



Exercise 9

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KRAKOW BOOK OF DRAGGERS FROM 1840



Postcard with Lajkonik
painter: Anna Gramatyka-Ostrowska
ANK, Appreciation Society
of Krakow's History and Monuments,
ref. no. 29/562/95

The book includes a recipe for attire and order (...) repelling the attack of the Tatars, by the Krakow Draggars; with the name "Zwierzyniecki Horse" celebrated annually.

We can read in it: the aim of the rider is to frolic and the constant chasing away of attackers and flushing out of common people; the left hand holding the reins and tugging, shaking the head of the steed and moving the bells; while the right hand waves a staff (...).

The fragment published in the exercise contains, however, a description of the horse on which the rider performs the said frolics.

Organization of the Lajkonik procession, probably from the beginning of the tradition, was handled by the Krakow Guild of Draggars (they were raftsmen trading in wood, dealing also with its transport along the river, which is where their name originates – from "dragging" wood along the river).

According to legend, it was the draggars who in the 13th century repelled the attack of the Tatars on Kraków, and the victory procession, dressed in victorious clothing, was the beginning of this tradition.

ANK, Krakow Town Records, ref. no. Rkps 3163

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