

REGISTER

POLAND (REPUBLIC). KONSULAT GENERALNY (CONSULATE GENERAL),
PRETORIA, UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

HISTORICAL NOTE:

A Polish Consulate General was established in Cape Town, Union of South Africa, on January 1, 1929. It was headed by Consul General Michał Kwapiszewski from January 1, 1930 to August 1, 1931. It then became an Honorary Consulate under Honorary Consul Cyryl Caro (August 1, 1931-September 15, 1934). In 1935, it was a Consular Agency and in 1936 an Honorary Vice-Consulate under Jan Majewski. In 1938, the post was an Honorary Consulate with Majewski as Honorary Consul, and in 1939 its status was raised to that of a regular Consulate. It remained as such, under Consul Majewski, until its liquidation in 1946. Among the changes occurring during this period were an expansion in both sphere of activity (reflecting the post's elevated status) and territorial jurisdiction (to include both Northern and Southern Rhodesia by 1938).

Elsewhere in southern Africa, a Polish Consular Agency was set up in Johannesburg in 1939, and in the same year an Honorary Consulate was opened in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia. By February 1941, a Consulate General had been established in Pretoria with Minister Plenipotentiary Dr. Stanisław Łepkowski as Consul General. In 1943, a Consular Agency at Durban attained the status of Consulate, the Honorary Consulate at Salisbury became a Consulate General, and Consulates were opened in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia and Zomba, Nyasaland for the care of Polish war refugees transported to East Africa. Contacts were maintained between the consular posts in South Africa and Polish government representations elsewhere in Africa, such as the Consulate in Tananarive, Madagascar and ministry delegations in Nairobi, Kenya. Among the concerns of the posts in the Union of South Africa were the transport and supervision of Polish war orphans settled at the Polish Children's Home in Oudtshoorn (see also the collection "Dom Polskich Dzieci").

As a result of withdrawal of international recognition of the London Government, most consular offices of the Republic of Poland were closed after the war. The Consulates in Durban and Cape Town and the Consulate General in Johannesburg ceased to function on May 1, 1946, while the Consulate General in Pretoria closed on May 15 of that year.

The archives of the Polish Consulate in Cape Town were sent by Mr. Majewski to Dr. Łepkowski in Pretoria for storage on July 27, 1946. Both the Cape Town and Pretoria consular archives eventually came into the possession of Mr. Tadeusz Kawalec, a former official of the Consulate in Cape Town, who donated them to the Hoover Institution in 1975.

(Sources: Pałyga, Edward. Stosunki konsularne Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej, Warszawa 1970 and Rocznik służby zagranicznej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warszawa 1936 and 1938).

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Series Description:

<u>Box Nos.</u>	<u>Series</u>
1.	CORRESPONDENCE, 1940-1957. Correspondence of Dr. Min. Stanisław Łepkowski, Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Pretoria, Union of South Africa, arranged alphabetically by last name of correspondent.
1-2.	SUBJECT FILE, 1941-1949. Letters, speeches, clippings, telegrams, circulars, notes, minutes, protocols, arranged alphabetically by subject.
2.	MISCELLANY, 1930-1946. Seals, calling cards, letterheads, personal documents, pre-war postage stamps, etc.
3.	SEALS AND ORIGINAL FOLDERS.

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3. SEALS AND ORIGINAL FOLDERS.