

Greater Poland Uprising 1918-1919

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The Day Orders of the Central Command for the Armed Forces in the Former Prussian Partition

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This is the basic document of the highest military authorities of the insurgent forces and the Greater Poland Army in the year 1919, which contained its orders. The issuance of Day Orders by Central Command was an important accent which made the newly appointed supreme authorities of the formed army more credible and later on was one of the basic management activities of Central Command. The Day Orders of Central Command were the second most important official document after the Tygodnik Urzędowy Naczelnej Rady Ludowej [Official Journal of the Supreme People's Council]. In

principal systemic issues, the orders were a reprint of all decisions of the Supreme People's Council regarding the army as well as the content of promotion decrees. The day orders were also the basic source of official information about the operations of the Greater Poland Army.

The first order (with a circulation of about 50 copies) was issued on 5 January 1919, in duplicate and lithographical form and was distributed to all the divisions of Central Command, the commandant's headquarters in the city and the troops stationed in Poznań and in poviats police headquarters. Owing to great demand, it was additionally printed typographically. With time, starting with order No. 38 (11 February 1919), the list of recipients was extended significantly by military offices. In line units up to the level of battalion; even still in 1919, several copies of the document were sent to the General Staff of the Polish Army in Warsaw and the Supreme Command of the Polish Army. In September 1919, the circulation of the Day Orders of Central Command was about 2000 copies, distributed according to a regularly updated distribution list. Sometimes, however, there was a deficiency of copies of the day orders, and then, depending on the circumstances and needs in the respective units, the orders or their excerpts were rewritten using a typewriter. Annexes were distributed according to a separate distribution list, taking into account the adjustment of their subjects to the recipient. The document was treated as secret, though it did not contain any clause to this effect on any page. It was supposed to be kept locked up and could be

made available only to authorised persons who, in turn, made the necessary copies required by commanders of lower ranks. It was prohibited to take the orders of Central Command to the front-line. The Day Orders of Central Command were prepared by Division IIa, based on materials received from the Divisions and offices of Central Command, afterwards they were analysed by the head of staff, taking into account the guidelines of the Chief Commander. They were signed by the Commander-in-Chief with the countersignature of the head of staff of Central Command or the officer who was acting as a substitute, to confirm their compliance. Later this post was taken by General J. Dowbor-Muśnicki. The day orders were prepared on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays before noon.

The day orders with consecutive numbers were issued from 5 January till 13 November 1919; in total their number reached 249 and their volume covered from 1 to several pages. In time, three Order Departments were established on a permanent basis. I - Organisational-Operational Department, II - Personnel Department and III - General Department. As integration with the Polish Army progressed, the day orders took into consideration the centrally applicable orders and ordinances of the Polish Army. In October and November 1919, 2 officer orders were issued. Depending on the time, the name of the authority that issued a given order varied and starting from order No. 202 (27 July 1919), a new vignette of the publication which included the state eagle was introduced, making the document resemble the Journal of Military Orders of the Supreme

Command of the Polish Armies; also, the principle of the issuance of Day Orders on a daily basis was abandoned. Furthermore, the departments were subject to modification and the scope of the subjects with which the orders dealt was gradually extended. In the beginning, the external form of the Day Orders varied in terms of graphics, typography and language. Also the paper, font and format of the document varied in the majority of cases; the office format popular at that time (about 34 x 21 cm) was used, which would correspond to the current extended A4 format. This also refers to the numerous annexes which included detailed documentation, regulations and proclamations, etc., not always registered in the main part of the order, and as a result of this, full sets of the orders of Central Command, with all annexes in the known library and archival collections in Poland are missing. The Day Orders of Central Command were first printed in Ludwik Kapela's Printing House and then in the Central Command Printing House in Poznań. Also at that time, the orders were re-edited and reprinted, sometimes using a different font and a slightly different layout of text on the page, which, in turn, followed from the difference in the size of the font. A certain number of orders, including order No. 32 dated 5 February 1919, came from the Printing House of Bolesław Winiewicz.

