

EXPLORING OUR MUSEUM AND LIBRARY

The Act of Union of the Eastern and Western Ukraine into One State

By Lubow Wolynetz, Curator

During the years 2017-2018, Ukrainians throughout the world have been commemorating the 100th anniversary of Ukraine's struggle for independence from both the Russian tsarist and Austro-Hungarian domination. Independence was achieved in 1918 and although short-lived, it has left a significant impact upon the Ukrainian people for generations to come. It has deepened their patriotic feelings, heightened their zeal for continuous struggle for freedom, and instilled a conviction in the populace that this achievement is possible and indispensable.

For centuries, Ukrainian lands have been split into the Eastern (the larger) part and the Western (smaller) part and have been dominated by two different foreign powers. The Ukrainian populace in both parts were united by the same language, the same culture and traditions, but separated by political borders and controlled by two separate tyrannical rules. For years there has been a deep-felt desire among the populace for the two parts—the Eastern Ukraine and the Western Ukraine—to

be united into one country, one state, under one ruler.

Shortly after the downfall of Tsarist Russia and the ensuing Russian Revolution of 1917, Eastern Ukraine proclaimed its independence in 1918 in Kyiv and became the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR). That same year, with the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Western Ukraine (consisting of the Ukrainian regions of Galicia, Bukovyna, and parts of Transcarpathia) proclaimed its independence in Lviv; it became the Western Ukrainian National Republic (ZUNR). Soon afterwards both governments of the newly formed Ukrainian Republics led talks on the possibility of uniting the two States into one Independent Ukrainian State. The ZUNR government approved this union on January 3, 1919 and the Directory of the UNR approved it on January 22, 1919. An Act of Union of the two States was proclaimed on January 22, 1919 in Kyiv at St. Sofia Square. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the proclamation of this Act. The ZUNR State was known as the Western



Ukrainian Lands following the Act of the Union of 1922.



The Galician Army aviation regiment, Photograph, Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford

Province of the Ukrainian National Republic. But, because of the political and wartime situation, both governments continued to work separately, retaining its own governmental structure due to the fact that it had different obstacles to overcome and different enemies to fight. The ZUNR government had its own Ukrainian Galician Army, but for additional military readiness and protection, it proclaimed general mobilization. As part of the military force, the Galician Army, also formed its own aviation regiment.

The existence of the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR) and the Western Republic (ZUNR) was short-lived; however, the possibility of achieving freedom, independence, and unification into one State was not forgotten, but was left to following generations to achieve.

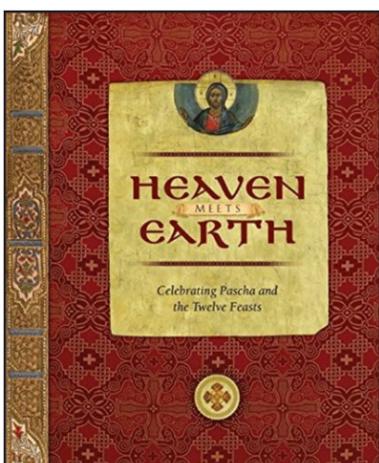
In our Museum and Library holdings we have some interesting archival material illustrating these historical events. Among them are photographs, posters, newspaper issues of the day, etc. Members of the Ukrainian

Diaspora in the United States (most of whom came from western Ukraine and still had family back home) rejoiced at the news of the formation of Western Ukrainian Republic, and the unification of the two Republics into one Ukrainian State. To help their brethren, Ukrainians in America issued loan certificates (similar to war bonds) and collected donations for the Ukrainian cause. We have samples of these certificates in our archives. We were also fortunate to have received photographs from the family of one of the early aviators of the Ukrainian Army, namely Volodymyr Pylypec, 1902-1968. He was ordained a priest in 1927 and served as pastor in the town of Bili Oslavy, Stanyslaviv district until 1944. He later emigrated to the United States and served in several parishes in the Philadelphia Archeparchy, one of which was the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Holy Family in Washington, D.C.

This is just a small sample of the rich and invaluable collection of archival material which our Museum and Library has and is carefully preserving for posterity. ❖

Book Review by Museum Director

Msgr. John Terlecky



Heaven meets earth: celebrating Pascha and the twelve feasts by John Kosmas Skinas. (Chesterston, IN: Ancient Faith Publishing, 2015 \$24.95)

During my three years of missionary work at Holy Spirit Ukrainian Greek Catholic Seminary in Lviv, Rudno (1919-1994), my knowledge and appreciation of the world of icons was greatly

enhanced by countless questions raised by seminarians there. Since I returned to the Stamford Eparchy in the fall of 1994, I have sought out resources on Byzantine iconography and have even conducted adult classes in parishes on the symbolism and theology of what has been popularly identified as “windows into heaven”.

Although this wonderful book (listed above) was published three years ago, I just discovered it a couple of months ago while browsing through the “books on sale” department of the Byzantine Rite Church Supplies store in Philadelphia. I was enthralled with both the beauty and the simplicity of this book that is primarily aimed at the general reader and might even be of assistance to a specialist in the field. The book has the shape of what is referred to as a “coffee-table” style. It offers much information on the great feasts that are celebrated both within the Orthodox Church and the Eastern Catholic Churches of the Byzantine Rite. It consists of four-colored icon plates and other illustrations containing

scriptural, theological and liturgical knowledge within just sixty-four pages.

The book is arranged by feasts according to the fixed calendar of the liturgical year which starts with the solemn feast of the Nativity of the Holy Mother of God in September. It then follows the cycle of feasts by season: the Exaltation of the Holy Cross; the Entrance of the Blessed Mother into the Temple; The Nativity, Theophany (Baptism), and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple and the Annunciation of the Blessed Mother. The book then crosses over to the moveable or non-fixed cycle of holydays that are celebrated each spring: Palm or Willow Sunday, the Great Feasts of the Resurrection and Ascension of Our Lord and Pentecost Sunday. This volume concludes with the summer holydays of the Transfiguration of Our Lord and the Holy Dormition of the Blessed Mother.

Each feast is subdivided into the following categories: the icon itself, asterisked bits that focus on key elements contained in the icon, a brief

note of the meaning of the feast, followed by Scriptural readings that come from the Vespers, Matins and Divine Liturgy for the feast, a parallel connection of each feast to Old Testament events, a noteworthy connection to outstanding example of a church in Christendom dedicated to the feast [I enjoyed seeing mention of the Annunciation Church in Bukovyna and of the Holy Dormition Church of the Kyievo-Pecherska Caves Monastery], special customs associated with the feast, and a brief meditation for reflection.

Since my personal discovery of this work, I have purchased about a dozen copies through Amazon services and distributed each as a gift. I find the asterisked tidbits mentioned above to really focus on offering clarity to the uniqueness of a given icon. I recommend this book as an exceptional resource especially for families with high school teenagers and youth adults in college. ❖