page 13, November 28, 2021 The Sower

EXPLORING OUR MUSEUM AND LIBRARY

Struggle for Freedom as Depicted in Song, Poetry, Art, Memoirs

By Lubow Wolynetz, Curator

During World War I and the years of the fight for freedom, 1914-1922, Ukrainian armed forces, the Sichovi Striltisi and the Ukrainian Galician Army fought valiantly against enemy invasions. Although their attempts to oust and defeat the enemy were not successful, the remembrance of the heroic deeds, and sacrifices made for a just cause, political and cultural attempts to resolve the tragic and critical situations were deeply embedded into the consciousness of the Ukrainian people. This, in turn gave them a steadfast desire to continue the struggle until their freedom and independence was achieved.

It is especially in the month of November when we reflect upon and ponder those crucially significant years of the struggle for freedom. We try to refresh our knowledge about it,

demonstrate the literary and musical

creativity of the participants in these events. One such item is a song book of

the Sichovi Striltsi (Spivanyk Sichovykh

Striltsiv (1918)) and Surma - a collection of

war songs (1922). Music, for centuries,

has been an important and an intrinsic

part of warfare. The songs during

wartime have had a psychological effect

for both the performers and listeners. It

strengthened their patriotic fervor,

intensified their courage, deepened the

understanding of their experiences and feelings, eulogized the lost, praised the

heroic, described the ordinary, and

laughed at the comical. The Sichovi

Striltsi created scores of songs during the

wartime years, which to this day we

cherish and sing during relevant

these songs and the energy of the musi-

cal composition was such that the Soviet

Regime banned their singing and threatened severe punishment to those who



Za ridnyj kraj (For Motherland). Fragment. Lyrics and music. Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford.



Surma – a collection of war songs. Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford.

both we have in our library.

Preserving and safeguarding these rare items is an exceptionally important task. Help us preserve these items. Be generous!❖

disobeyed. The song "Oh in the meadow the guelder rose branches have bent..." is considered to be a second national anthem. And the song "The Cranes" (Vydysh brate mii...) is a mournful, sorrowful lament for the fallen soldiers or notable persons devoted to work for the social good. In the song book "Surma", each song has detailed information about the lyricist, composer as well as the date and occasion when the song was written. Our library also has a book entitled "Chervona Kalyna - literary anthology" published in 1918. It contains historical data, poetry, memoires, photographs, drawings, caricatures, etc. In the 1920s and 1930s, other works were published like "Kalendar Chervonoi Kalyny" and "Chronicles of Chervona Kalyna", issues of moments. The power of the words of



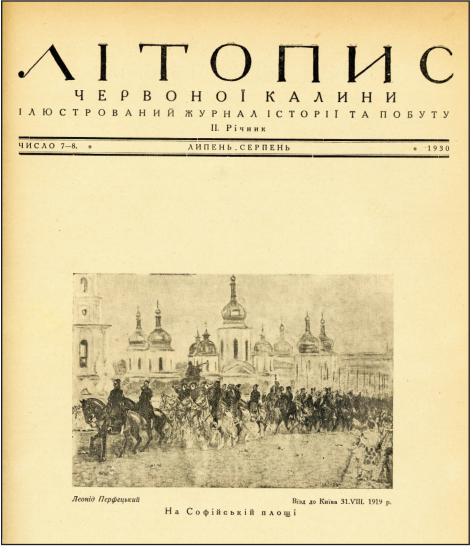
The Cranes (Vydysh brate mii...). Fragment. Lyrics and music. Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford.

learning a more detailed and in-depth history about which many of us know

An unbiased and just preservation of Ukraine's history in the in the post war years was not an easy task. People in Eastern Ukraine, under the yoke of the communist regime, were denied all national and patriotic manifestations and severely punished for any and every display. Patriotic national expressions and cultural accomplishments in Western Ukraine - Halychyna, which was under Polish jurisdiction, were at times strictly limited and periodically destroyed. Nevertheless, Galician intellectuals, notwithstanding restrictions, managed to achieve much for the Ukrainian populace, especially in the cultural and educational aspects and the affirmation of their national consciousness. Among the numerous measures taken, the attempts to preserve historic memory was at its forefront. They accomplished this through the publication of valuable scholarly works, documents, memoires and cultural and art exhibitions.

Apart from the rank-and-file soldiers within the military forces of the Sichovi Striltsi and the Galician army, there were a group of highly educated officers, and professionals (lawyers, journalists, writers, poets, artists, composers, musicians, professors, teachers). They were the ones who took upon themselves the responsibility to record and thus safeguard the details of the war time activities, heroic deeds, and creative events. They took it upon themselves to keep publishing all of the pertinent material as it surfaced to awareness including photographs, artwork, and musical compositions.

Our Museum and Library has a collection of rare and valuable publications dealing with wartime and post wartime life. The publications I wish to describe are a significant source of information about the aforementioned times and



Chronicles of Chervona Kalyna. Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford.