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## INTRODUCTION

### Biographical Notes

Stefan Sznuk, born in Warsaw in 1896, was a pioneer aviator in Poland. He was one of the first members of the Polish Air Force and took part in the Polish-Russian (Bolshevik) War of 1919-1921. He remained in the Polish Air Force and, in March 1939, he was promoted to Colonel. Before the outbreak of World War II, he was Head of Polish Air Force training. With the capitulation of the Polish forces, Sznuk evacuated to Romania where he planned and carried out a series of dramatic mass escapes, resulting in the freeing of the majority of Polish personnel, who eventually reached France and England to continue the war on behalf of their occupied homeland.

In 1940-41, he served as Chief of Staff of the reborn Polish Air Force in England. Later in 1941, Colonel Sznuk was sent to Canada to become Head of the Air Mission and finally Military and Air Attaché to the Polish Legation. For his military services he received many decorations including the Order of Commander of the British Empire. At the final demobilization he was promoted to the rank of Major General.

General Sznuk remained in Canada after the war and taught as Professor at the Triservice Language School of the Department of National Defence. General Sznuk also became very active in the local and national Polish community in Canada. He was instrumental in arranging the arrival of over 4,500 Polish veterans to Canada. He also took a personal interest in assisting individual immigrants and political refugees from Poland. As a result of his advice and assistance, Canada became the new home for many Polish scientists, professors, doctors, technicians and skilled workers.

General Sznuk served as Vice-President of the Canadian Polish Congress for many years with the special responsibility to maintain liaison with the Canadian Federal Government and Parliament. He was also very active in the RCAF Association, serving as its Vice-President and Vice-Chairman for eight years. General Sznuk was also active in the Canadian Citizenship Council to which he was elected as a National Consultant. For his outstanding achievements and contributions to Canada, General Sznuk was awarded the Order of Canada in 1970. General Sznuk died in Ottawa on 6 May, 1986, at the age of 89 years.

### Introductory Notes

General Sznuk's archival collection reflects his many years as community leader and public servant. His papers include correspondence to senior government officials and politicians in Canada and also in other countries. As a member of the executive of various veteran and Polish associations, he submitted briefs, reports and policy papers to the Canadian Federal Government. He also corresponded with many prominent individuals in the Polish community across Canada and in other countries. Papers relating to these activities are also contained in the collection.

This archival collection provides a unique national perspective on the relationship between the Polish Canadian community and the Canadian Federal Government during the Second World War and in the post-war years. The papers are a rich source of information on the post-World War II immigration to Canada, the integration of new immigrants and the growth and development of multiculturalism in Canada.

The General Sznuk Papers complement historical information in the Immigration Branch, National Defence, Veterans Affairs and External Affairs Records. Also this collection adds to the historical information in the Canadian Polish Congress Collection (MG28 V10) at the National Archives.

Photographs were transferred to the Documentary Art and Photography Division of the National Archives and the publications were transferred to the National Library.

The material was presented to the National Archives in 1981 by General Sznuk and donated in 1991 by his daughter, Mrs. Krystyna Sparks.

# SZNUK, Stefan

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1	7	Medical Records, RCAF	1944
1	8	Identification Documents for travel to USA	1947
1	9	Identification Documents (Photocopies)	
1	10	Certificate of Canadian Citizenship	1956
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1	12	Polish Air Force, Correspondence	1946
1	13	Nomination as General (Polish Air Force)	1964-65
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2	9	Borowska, Stanislaw	1965
2	10	Buckiewicz, H.	n.d.
2	11	Cromb, W.T.	n.d.
2	12	Cross, P.	1968
2	13	Dorantt, Jan	n.d.
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2	17	Kos-Rabcewicz-Zubkowski	
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5	49	Polsko-Kanadyjski Obywatelski Komitet (Polish-Canadian Citizens Committee on Security and Cooperation in Europe)	n.d., 1975-76
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6	4	Kolo 13ej Promocji SPL	1977, 1979
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