

OBITUARY

Wojciech KRZEMIŃSKI

1926 – 1981

The community of geodesists and surveyors has suffered a considerable loss. On the 9—th April, 1981, after a short and unexpected illness passed away Wojciech KRZEMIŃSKI, our good colleague, Secretary of the Polish National Committee of Geodesy and Geophysics, and Assistant Secretary General of the International Association of Geodesy.



Wojciech KRZEMIŃSKI was born in 1926 in Warsaw as a son of a bank official. He completed his secondary education in conspiracy, during the Nazi occupation in Poland, when normal Polish schools had been closed by the invader. At the same time, already as a boy of fifteen he joined the Boy Scout military formation in the underground resistance movement. He took part in the Warsaw Insurrection of 1944 and, heavily wounded, was taken prisoner by the Germans. Liberated by Allied Forces in 1945, he remained a certain time in Germany, and then joined the Polish Army Forces in Italy and Great-Britain. In 1947 he was back to Poland. He became a student of the Faculty of Geodesy and Cartography at the Warsaw Technical University. In 1952 he completed his studies, and was graduated as Master of Geodetic Sciences.

The beginning of his professional activities is associated with the Institute of Geodesy and Cartography in Warsaw, where he started to work even before leaving the University. At the first stage he devoted himself to the task of carrying on geomagnetic measurements and preparing magnetic maps of Poland. This was connected with the establishment and permanent updating of basic networks of fundamental magnetic points, including linking of the Polish magnetic observatories with fundamental observatories of Europe.

Wojciech KRZEMIŃSKI's interests concerned also the problems related to the fundamental national geodetic networks. In his endeavours after the modernization of the national triangulation net of the country, he went in for the uniformity of the length scale by establishing the national length base determined, among other methods, by Väisälä apparatus; carrying on studies and attestation of the EDM equipment, making metrologic laboratory achieve a high scientific level, and finally taking part in elaborating and bringing into effect the programme of modernization of the geodetic horizontal fundamental network. At the same time he turned his attention to the imperfection of the comparison system of precise levelling rods, and has discovered a considerable influence of the errors resulting from that comparison on the results of measurements. Eventually, in cooperation with the Institute of Geodesy and Geodetic Astronomy of the Warsaw Technical University, a new instrumentation had been created for the purpose of comparing levelling rods in horizontal position.

Another passion of Wojciech KRZEMIŃSKI's life were polar explorations. Already in 1958, as a young scientist he headed the first Polish Antarctic expedition, which led to establishing on the Antarctic Continent the A.B. Dobrowolski Polar Station, and had included Poland among the Antarctica exploring countries. The last years of his life were entirely devoted to polar expeditions: in 1978 he commands a new and a much more important Antarctic campaign, and in 1981 he already organizes a next one. This work has been interrupted by the unexpected illness and death.

Wojciech KRZEMIŃSKI carried on an extensive didactic and training activity. As early as from 1954 on he already lectured Terrestrial Magnetism at the Faculty of Geodesy and Cartography. Furthermore, he carried on the theoretical and practical training in the field of geomagnetic measurements, electromagnetic measurements of distances, geodetic metrology, and other disciplines. Thanks to the vivid mind, he was able to master various domains of geodesy to such a degree that he could easily transmit his knowledge to the other colleagues. He was particularly interested in the history of geodesy and cartography in Poland. As an active member of the Association of Polish Geodesists he cooperated with the Museum of Technics in Warsaw, organizing historical exhibitions concerning various fields of geodesy and cartography. They were usually connected with scientific sessions.

He took an active part in the general Polish scientific movement as a member of the Committee of Geodesy and National Committee of Geodesy and Geophysics of the Polish Academy of Sciences, where he became Scientific Secretary. He also belonged to other scientific societies related to geodesy and polar research.

Wojciech KRZEMIŃSKI's international activity started in 1957. At the first stage he acted within the frame of the International Geophysical Year and then of the International Geophysical Cooperation of the Eurasian Region. He is called upon to the post of Scientific Secretary of the International Commission for Cooperation of the Academies of Sciences of Socialist Countries "Planetary Geophysics Research", taking also part in several other forms of international cooperation. The year 1968 is the beginning of his collaboration with the International Association of Geodesy. He participates in many symposia and scientific conferences, represents Poland at the General Assemblies of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics. His official pronouncements are characterized by determination and sobriety. He has a great ability of entering into contact with confrères from different countries. All this is rewarded by general appreciation and popularity in international circles. He holds the post of the Secretary of the Section I of the International Association of Geodesy, and then is elected to the post of the Assistant Secretary General of the I.A.G. He becomes also the representative of Poland to the Geodetic and Cartographic Commission SCAR.

In acknowledgment of his scientific and organizing activity Wojciech KRZEMIŃSKI is granted the degree of Assistant Professor in 1962. For his merits he received several orders and distinctions, as well as numerous prizes awarded by Polish State and scientific organisations.

