



## The Polish Soldier Migrant Project



In 1947 and 1948 Australia accepted a very specific Polish migrant. Over 1,500 former members of the Polish military based in the United Kingdom arrived in Australia aboard the “Asturias” and the “Strathnaver”. These men represented various military services including the Carpathian Brigade, the Air Force, Armoured Division and the Second Corps. A sizeable number worked on the Hydro-Electric Scheme in Tasmania; but many were sent to various parts of Australia. These men were vital to the establishment of Polish community structures in the following decades. They also represent a significant prelude to the massive post-war Polish migration from the displaced persons camps scattered throughout Western Europe.

The Polish Museum and Archives in Australia is seeking to document this unique group of Polish soldier migrants in the form of a publication and is currently conducting research.

## POLISH SOLDIERS FOR AUSTRALIA

Among the 1452 passengers who will go from London to Australia by the Asturias will be 280 Polish ex-servicemen, all of whom fought at Tobruk with the Australians, and are members of the Rats of Tobruk Association.

They have been specially selected in Britain to work on the Tasmanian hydro-electric scheme.

The Poles will travel as a military unit under a British major, and will be discharged on their arrival in Australia. They will be admitted under certificates of exemption for two years, one condition being that they remain in the hydro-electric commission's employ for that period. Thereafter they can be re-employed and granted the necessary authority to remain permanently in Australia.

### POLES ON TRIAL.

If this experiment succeeds, further batches of Poles may be brought to Australia, particularly for work on the re-building of Darwin.

Other passengers by the Asturias will include 170 returning businessmen, wives and fiancées, 56 persons coming out as industrial nominees, 796 free and assisted migrants, and 100 child migrants.

The two last-mentioned classes are all bound for Western Australia.

The Asturias leaves Southampton on August 29.



If you can assist with documents, photographs or oral history, please contact

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