

RARE VARIETY OF SHILLING OF THE GRAND MASTER OF THE TEUTONIC ORDER PAUL VON RUSDORF FOUND IN VOLYN REGION

Early 20s of the XV century brought quite hard times for the State of the Teutonic Order. The defeat in the Battle of Grunwald (the Battle near Tannenberg) in 1410 and the fiasco of the Order in the “Great War” of 1409-1411 with Poland, as well as significant military and political mistakes of the Grand Master *Michael* Küchmeister von *Sternberg* set considerable challenges for the Teutonic Order. Under these circumstances Paul von Rusdorf became the 29th Grand Master in March 1422 and headed the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia for almost 20 years. During his reign the Crusaders made attempts to revive the past greatness of the Order State, to expand its military and political influence, and most importantly weaken the main enemy of the Teutons which was Poland. That was a new period of wars with Poland and the Order had new defeats. However, the active policy of the Grand Master to terminate the Polish-Lithuanian union left a significant mark in the Ukrainian history. During his reign the sufficiently close links between the state of the Teutonic Order in Prussia and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (hereinafter GDL) were recovered, especially Volhynia region. The Order took an active part in the civil war in GDL as an ally of the Grand Duke of Lithuania Švitrigaila Algirdas, and his intentions to revoke the alliance with Poland and to create the Grand Duchy of Rus headed by Švitrigaila as the Grand Duke. In August 1431 the crusaders started another unsuccessful military confrontation with Poland – the Polish-Teutonic War of 1431-1435. Along with the restored military alliance the states of the Teutonic Order in Prussia renewed economic relations with the Rus lands of GDL, mostly with Volhynia and Podolia.

The cooperation of the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia and the Rus lands left a sufficient amount of numismatic sources. According to the words of the famous Ukrainian scientist Mykola Kotlyar coin findings are «the relics of domestic and foreign trade of those times»¹. At the time of writing his article the author knew about 32 coins of the emission of the Grand Master Paul von Rusdorf found in Ukraine during 1897 – 2016. The coins were either parts of hoards or occasional findings. The information about the coins can be found in archive documents², scientific works³ and materials of numismatic Internet forums⁴. The area of the coin findings covers Vinnytsia, Volyn, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Khmelnytsky and Chernihiv regions. Most of the findings of coins of Paul von Rusdorf in Ukraine are the types of coins classified by the prominent German numismatist and sphragist of the nineteenth century Friedrich August Voßberg as emissions of 1422-1436, mostly coins of 1426-1436⁵. That was the period of renewal of political, economic and trade relations between the Teutonic Order and GDL and its Rus lands. There are quite rare specimens among the coin findings.

1 Котляр М. Ф. 1971, с. 65.

2 ANMHU, page 2 overleaf.

3 Позіховський О., Шуст Р. 2005, с.543, Орлик В. 2013 б., Орлик В. 2015.,

4 Орлик В. 2013 а., Коцур В.П. 2016

5 Voßberg Friedrich August, 1843, s. 163.

In July 2016 a shilling of Paul von Rusdorf (1422-1441) of the emissions of 1426-1436 minted in Torun (Picture 1) was found on the Lypa river bank in Horokhiv district of Volyn region, 10 km from the town of Berestechko.



Picture 1 Obv.: HÄOS | T'PÄ | VLVS | PRIM Rev.: HONG | TÄDR | ORVM | PRVQ
(m 1,46 g., AE 21 mm.)

These coins have specific iconographic and palaeographic features. Particularly, the presence of the symbol «•» above the shield of the Grand Master, the presence of the letter «A» with connecting line in the legend – «Ä», combination of different variants of writing of the letter «M» in the legend, particularly «H» or «H» with «M» (Picture 2), and the combination of iconographic and palaeographic symbols of in the legend of the obverse of the coin «'» and «s» with the above-mentioned features.

The coins of the time of Paul von Rusdorf (1422-1441) contained in the Dubno hoard were represented by shillings minted in 1426-1436 at Torun mint⁶. These coins have specific iconographic and palaeographic features. Particularly, presence of the symbol «•» above the shield of the Grand Master, the legend has letter «A» with a connecting line – «Ä», combination of different variants of letter «M» in the legend, particularly «H» or «H» with «M», and combination of iconographic and palaeographic symbols of the legend on the obverse «'» and «s» with the above-mentioned specific features.



Picture 2

6 Voßberg Friedrich August, 1843, s. 163.

It is unknown to us the circumstances of the findings. The coin partially corresponds to the shilling described by Friedrich August Voßberg with number 837⁷. But the shilling found in Volyn region had the eagle head turned to the right on the shield of the Grand Master (Picture 3).



Picture 3

This coin contains in the catalogue of modern Polish researchers Jaroslaw Dutkowski and Adam Suchanek with number 839⁸ and has rated rare 4. This type of coins is not present in the coin collection of the Teutonic Order at the National Museum in Warsaw, where there are 42 coins of the emission of the Grand Master Paul von Rusdorf⁹. There is no coin of this kind in the biggest collection of the coins of the Teutonic Order in the District Museum in Torun, Poland.

The iconographic analysis of the coins we found in Volyn and which were published by the Polish researchers shows that they were struck with different pairs of dies. This means that for this type of coinage at Torun Mint they produced several pairs of dies. The coin from the catalogue of Jaroslaw Dutkowski and Adam Suchanek has a quite worse conservation condition than our finding under analysis; in particular it lacks parts of the legends of the obverse and reverse.

The coin under analysis was published by its owner on the Ukrainian website “Violity” in order to define the emitter and to assess its value¹⁰. After the clarification and assessment the coin was sold at the auction of the Internet resource “Violity” on August 24, 2016 for 670 UA Hr.

The coins of the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia found on the Ukrainian territory hold certain place among other findings. However, they are not represented equally by the emissions of the Grand Masters. Coin findings depend on several factors including direct or indirect cooperation between the inhabitants of the region where the finding was recorded

7 Voßberg Friedrich August, 1843, s. 163.

8 Jaroslaw Dutkowski, Adam Suchanek, 2010, s. 84-85, # 839.

9 Miehle Danuta 1998.

10 Violity 2016

with the emitter of the found coin, mainly during the time close to the minting of the coin. The found coins of the reign of the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order Paul von Rusdorf, including emissions of 1426-1436 are the result of contacts of representatives of the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, mainly trading representatives with the people of the Rus lands during the restoration of close links between the Rus lands of GDL and the state of the Teutonic Order in Prussia. Their economic cooperation contributed penetration of the coins of the Teutonic Order on money market of the Ukrainian Medieval lands, including those varieties, which currently have significant rated rare. And this is the shilling of Paul von Rusdorf (1422-1441) of the emission of 1426-1436 minted in Torun and which was found in July 2016 in Horokhiv destrikt of Volyn region.

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Рідкісний різновид шилінга великого магістра Тевтонського ордену Пауля фон Русдорфа, знайдений на Волині Резюме

У липні 2016 р. на полі, розташованому на березі річки Липа в Горохівському районі Волинської області, за 10 км. від м. Берестечка був знайдений шилінг Пауля фон Русдорфа (1422-1441) емісії 1426-1436 рр., монетний двір – м. Торунь. Подібна монета міститься в каталозі сучасних польських дослідників Ярослава Дутковські та Адама Сушанека під №839 і має ступінь рідкості R4. Даний тип монет відсутній у

зібранні монет Тевтонського ордену Національного музею у м. Варшаві, де зберігається 42 монети емісії Великого магістра Пауля фон Русдорфа. Знахідки монет часів правління в Тевтонському ордені Великого магістра Пауля фон Русдорфа, зокрема емісій 1426-1436 рр., – наслідок контактів представників станів держави Тевтонського ордену у Пруссії, переважно торгівельних станів із мешканцями руських земель, у часи відновлення тісних зв'язків між руськими землями Великого князівства Литовського і державою Тевтонського ордену у Пруссії. Їхня, переважно економічна співпраця, сприяла проникненню на грошовий ринок українських середньовічних земель монет Тевтонського ордену, у тому числі й тих їхніх різновидів, які нині мають значні ступені рідкості.