

Collector Coins



face value	10 zł
metal	925/1000 Ag
finish	proof
diameter	32.00 mm
weight	14.14 g
mintage	56 000 pcs

Obverse: An image of the Eagle established as the state Emblem of the Republic of Poland on the right-hand side; an inscription, Zł 10, below. In the centre, an image of the Combat Paratrooper Emblem. On the left-hand side, stylised: parachute canopy, and a jumping paratrooper's silhouette against it. Above, stylised images of two airplanes. Below, a semicircular inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA, and the notation of the year of issue, 2004. The Mint's mark, $\frac{m}{w}$, under the Eagle's left leg.

Reverse: On the right-hand side, a bust of Brigadier-General Stanisław F. Sosabowski. On the left-hand side, stylised: silhouettes of three jumping paratroopers and above, images of two airplanes. Below, an inscription, GEN. BRYG. / STANISŁAW F. SOSABOWSKI 1892-1967.

Designer of the coin: Robert Kotowicz



face value	2 zł
metal	CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy
finish	standard
diameter	27.00 mm
weight	8.15 g
mintage	850 000 pcs

Obverse: An image of the Eagle established as the state Emblem of the Republic of Poland; on both sides of the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue, 20-04. An inscription, Zł 2 Zł, below; on the rim a circumscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA, preceded and followed by six pearls. The Mint's mark, $\frac{m}{w}$, under the Eagle's left leg.

Reverse: A bust of Brigadier-General Stanisław F. Sosabowski. On the left-hand side, an inscription, 1892 / 1967; on the right-hand side, against the background of the general's bust, an image of the Combat Paratrooper Emblem. Below, a semicircular inscription, GEN. BRYG. STANISŁAW F. SOSABOWSKI.

On the edge: An inscription, NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted 180°, separated by stars.

Designer of the obverse: Ewa Tyc-Karpińska
Designer of the reverse: Robert Kotowicz



On November 17, the National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation collector coins depicting Brigadier General Stanisław Franciszek Sosabowski, with the following face values:

- 10 zł – struck in silver, in proof finish,
- 2 zł – struck in standard finish, in CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy (Nordic Gold).

Stanisław Franciszek Sosabowski was born on 8 May 1892 in Stanisławów, then part of the Austro-Hungarian partition of Poland. He graduated from the primary school and a junior high school specializing in mathematics and natural sciences in his hometown. Following his father's death in 1903

and due to his difficult financial situation he started to earn a living by giving private classes. As a 17-year old boy he joined the Polish Rifle Units. He passed his high school examinations with honours in 1910 and entered the Cracow Business and Commerce College. At the same time he continued his activity in the Units as an instructor in the Cracow Headquarters. He returned to Stanisławów in 1911 and worked as a bank clerk. He also became the commander of the 24th Polish Rifle Unit in the city and later the commander of the South-Eastern District. Moreover, he organized the scouting movement and was the troop leader in his hometown until 1913. In August 1914 Sosabowski was conscripted as a chief warrant officer

Coins struck by the State Mint in Warsaw.

Printed by NBP Printing Office

– Brigadier-General
Stanisław Franciszek Sosabowski –

into the 58th Infantry Regiment of the Austro-Hungarian Army. He fought at Przemyśl, in the Zakliczyn region, the Dukielska Pass and in the Lublin region.

With a heavily injured leg in September 1915, he stayed at various hospitals until May 1916. He was promoted to second lieutenant in January 1916 for bravery shown on the battlefield. Due to his health condition, he was sent to work at the headquarters of the 2nd Army in Lvov (where he married Maria Tokarska) and in Złoczów, and then in the 11th Corps and Southern-Tirol Front Group. Later on, as a lieutenant, he worked in the General Gouvernement in Lublin. He co-led a secret Polish organization that assisted soldiers and officers in joining the Polish Armed Force and the Polish Military Organization. He joined the Polish Army in November 1918 and was promoted to the rank of captain. At first, he headed the Liquidation Committee of the former General Gouvernement in Lublin and then was delegated to work at the General Liquidation Office. In August 1919, he was employed at the Ministry of Military Affairs and later headed a unit in the 4th Department (responsible for supplies and communication) of the General Headquarters. As a military expert, he was a conference participant in Spa in 1920. He was promoted to major on 9 November 1920. From that day on until 15 March 1921 he was a member of the Polish Military Purchase Mission in Paris. During the Polish-Bolshevik war, he reported for duty in the front units following a call by the State Defence Council. However, due to his temporary injury and involvement in the staff works, he did not participate in combat. In the autumn of 1922 he commenced a year-long study at the Military Academy. After its completion in November 1923, he was formally delegated to the 15th Infantry Regiment. In fact, he returned to his work at the General Headquarters, where he continued working with the 4th Department until 1927, dealing with the planning of strategic reserves of supplies. In that period, he published several articles on the state economy and defence. He also worked on the editorial board of "Polska Zbrojna". Having been promoted to certified lieutenant-colonel on 20 April 1927, he was transferred to the post of the battalion commander of the 75th Infantry Regiment in Chorzów. In the following years, he was the Garrison Commander in Rybnik and later the deputy commander of the 3rd Highland Regiment in Bielsko. Having gained experience in such units, he was transferred to the Military Academy in 1930 to work as a lecturer and a head of the chair of staff services. During his work at the Academy, he wrote course books for heads of subunits, including: "Wychowanie żołnierza obywatela" (Educating a soldier-citizen). He received the first prize of the Military Scientific and Educational Institute for his work entitled "Kwatermistrzostwo w polu" (Quartermastery in the field) published in 1935. During his work at the Academy he earned the reputation of an outstanding, independent and responsible officer. In January 1937, after sending many requests to headquarters, Sosabowski returned to the army and took command of the 9th Legions Infantry Regiment in the 3rd Legions Infantry Division in Zamość. He kept this post until the beginning of 1939, when following the death of his younger son (who died in an accident in 1938) he was transferred to Warsaw on his own request. From January 1939 he commanded the 21st "Children of Warsaw" Infantry Regiment. On 19 March 1939 he was promoted to the rank of certified colonel. During the celebrations of the 3 May 1939, he led the last infantry parade to be held in Warsaw before the war. In the September campaign the 21st Regiment fought as part of Modlin Army which next defended

Warsaw where Colonel Sosabowski commanded "Grochów" Defence Section from September 14th. He was awarded the Virtuti Militari Cross Class V for his bravery on the battlefield. He described his experiences from those times in an article published in London in 1941 under the title: "Z dziejów obrony Warszawy, wrzesień 1939" (The defense of Warsaw, September 1939).

After the capitulation of Warsaw General Sosabowski was taken into captivity. He managed to escape and as early as in October 1939 joined an underground organization called Poland's Victory Services. The underground cadre 21st "Children of Warsaw" Infantry Regiment was established on his initiative. General Michał Tokarzewski-Karaszewicz, commander of Poland's Victory Services sent Sosabowski to France in mid November 1939 to establish contacts with General Władysław Sikorski, Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army. After a short stay in Lvov and Stanisławów, colonel Sosabowski managed to get to France in December 1939 through Slovakia, Hungary, Italy and Switzerland. At first, he served under General Kazimierz Sosnkowski; in January 1940 he became the commander of a division infantry in the 1st Grenadier Division and later in the 4th Infantry Division. After the defeat of France, he was in charge of the relocation of the 4th Division to Great Britain from 19 June 1940. In July 1940, Colonel Sosabowski started to organize in Scotland the first cadre unit of the Polish Army in Great Britain which from August 1940 was called the 4th Cadre Rifle Brigade. The unit was to serve him as a basis for the creation of the first airborne unit in the Polish Army. A training centre was built for the unit in Largo House. Sosabowski himself participated also in a parachute training programme. On 9 October 1941 the unit was named the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade. The aim of its authors was to prepare support for the uprising in occupied Poland. However, under pressure from British authorities that wanted to use these troops in combat on the Western front and made that a prerequisite for it to receive supplies and armament, on 6 June 1944 the Commander-in-Chief General Sosnkowski transferred the unit to British command. On 15 June 1944 Colonel Stanisław Sosabowski was promoted to Brigadier-General. At the start of the Warsaw Uprising, General Sosabowski wanted to transfer the Brigade to Warsaw but the British did not agree to this.

In September 1944, the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade led by General Sosabowski participated in the "Market-Garden" operation. On September 21, a part of the Brigade was dropped near Driel in the Netherlands to support the 1st British Airborne Division that was fighting on the other bank of the Rhine. Unfavourable weather conditions and bad reconnaissance of the allied forces resulted in the Poles fighting ineffectively against the better equipped Germans. In that battle General Sosabowski showed bravery and leadership skills. In many a critical moment he helped by his very presence and authority. One of the legendary stories recalls that the General mounted a ladies bicycle and shouted "Follow me!" to a British commander of reconnaissance vehicles who resisted giving support to Polish troops. It was planned that the Polish troops were to get to the other side of the Rhine on ferry boats supplied by the British. In fact, the other river bank was manned by Germans and the ferry boats had been destroyed. Faced with these circumstances General Sosabowski organized the defence around Driel. On September 22-23, only a part of the Brigade managed to get across. There were many casualties. Another attempt was made at night on September 24-25. It failed. As a result, incurring German attack from armour and

artillery, Polish and British troops were evacuated from the north bank of the Rhine on the following night. In the last phase of the battle, as the General wrote: "the brigade located on the north bank of the Rhine had the honour to cover the withdrawal of the British units". This showed that General Sosabowski's doubts, voiced earlier, as to the planning and management of the whole operation by allied forces, had been justified. Long before the parachute drop of the Brigade General Sosabowski became very unpopular among the British. At briefings he would constantly demand information about the location and number of enemy forces. This constant, although futile, demand for compliance with the fundamental principles of operational planning came to be famous in military history. However, it should be emphasized that thanks to Sosabowski's skilful command and his concern for the lives of his soldiers, the Brigade incurred smaller losses than British parachute units. After Sosabowski's return to Great Britain, the British forced Władysław Raczkiewicz, President of Poland, to relieve General Sosabowski of his duties as commander of the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade on 26 December 1944. Sosabowski was appointed Inspector of Stage and Watch Units. The General received the Cross of Valour for his command of the Brigade in the "Market Garden" operation.

At the end of war, General Sosabowski remained abroad. In 1947 he joined the Polish Resettlement Corps, where he worked as the Inspector of Stage and Watch Units until 1948. He was later demobilized and deprived of any means of living. From December 1949 he worked as a storekeeper at an electric appliance factory, until his retirement in 1966.

He was one of the founders of the Polish Airborne Association that gathered his former subordinates. He was also a member of the General and Colonel Club of former Commanders-in-Chief. He wrote articles and books (including his memoirs "Najkrótszą drogą" (The Shortest Way) and "Droga wiodła ugorem" (The road led through the fallow), delivered presentations on the history of the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade. He also addressed his country from the London studios of Radio Free Europe.

General Stanisław Sosabowski died on 25 September 1967 in Hillingdon near London. His ashes were brought to Poland and buried at the Powązki Military Cemetery in Warsaw on November 14, 1967.

General Stanisław Sosabowski was awarded the following as well as many other decorations: the Order of Polonia Restituta Class V, the Virtuti Militari Cross Class V, the Golden Cross of Merit with Swords, the Independence Cross, the Cross of Valor, the Order of the Romanian Crown Class V with Swords, the Yugoslavian Order of White Eagle Class IV and the Order of St. Sava Class IV and the CBE.

The 6th Pomeranian Airborne-Assault Brigade was named after General Stanisław Sosabowski and his bust was unveiled at its headquarters field in September 1992.

WITOLD GŁĘBOWICZ
Polish Military Museum
in Warsaw

All collector coins are legal tender in Poland.