

The king's body has never been found. In 1935, near Varna, at the place of the historic battle, one of Trace grave-mounds was turned into a monument - mausoleum of Władysław Warneńczyk. In the cathedral of Wawel there is a symbolic tombstone from the beginning of the XXth century.

Elaborated in the NBP in base of:

1. „The Galaxy of Polish Kings and Princes”, Czytelnik 1978
2. „The book of Polish Kings and Princes” under scientific supervision of Stefan K. Kuczyński, Świat Książki 1999
3. „Polish History from the most Ancient Times until the Present Day” by Alicja Dybkowska, Jan Żaryn, Małgorzata Żaryn, PWN 1994, and encyclopaedia sources

All collector's coins are legal tender in Poland.



face value	100 zł
metal	900/1000 Au
finish	proof
diameter	21.00 mm
weight	8.00 g
mintage	2,000 pcs

Obverse: An image of the Eagle as the state Emblem of the Republic of Poland, on the Eagle's sides a notation of the year of issue: 20-03; under the Eagle an inscription: ZŁ 100 ZŁ; in the rim, an inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA. Under the left talon of the Eagle the Mint mark: $\frac{m}{w}$.

Reverse: The bust of king Władysław III Warneńczyk. On the left the dates of his reign: 1434 / 1444. Above a semicircular inscription: WŁADYSŁAW III WARNEŃCZYK.

Coin designer: *Ewa Tyc-Karpińska*

Coin was struck by the State Mint in Warsaw.

Printed by NBP Printing Office

Collector's Coin



On 5 February, 2003 the National Bank of Poland puts into circulation a collector's coin of the face value of 100 zł, depicting the bust of king Władysław III Warneńczyk, struck in gold in proof finish.

The coin is a continuation of the series "Polish Kings and Princes" initiated by the National Bank of Poland in 1979 and completes, in accordance with the subject, two silver coins and one cupro-nickel coin depicting king Władysław III Warneńczyk, issued in 1992.

Władysław III, called Warneńczyk, the first son of Władysław II Jagiełło and Sophie – Sonka, the daughter of prince Andrew Holszański, was born on 31 October, 1424 in Cracow.

On a congress in Brześć Kujawski in 1425 the king obtained an assurance that a new-born son would succeed to the throne in exchange for confirmation of old and conferment of new privileges to nobles. After the birth of the second royal son in 1427, Kazimierz IV Jagiellończyk, Jagiełło pursued to guarantee for both of them a succession to the Polish throne. Favour of Polish nobles and magnates for these goals was conditioned by realisation of royal promises but Jagiełło was not particularly eager to do it. A several year's monarch's struggle with magnates, aiming to guarantee a hereditary stronger succession, ended up with a condition of personal inviolability of nobles without judicial sentence. This provision was inscribed in the deed of Jedlno issued in 1430. Instead the king obtained the assurance of election for one of his sons.

Before his death Jagiełło suggested his older son Władysław for an heir to the throne. The powerful bishop of Cracow, Zbigniew Oleśnicki, strove after Władysław's coronation worried about his own position, threatening with spectre of civil discord and even war.

The coronation took place on 25 July, 1434. After the coronation ten-year-old king vowed rights, privileges and liberties, formally initiating his reign. Given the king's minority (Władysław was acknowledged

major when he completed fourteen years, at a congress in Piotrków in 1438) rules of governors-opiekadlnicy (i.e. tutors) were set up in every province. However, the fate of the country depended on the omnipotent bishop Zbigniew Oleśnicki and magnates supporting him. Specific regency of Oleśnicki was seriously defied by his adversaries. Increasing anarchy in the country and weakness of executive apparatus of the authority caused an open civil war, which ended up with a defeat of confederate oppositionists at Grotniki in May, 1439. Zbigniew Oleśnicki had always thought to join the crowns of Hungary and Poland. Such a union would give the Kingdom the possibility of extending influences in Central and Southern Europe and playing an important role in resolving serious and swollen problems of the Christianity. Towards the close of the emperor Zygmunt Luksemburski's reign, who died in 1437, Oleśnicki considered a plan of bringing the throne of Buda to the Polish king. At the same time Oleśnicki supported anti-Hussite policy of the emperor tried to guarantee to the Jagiellons a succession after him in Bohemia and Hungary. The bishop of Cracow was afraid that Poland would be encircled by Luxemburg and Teutonic forces. He did not manage to fulfil the plans and Zygmunt's son-in-law, Albrecht Habsburg, succeeded the Hungarian throne. Then the Polish party undertook military action in northern part of Hungary (now in Slovakia) in order to raise to the throne at Danube the Polish king, Władysław Jagiellończyk.

The death of Albrecht Habsburg in 1439, after two-year reign, reminded again of the Polish-Hungarian union issue. The Hungarians fought at those times with a pressure of Ottoman Turks who after the occupation of neighbouring Serbia started to attack the borders of their country. Hungary threatened by the Turkish danger tried to find an ally. In a union the most difficult issue was to eliminate rivaling for succession Albrecht's widow, queen Elisabeth, expecting a child to whom she wanted to guarantee a succession. However, Władysław had more supporters. For some time, as it turned out later, queen's resistance was broken because she agreed to marry Władysław and enable him to be chosen the king of Hungary, even she would give birth to a son. Supported by a Habsburg party she changed her mind when a posthumous son was born. A several month's baby was crowned with a crown taken away in time secretly from Visegrad. These actions proved clearly that promises given to Władysław Jagiellończyk were not sincere. After the arrival of the Polish king to Buda the majority of Hungarian nobles called in question the coronation of Elisabeth's son and on 7 July, 1440 Władysław Jagiellończyk was crowned the king of Hungary - given the lack of coronation insignia - with a crown taken from reliquary of St. Stephen, patron of Hungary. But Elisabeth and her supporters did not capitulate. An open civil war broke out which was even more dangerous because of the fact that the Balkans were threatened by Turkish Ottomans. Two year's Władysław's struggle with Elisabeth did not bring any breakthrough in favour of Jagiellończyk's supporters. The war exploited both parties and seriously affected Hungarian people who truly wanted its end.

An open civil conflict in Hungary was not only a Central Europe issue. Hungary, endangered by the Turks, became interesting for the

Church, which was in a crisis. Those were the days of diarchy: Eugenius IV and supported by council of Basel, Felix V. Eugenius IV aimed to set up an anti-Ottoman league which success would strengthen his seriously impaired authority and underpin prestige. This pope, paying great attention to the situation in Hungary, decided to mediate. A papal legate sent at Danube, Julian Cesarini, convinced Elisabeth and Władysław to make a compromise, not favourable for Hungary but suitable for papal plans. On 14 December, 1442 a treaty in Győr was negotiated. Historians make guesses that slogans of a crusade, which the papal legate presented to Władysław, found breeding ground.

In September 1442 still at time of civil war, the young king regardless the matters of Hungary, Poland and Jagiellonian dynasty, got involved in a dangerous war with Turkey. A campaign led by a magnate and an outstanding Hungarian commander, John Hunyady, at the end of 1443 and at the beginning of 1444 brought several splendid victories (occupation of Nisz and Sofia, battles at Krošovec and Zlatniky). Propagandist action exaggerated the importance of these victories.

In such an atmosphere with increasing anti-war protests both in Hungary and Poland, peace negotiations were undertaken in Szeged. On 1 August, 1444 a peace treaty favourable for Christian countries was made for ten years and vowed by Władysław. In virtue of this treaty Turkey was obliged to withdraw its army from Serbia and all occupied Hungarian lands and to pay a contribution of 100.000 florins in gold. Corroboration given by Władysław to pope Eugenius IV caused that relations between the king and Polish magnates with the bishop Oleśnicki as a leader worsened distinctively; inflow of the army and the money from Poland were hindered too. Influenced by Cesarini who desired another crusade for liberation of Constantinople, already on 4 August Władysław breached the agreement and waged a war with Sultan Murad II. The pope dispensed the young king from a peace promise explaining that a peace treaty with the unfaithful Turks was not valid. He underlined that the allies could not be left alone and Burgundy and Venice prepared a fleet to block the straits of the Black Sea and to prevent Turkish army from looking for aid in Small Asia. The hope of close victory over the Turks and their final expulsion from Europe were dangled before the king. As a consequence Władysław decided to lead the second badly prepared crusade against the Turks. It ended with a total defeat: Venetian fleet failed while the Christian army commanded by John Hunyady made mistakes big in consequences. On 10 November, 1444, on the fields of Varna, charging retrenched by field fortifications a unit of janissaries protecting the Sultan, the king Władysław perished. Julian Cesarini perished at withdrawal. This battle foredoomed the fate of the Balkans and Constantinople.

This way the last crusader of Europe passed away, the king in place of whom others took decisions because he did not manage to be resolute enough. He was submissive, humble, inexperienced but at the same time brave, courageous, full of knightly virtues and will to defend his faith. He would win people's hearts with his kindness. He was a ruler not only unhappy but authentically tragic.