Wife's Suggestion Spurs Librarian to Compile Lexicon

By LINDA FARFEL

Thresher Staff

Twenty years ago the Nazi Army invaded Poland. At this time Dr. Casimir Bulas, present acquisitions research librarian at Rice, was teaching archaeology at the University of Krakow. He was arrested along with the rest of the university staff and deported to a small town near Berlin. The next year he was returned to Krakow to find all the schools closed by the Nazis.

In 1940, at the suggestion of his wife, Dr. Bulas began the monumental and essential work of completing the first Polish-English dictionary. The English used was based on British sources; and in 1949 the work was completed with complete correspondence between the Polish-English and English-Polish sections.

In Collaboration

In 1951 Dr. Bulas came to America, and in September of the following year, to Rice. For the next eight years he worked in collaboration with Dr. Francis J. Whitfield, professor of Slavic Languages at the University of California. Together, with the aid of innumerable specialists in different fields, they incorporated American slang, poetic words, and technical words from zoology, physics, chemistry, etc. into the dictionary.

Differentiation between British and American words was made; and colloquialisms and archaic expressions, included. The dictionary had to be checked and re-checked, copied and re-copied. Finally the first copy appeared in August 1959.

By Kosciuszko Foundation

Dr. Bulas was asked by the Kosciuszko Foundation to publish his dictionary for the Polish Millennium Series. This commemorates 1000 years of Christianity in Poland and Polish civilization.

This month the Kosciuszko Foundation published several reviews of the dictionary from Polish scholars. The following are typical enthusiastic tributes to this monumental accomplishment:

"We regard this Dictionary as the most outstanding scholarly achievement in the field of English and Polish languages. "We have not had here in Poland such a scholarly and extensive dictionary."

The second volume is expected to appear during the forthcoming year.