

## Subject Guides

# Alliance College Polish Collection

### *A Short History of the Collection:*

The Polish National Alliance [PNA], the largest Polish fraternal organization in the US, founded Alliance College in 1912 “to provide opportunities for Americans of Polish descent to learn about the mother country, its culture, history, and language.” The college was located in Cambridge Springs, PA until the PNA was forced by declining enrollments to close it in 1987.

Alliance College's Polish collection was developed systematically using both purchase and exchange, and was periodically evaluated by scholars and librarians from Poland. It was also the recipient of various grants and a substantial number of gifts from Polish Americans. By the end, the collection had grown to approximately 35,000 cataloged and 15,000 uncataloged volumes. The material is primarily in Polish, and is particularly strong in Polish language and literature, history, and the Polish experience in the United States. Also included are Polish music, art, folklore, science, economics, sociology, government, and foreign relations.

The PNA presented the Alliance College Polish Collection to the University of Pittsburgh in 1991, when the campus was sold to the state of Pennsylvania. Pitt was chosen as the recipient of the collection because of its reputation as a leader in the teaching and fostering of the Polish language, literature and culture. The ease of access to the collection by scholars and the large Pittsburgh-area Polish community was also considered by the PNA in their decision, as was the sentimental attachment of Alliance College to Western Pennsylvania.

Through the generosity of the Polish American Community (both organizations--especially the Polish National Alliance and the Kosciuszko Foundation--and individuals), the Social Sciences Research Council, and the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Russian and East European Studies, Pitt has already cataloged and added to PITTcat, its shelves, and the national OCLC database over 14,000 books, journals and magazines from the Alliance collection.

### *Locating Materials from The Polish Alliance Collection:*

If you are looking for a particular author, title, or subject, check PITTcat. Most of the Alliance books, as well as other material from and about Poland, are already in Pitt's library stacks. If you do *not* find what you are looking for, see the final item below. If you would simply like to get an idea what is in the collection, you can create a list of 10,000 of the Alliance books and journals by entering the following keyword search ("keyword anywhere") in PITTcat — PNA **Note:** *This search produces a few items that are not in the Alliance collection, too.*

If you need additional material which *might* be in the Alliance collection, but which has not yet been entered into PITTcat, you can check the Alliance's own card catalog of the collection, which is located on the 2nd floor, just outside room 207. **Note:** *The Alliance catalog does not reflect current holdings in Pitt libraries. Many call numbers have been changed. We have acquired thousands of additional Polish books since the catalog was created. A portion of the books listed in the catalog are waiting in our climate-controlled off-campus facility until they can be cataloged and entered into PITTcat. For an accurate listing of material in ULS libraries and its location, see PITTcat.*

***Browsing the Collection:***

For the benefit of researchers we have not separated Alliance material from the rest of our Polish collection. The most Alliance books will be found in Hillman on the 4th floor in the call number range PG6000-PG7904 (Polish language and literature), and on the 3rd floor in DK4000-DK5706 or DK400-DK449 (history of Poland). You might also like to look at the huge, ongoing biographical dictionary *Polski słownik biograficzny* in the Reference Collection on the ground floor at CT1230.P65 1935.

*For access to material not in PITTCat or for research assistance, contact the Slavic Bibliographer through the Information Desk.*

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