

CAVALRY UNIT OF JAN BUCZACKI FROM THE YEAR 1501

Summary. This article considers the offensive and defensive armament, organisational structure, and condition of horses in the King of Poland's 200-horse mercenary company under the command of rittmeister (*rotmistrz*) Jan Buczacki in 1501. As a part of the permanent defence system (*obrona potoczna*), this company was stationed in the territory of the Kingdom of Poland's Ruthenian Lands in order to protect the lives and property of the local residents from the military threats of Tatar and Moldavian forces. The article presents the results of a source study and a statistical analysis of a part of a hand-written military registry from 1501, which is stored in the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw. In the registry records, 24 knights (men-at-arms, or companions – *towarzysze*), including the captain, were mentioned by their name or nickname, while the majority of the soldiers and squires remained anonymous. In total, the company comprised 171 men (including 24 knights and 2 military musicians) and 29 squires. The records report that the company had 135 pieces of offensive armament (102 cross-bows, 30 lances, 3 matchlocks) and 174 pieces of defensive armament (28 full plate knights' armours, 106 shooters' armours, 5 chain mails, a breastplate, a sallet helmet, an armet helmet, and a small shield – a buckler). According to the type of armaments, the soldiers of the unit can be divided into four categories: heavy lancers (*kopijnicy*), arbalists, demi-lancers (*półkopijnik*), and swordsmen. In addition, the registry includes detailed records describing the company's horses, which were classified as either spearman or shooters' horses. In particular, there were 56 heavy lancers' horses, 137 shooters' horses, and 7 horses belonging to neither of those categories.

Keywords: Kingdom of Poland, Ruthenia, Podolia, arms, armour, mercenaries, cavalry, Jan Buczacki

The primary source for learning about the structure and armament of the permanent defence (*obrona potoczna*) troops are the manuscripts stored in the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, in the Archives of the Crown Treasury section, division 85 of the Enlistment inventories of the Crown Army. These are mainly inspection records written down by royal scribes when accepting men into service or extending service for the next quarter for enlisted troops. The source basis for the study is a register of a 200-horse

unit (*rota*) of enlisted cavalry under the command of *wojewodycz Johannes* from 1501.¹

The army serving in the Ruthenian Lands of the Kingdom of Poland has been the subject of interest for a large group of historians. The first to take up the subject in their research were Konstanty Górski,² Tadeusz Korzon,³ and Ludwik Kolankowski.⁴ Marek Plewczyński,⁵ Tadeusz Grabarczyk,⁶ and Aleksander Bołdyrew⁷ also dealt with this issue. Classical works on weaponry by Wendelin Boeheim,⁸ Edward Oakeshott⁹ and, above all, studies by Polish researchers, including Zdzisław Żygulski junior,¹⁰ Jan Szymczak,¹¹ Marian Głosek,¹² and

¹ The Central Archives of Historical Records, Archives of the Crown Treasury, Division 85, Rejestry popisowe wojska koronnego (Enlistment inventories of the Crown Army), sign. 5, c. 2–12 (hereinafter: CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5).

² K. GÓRSKI, *Historia piechoty polskiej*, Kraków 1893; IDEM, *Historia Jazdy Polskiej*, Kraków 1894.

³ *Vide*: T. KORZON, *Dzieje wojen i wojskowości w Polsce*, vol. 1, Lwów–Warszawa–Kraków 1923.

⁴ L. KOLANKOWSKI, *Roty koronne na Rusi i Podolu 1492–1572*, „Ziemia Czerwieńska” 1935, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 141–174.

⁵ M. PLEWCZYŃSKI, *Wojny Jagiellonów z wschodnimi i południowymi sąsiadami Królestwa Polskiego w XV wieku*, Siedlce 2002; IDEM, *Wojny i wojskowość polska w XVI wieku*, vol. 1, Zabrze 2011.

⁶ T. GRABARCZYK, *Piechota zaciężna Królestwa Polskiego w XV wieku*, Łódź 2000; IDEM, „Po raku, po husarsku, z przyprawą tatarską” – początki przemian wojskowości polskiej u schyłku XV w., [in:] *In tempore belli et pacis. Ludzie – Miejsca – Przedmioty*, eds. T. GRABARCZYK, A. KOWALSKA-PIETRZAK, T. NOWAK, Warszawa 2011, pp. 117–128; IDEM, *Udział wojsk zaciężnych w obronie południowo-wschodnich kresów Królestwa Polskiego w latach 1499–1500*, [in:] *Kresy, granice i pogranicza w historii wojskowej*, ed. A. OLEJKO, Rzeszów 2014, pp. 402–412; IDEM, *Jazda zaciężna Królestwa Polskiego w XV wieku*, Łódź 2015.

⁷ A. BOLDYREW, *Produkcja i koszty uzbrojenia w Polsce w XVI wieku*, Warszawa 2005; IDEM, *Piechota zaciężna w Polsce w pierwszej połowie XVI wieku*, Warszawa 2011; IDEM, *Equus Polonus: koń w wojsku polskim w XVI wieku*, Piotrków Trybunalski 2016.

⁸ In preparing the article, I used the Russian edition of W. Boeheim's work, *Handbuch der Waffenkunde* (Leipzig, 1890). *Vide*: В. БЕХАЙМ, *Энциклопедия оружия*, пер. А. ДЕВЕЛЬ, ред. А. КИРПИЧНИКОВ, Санкт-Петербург 1995.

⁹ In preparing the article, I used the Russian edition of E. Oakeshott's works. *Vide*: Э. ОКШОТТ, *Оружие и воинские доспехи Европы. С древних времен до конца Средневековья*, пер. Л. ИГОРЕВСКИЙ, Москва 2009.

¹⁰ Z. ŻYGULSKI, *Broń w dawnej Polsce na tle uzbrojenia Europy i Bliskiego Wschodu*, Warszawa 1982.

¹¹ J. SZYMCHAK, *Produkcja i koszty uzbrojenia rycerskiego w Polsce XIII–XV w.*, Łódź 1989; IDEM, *Początki broni palnej w Polsce (1383–1533)*, Łódź 2004; IDEM, *Rycerz w hełmie, w zbroi i z tarczą*, Warszawa 2016; IDEM, *Rycerz z bronią zaczepną*, Warszawa 2017; IDEM, *Rycerz i jego konie*, Warszawa 2018.

¹² M. GŁOSEK, *Miecze środkowoeuropejskie z X–XV w.*, Warszawa 1984; IDEM, *Broń biała*, [in:] *Uzbrojenie w Polsce średniowiecznej 1450–1500*, ed. A. NOWAKOWSKI, Toruń 2003 (hereinafter: UWPS), pp. 23–40; IDEM, *Broń drzewcowa i obuchowa*, [in:] UWPS, pp. 40–52.

Włodzimierz Kwaśniewicz,¹³ as well as a collective work edited by Andrzej Nowakowski on weaponry in Poland in the years 1450–1500, were helpful in analysing the armament of soldiers from Jan Buczacki's rota.¹⁴

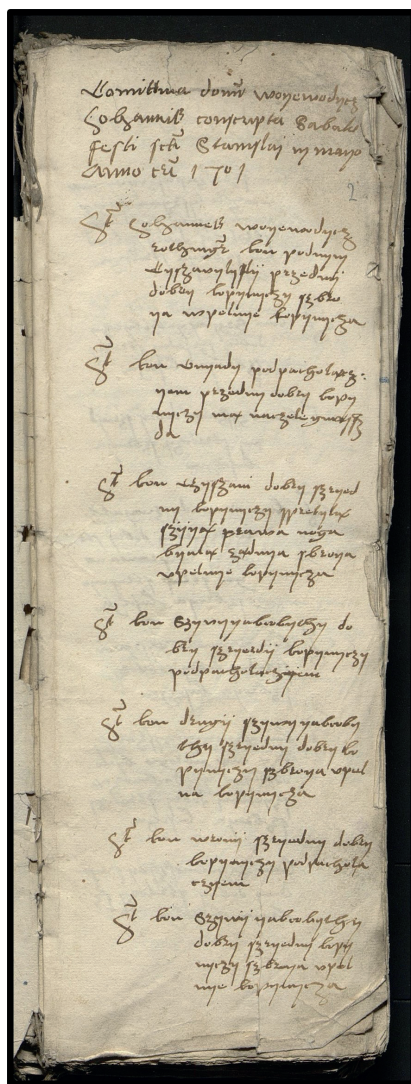


Fig. 1. The first page of the enlistment inventories of Jan Buczacki's *rota*
(Source: CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 2)

¹³ W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon dawnego uzbrojenia ochronnego*, Warszawa 2005.

¹⁴ *Uzbrojenie w Polsce średniowiecznej 1450–1500*, ed. A. NOWAKOWSKI, Toruń 2003.

In 1500, the Crimean Tatars, inspired by Moscow, twice carried out heavy raids on the Crown Lands. In order to counteract such occurrences in the following year, on 13 April 1501, Stanisław of Chodecz was appointed the new general starost of Ruthenia, replacing the discredited Piotr Myszkowski. To defend the borders, 200 footmen soldiers and 2,150 cavalry were then recruited, divided into 13 units or *rotas*. One of them, which was commanded – as noted by the scribe who drew up the register – by *wojewodycz Johannes*, will be discussed in this paper.

Firstly, we should clarify who the '*wojewodycz Johannes*' commanding this unit was. The answer to the question of the identity of the above-mentioned commander was given by L. Kolankowski in 1935. Kolankowski established that he was Jan, son of Jakub Buczacki (1430/1438–1501), Voivode of Podolia (1485–1497) and Ruthenia (1499–1501). The Buczacki family was called by Vitalii Mykhaylovskiy 'the uncrowned rulers of Podolia'.¹⁵ Jan Andrzej Buczacki (d. 1509) of the Abdank coat of arms, was a crown dapifer (*podczaszy*), starost of Międzybórz and Rawa. Jan spent his youth as a royal courtier. His name was mentioned more than once on the pages of the registers of the royal court banner. Together with his brother Jakub (d. 1541) he was a student at the University of Kraków. On 14 June 1497, in Lviv, before marching to Moldavia, King Jan Olbracht granted Buczacki a number of estates in the Halych region.¹⁶ He took part in the 1497 Moldavian expedition as a royal courtier. From 1501 onwards, he served as a rittmeister in the permanent defence. In 1502, he fought against the Tatars in Lithuania and defeated a strong Tatar detachment near Bobruysk. In 1503, he took part in Piotr Myszkowski's envoy to Moscow. In 1508, he represented the king's interests in Lithuania in connection with Prince Michał Gliński's uprising (1467–1534). In 1509, he was a member of an envoy to Hungary and Turkey. While on his way back, he died suddenly in Timișoara, where he was buried.¹⁷

¹⁵ В. МИХАЙЛОВСЬКИЙ, *Еластична спільнота. Подільська шляхта в другій половині XIV – 70-х роках XVI ст.*, Київ 2012, pp. 117.

¹⁶ „villas Monasterczani, Chothkowo, Czerniew, Chomykow et Jabloncza, terrae Haliciensis”, CAHR, Crown Metric (Metryka Koronna), sign. 16 (hereinafter: CAHR, CM), c. 66; *Matricularum Regni Poloniae summaria, excussis codicibus, qui in Chartophylacio Maximo Varsoviensi asservantur*, part 2, ed. T. WIERZBOWSKI, Varsoviae 1907, no. 742 (hereinafter: MRPS).

¹⁷ B. СТАХОЊ, *Buczacki Jan Andrzej*, [in:] *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 3, Kraków 1937, p. 84; В. МИХАЙЛОВСЬКИЙ, *op. cit.*, pp. 117, 124–126, 170; T. KORZON, *op. cit.*, pp. 232, 251, 361; J. KAŁUŻNY, *Chorągiew nadworna królów Polski w latach 1447–1501*, PhD thesis written under the supervision of Professor T. Grabarczyk, Łódź 2021, pp. 169, 170, 237, 332, 422.

Jan Buczacki started his preparations for service in 1501 on 27 March when, while staying in Kraków, he received a letter of command (the so-called *litterae indemnitis*) that allowed him to begin forming a 200-horse cavalry unit.¹⁸ The recruited unit reported for inspection on 8 May 1501 and was probably enlisted for duty near Lviv.¹⁹ According to the register drawn up at the time, rittmeister Buczacki served in full heavy lancer's armour, rode a good heavy lancer's horse, and appeared at the head of a 40-horse retinue, testifying to his wealth. The commander had 2 soldier-signallers at his disposal: a trumpeter (*pyszcze*) and a drummer (*bałewnik*), both listed in shooter's armour.²⁰ Large 12-horse retinues were led by Podlodowski (name unrecorded), Piotr Umiński, Kacper Maciejowski) while others, such as Mikołaj Szramek, presented as few as one shooter.²¹ In total, the company comprised 171 servicemen (including 24 knights and 147 ordinary soldiers, including 2 military musicians) in addition to 29 squires.

Table 1

Membership of Jan Buczacki's *rota*

No.	Companion	Category	Number of soldiers in the retinue	Knights	Squires	Folio
1	Jan Buczacki	heavy lancer	40	36	4	c. 2
2	Podlodowski	heavy lancer	10	9	1	c. 4
3	Umiński Piotr	heavy lancer	11	9	2	c. 4v
4	Maciejowski Kacper	heavy lancer	11	9	2	c. 5v
5	Dołuski Jan	heavy lancer	9	7	2	c. 6– 6v
6	Dołuski Stanisław	heavy lancer	9	7	2	c. 7v

¹⁸ CAHR, CM, sign. 19, c. 20; MPRS, part 2, no. 1465.

¹⁹ As A. Boldyrew rightly pointed out, it is most likely that the inspection of all 13 troops was carried out by one person. Perhaps the vetting of the *rota* in question was carried out by Stanisław Chodecki, starost of Lviv, whose name can be found in the title of Piotr Oleski's description of the unit (CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 103) from 1501. On this basis, it can be concluded that Buczacki's *rota*, like the rest of the troops, may have been recorded in the vicinity of Lviv.

²⁰ CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 3.

²¹ CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 2–4, 4–6, 10v.

Table 1 (cont.)

No.	Companion	Category	Number of soldiers in the retinue	Knights	Squires	Folio
7	Orzechowski Jan	heavy lancer	7	6	1	c. 7v
8	Kartkowski	heavy lancer	4	3	1	c. 7v
9	Jaromirski Marcin	heavy lancer	7	6	1	c. 8
10	Jaromirski Ambroży	heavy lancer	4	3	1	c. 8v
11	Zborowski Dawid*	heavy lancer	7	6	1	c. 8v
12	Ścibor	heavy lancer	5	4	1	c. 9
13	Mikołaj, standard-bearer	heavy lancer	5	4	1	c. 9
14	Borański (Dorański) Piotr	heavy lancer	5	4	1	c. 9v
15	Piwko Mikołaj	heavy lancer	7	6	1	c. 10
16	Stanisławski Kacper	heavy lancer	4	3	1	c. 10
17	Szramek Mikołaj	arbalist	1	1	0	c. 10v
18	Izdebski Paweł	arbalist	2	2	0	c. 10v
19	Borzynowski Piotr	arbalist	2	2	0	c. 11
20	Krzyżanowski Stanisław	arbalist	2	2	0	c. 11
21	Mylakowski Mikołaj	arbalist	3	2	1	c. 11
22	Słupski Martin	heavy lancer	9	8	1	c. 11v
23	Boratyński Jan	heavy lancer	7	6	1	c. 11v
24	Trepka Jan	heavy lancer	6	5	1	c. 12

* Szboronski David. CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 8v.

Source: Own compilation based on CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 2–12v.

At the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century, enlisted cavalry units were usually divided into two basic categories of horsemen: heavy lancers and arbalists. However, the armament of some of the men in Buczacki's *rota* does not allow them to be unequivocally described as heavy lancers or arbalists. We find the division presented by Jan Ostroróg, the Voivode of Poznań (1436–1501), in his work *Memoriał o urządzeniu Rzeczypospolitej* [*The Memorandum on the Organisation of the Republic*] of 1477 useful when classifying the horsemen. Ostroróg proposed the following categories of soldiers in cavalry units based on their armament: heavy lancers (*hastarii*), demi-lancers (*semihastarii*),

arbalists (*saggitarii*), and swordsmen (*gladiatores*).²² These categories of horsemen were also found in the enlisted cavalry.

Table 2

Armament in Jan Buczacki's *rota*

Offensive armament			Protective armament							
Ranged weapon		Pole weapon	Set of armour			Torso protection		Helmets		Shields
Crossbow	Handgonne	Lightweight lance	Heavy lancer's full armour	Heavy lancer's armour	Shooter's armour	Chain mail	Breastplate	Armet helmet	Sallet helmet	Buckler
102	3	30	6	22	137	5	1	1	1	1

Source: Own compilation based on CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 2–12v.

The core of the *rota* was heavy lancers – 29 (16.96%) such knights served in the unit. Six soldiers wore armour described as *zupelnya kopynycza* (full heavy lancer's armour), and 22 *kopynycze* (heavy lancer's armour).²³ These were full plate armours typical of heavy-armed knightly cavalry. The neck and upper torso were protected by a gorget consisting of two plates and a neck guard. The knight's torso was protected by a cuirass that consisted of two parts: the upper part, which included the *plach*, i.e., a breastplate with a lance-rest (a hook for supporting the lance; French: *faukre*, German: *rüsthaken*) on the right side with a backplate, and the lower part with movable faulds (armour segments) and tassets. Protection for the arms (rerebraces) consisted of pauldrons, arm guards (besagues), couters with 'wings,' forearm guards (vambraces), and plate gauntlets. Chain mail sleeves or long-sleeved

²² J. OSTORÓG, *Memoriał w sprawie uporządkowania Rzeczypospolitej*, transl. A. OBRĘBSKI, Łódź 1994, p. 41; T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, p. 62.

²³ With caution, it can be assumed that the addition of the word *vpelnye* (i.e. complete) may have meant full plate armour, and simple *zsbroya kopynycza* may have meant half-armour, so-called $\frac{3}{4}$, i.e., without the greaves and plate sabatons.

mail shirts were also used.²⁴ The legs were protected by cuisses, poleyns, greaves, and plate sabatons with spurs. Underneath the armour, the knights wore arming doublets (Old Polish: *kabath*). In the mid-16th century, the price for an arming doublet ranged from 3 to 18 groschen.²⁵ The whole set of armour (together with the helmet) could cost from 21 to 50 florins. However, the compensation that enlisted men received for the loss of their armour at that time was only 9–10 florins.²⁶

It is not known what type of helmets were used by Buczacki's heavy lancers. It is most likely that these were sallet helmets which were popular at the end of the Middle Ages, possibly worn with a high bevor.²⁷ It is also possible that the heavy lancers also wore closed helmets with visors (armet helmets).²⁸

The source says nothing about the offensive armament of the heavy lancers. We can only assume that each such horseman must have been equipped with a lance and a sword. In the 15th century, lances were 3.8–4 m long on average, often decorated with paint and coloured pennants with tassels.²⁹

Most of the soldiers in Buczacki's *rota* were arbalists. 105 (61.4%) arbalists were serving in this unit at the time, of whom 102 were armed with crossbows. The price of a crossbow was about 2 florins, but the enlisted men were compensated only 1 florin

²⁴ T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, pp. 110–112; P. KLUČINA, *Zbroj a zbraně: Evropa 6. – 17. století*, Praha–Litomyšl 2004, pp. 18–17.

²⁵ J. SZYMCAK, *Rycerz w hełmie, w zbroi i z tarczą*, Warszawa 2016, pp. 116–126; T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, pp. 97, 113–114; W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon dawnego uzbrojenia ochronnego*, Warszawa 2005, pp. 31, 134.

²⁶ T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, pp. 86–87; IDEM, *Piechota zaciężna Królestwa Polskiego w XV wieku*, Łódź 2000, pp. 156–60; A. BOŁDYREW, *Piechota zaciężna w Polsce w pierwszej połowie XVI wieku*, Warszawa 2011, pp. 246–248; W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon...*, p. 154; A. SWARYCZEWSKI, *Platnerze krakowscy*, Warszawa–Kraków 1987, pp. 23–26; J. SZYMCAK, *Rycerz w hełmie...*, pp. 65–66.

²⁷ A. NOWAKOWSKI, *Uzbrojenie ochronne*, [in:] UWPS, pp. 75–109, pp. 75–76.

²⁸ More on this topic in: W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon...*, pp. 8, 22, 95, 134; P. KLUČINA, *Zbroj...*, pp. 372–374; A. NOWAKOWSKI, *Uzbrojenie...*, pp. 75, 78–79; Э. ОКШОТТ, *Оружие и воинские доспехи Европы. С древних времен до конца Средневековья*, пер. Л. ИГОРЕВСКИЙ, Москва 2009, p. 437; T. GRABARCZYK, *Piechota...*, pp. 92–93; IDEM, *Jazda...*, p. 93; IDEM, *Шлемы наемников в польском войске второй половины XV в.*, [in:] *История военного костюма: от древнего мира до наших дней. Материалы Международной военно-исторической конференции 19 ноября 2015 г.*, ред. А. АРАНОВИЧ, Д. АЛЕКСЕЕВ, Санкт-Петербург 2016, pp. 88–90; A. BOŁDYREW, *Produkcja...*, p. 109; J. SZYMCAK, *Rycerz w hełmie...*, p. 66; Z. ŻYGULSKI, *Broń w dawnej Polsce na tle uzbrojenia Europy i Bliskiego Wschodu*, Warszawa 1982, pp. 101–103, 148.

²⁹ T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, p. 80; M. GŁOSEK, *Broń drzewcowa i obuchowa*, pp. 43–44; M. PLEWCZYŃSKI, *Wojny i wojskowość...*, vol. 1, pp. 48–49; W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon...*, p. 31; J. SZYMCAK, *Rycerz z bronią zaczepną*, Warszawa 2017, pp. 82–89; Z. ŻYGULSKI, *Broń...*, p. 112.

if they lost it.³⁰ Three shooters in Buczacki's *rota* were armed with firearms. Like the foot soldiers at the time, they used handgonnes (*rucznyca*). In Poland, gunmen in mounted troops were first recorded in 1497, but as the register of Buczacki's *rota* shows, this type of weapon was still not very popular in the case of cavalry units.³¹

Riders armed with firearms also wore armour, which was referred to in the register as 'arbalist's armour.' Jan Ostroróg wrote that every arbalist should have '*galeam, loricam et bombardam vel balistam cum viginti sagittis*.'³² A set of shooter's armour would have consisted of components that did not interfere with the soldier's use of the crossbow and would have given a wide field of vision. Compensation for the loss of such armour in 1471 was 90 groschen. For such a sum, it was possible to purchase a sallet helmet (30 groschen) together with chain mail (60 groschen). At the end of the 15th century, shooter's armour should have consisted of at least a helmet (sallet or kettle hat), cuirass or chain mail, gorget, and possibly also tassets and chain mail sleeves.³³

As mentioned above, the unit also had three handgonnes at its disposal. The first belonged to a soldier from the rittermastser's retinue; the other two were in the retinues of Podlódowski and Jan Trepka, respectively. The soldiers with the handgonnes wore shooter's armours and rode shooter's horses (Polish: *koń strzelczy*)³⁴ – the same as men equipped with crossbows.³⁵ The handgonnes of the time were long-barrelled firearms with a matchlock, a long barrel on a stock with a clearly marked butt. The average length of these weapons was 1–1.2 m, weight 10–15 kg, and calibre up to 15 mm. The barrels were made of iron or bronze. Handgonnes were fired with bullets made of lead, stone, or even glass.

³⁰ T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, pp. 81–83; P. KLUČINA, *Zbroj...*, pp. 52, 411–417; W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *1000 słów o broni białej i uzbrojeniu ochronnym*, Warszawa 1983, pp. 95–97; Z. WAWRZONOWSKA, *Broń strzelcza*, [in:] UWPS, pp. 55–60.

³¹ T. GRABARCZYK, "*Po racku...*", pp. 117–128; T. GRABARCZYK, *Hand Firearms in 15th-Century Poland. Why Did the Breakthrough Happen?*, „Fasciculi Archeologiae Historicae” 2021, vol. 34, pp. 102–121.

³² '*An arbalist [should have] a helmet, chain mail, and a bombard or a crossbow with twenty arrows*'. J. Ostroróg, *Memorial...*, p. 41; T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, p. 62.

³³ *Ibidem*, pp. 87–89; Т. ГРАБАРЧИК, *Шлемы...*, pp. 86–88.

³⁴ The term *koń strzelczy* – a shooter's horse – refers to a horse that is smaller than a lancer's horse and larger than the small horses used, for example, by Tartars or Cossacks. Shooters' horses were ridden by riders armed with crossbows, bows, and firearms, but also by riders who did not have ranged weapon, but had lighter protective armour, which distinguished them from the heavy-armed lancers.

³⁵ CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 3v, 4v, 12.

The firing speed of the handgonnes was low (about one shot every 10 minutes) and the effective range of fire was up to a hundred metres. Soldiers did not fire the handgonnes while on horseback, but on foot.³⁶

In Buczacki's *rota*, 30 soldiers were armed with lightweight lances (*drzewcze*) and wore shooter's armour. The exceptions were two horsemen, the first of whom served in chain mail with a shield-buckler, while the second served in a breastplate (*plach przedny*) and helmet (*sallet*).³⁷ This group can be referred to as 'demi-lancers.' It was probably this type of horsemen that J. Ostroróg called *semihastarii*. According to Jan Ostroróg, such a soldier should have 'an armet helmet (*przyłbica*), chain mail (*pancerz*), arming doublet (*kaftan*), gorget (*obojczyk*), and gauntlets (*rękawice*).'³⁸ The introduction of such equipped horsemen into the ranks of the enlisted cavalry was the forerunner of the so-called 'Rac reform,' in which light-armed *Rac* riders and hussars were to serve alongside the heavy-armed lancers and arbalists.³⁹ It is possible that one of the soldiers in the *rota* discussed in this paper was a hussar, i.e., equipped with a lightweight lance and (*drzewcze*) and a shield (buckler – *pucklarsz*). *Rotas* with a larger number of light-armed men were more mobile and better equipped to fight against opponents such as Tatars, Moldavians, or Turks.⁴⁰ It is worth noting that the percentage of demi-lancers (*semihastarii*) reached 17.54%, and together with the heavy lancers (16%) constituted a third of the unit.

The *drzewcze* mentioned in the register was a type of pole weapon similar to the lances used by hussars.⁴¹ Tadeusz Grabarczyk and Marek Plewczyński claim that it was a shorter version of the Hungarian hussar lance (about 3.5 m) which was hollow inside and had a ball ('knob') and a pennant. The price of these weapons averaged from 8 to 20 groschen, with *drzewcze* alone costing 6 groschen and

³⁶ J. SZYMCAK, *Początki broni palnej w Polsce (1383–1533)*, Łódź 2004, pp. 45, 99–100, 311–312, 315–316; T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, pp. 84–85; IDEM, *Piechota...*, pp. 143, 150–151; IDEM, *Hand Firearms...*, pp. 102–121; A. BOŁDYREW, *Piechota...*, pp. 222–223; M. MIELCZAREK, *Ręczna broń palna*, [in:] UWPS, pp. 64–65.

³⁷ CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 8v.

³⁸ J. OSTRORÓG, *Memoriał...*, p. 41; T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, p. 62.

³⁹ *Vide*: T. GRABARCZYK, "Po racku...", pp. 117–128.

⁴⁰ CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 4v, 6, 7, 8, 8v; *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku*, vol. 34: *Przyrabiać–P*, Warszawa 2010, p. 417; W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon...*, p. 98.

⁴¹ CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 34–42v. *Vide*: О. ГАНСЬКИЙ, *Озброєння і обладунки «затяжної» кінної роти Струся з 1501 р.*, [in:] *Історія давньої зброї. Дослідження 2020*, Київ 2023, pp. 194–196.

the hollow lightweight version 12 groschen or more. The cost of the spearhead was 2–6 groschen.⁴²

The armament of one demi-lancer was described as '*plach przedny lapka drzewcze*' (breastplate, sallet, lightweight lance).⁴³ This soldier from Ambroży Jaromirski's retinue was the only one whose recorded equipment included a breastplate (*plach przedny*),⁴⁴ and the only one listed with a helmet – *lapka* (sallet).⁴⁵

The discussed *rota* also included six soldiers (3.51% of the unit) that are recorded as having protective armour only. Three were listed with shooter's armour (two in the rittmeister's retinue, one in the retinue of Jan Dołuski), one in armour and an armet helmet (in Stanisław Dołuski's retinue), and the remaining two in armour only (in the retinues of Marcin Jaromirski and Kacper Mącznieniowski).⁴⁶ The term *panczersz* meant chain mail. Prices for this type of armour ranged between 42 and 96 groschen. In the event of the loss of chain mail, soldiers were compensated: in the 1470s, a distinction was made between a heavy lancer's chain mail, valued at 288 groschen, and an shooter's chain mail, priced at 192 groschen. However, from the late 15th century onwards enlisted soldiers were reimbursed less for lost chain mail, as low as 60 groschen.⁴⁷

The helmet noted on one soldier's equipment is a *przelbycza* (identified with an armet helmet). However, it is unlikely that a light rider equipped only with chain mail would have been wearing a heavy helmet with a visor. In the case of this soldier, the term 'visor' should be rather identified with a *misiurka* (прилибца, мисюрка-прилибца) known from Eastern Europe – a helmet consisting of a shallow skull and an attached coif of mail.⁴⁸

⁴² A. BOŁDYREW, *Produkcja...*, pp. 84–85; T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, pp. 80–81.

⁴³ CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 8v.

⁴⁴ W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon...*, p. 81; T. GRABARCZYK, *Piechota...*, p. 166; IDEM, *Jazda...*, pp. 104–105; A. BOŁDYREW, *Piechota...*, pp. 250–251.

⁴⁵ Э. ОКШОТТ, *Оружие...*, pp. 437–438; W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon...*, p. 103; P. KLUČINA, *Zbroj...*, pp. 376–377.

⁴⁶ CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 3v, 6–8.

⁴⁷ W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon...*, pp. 62–63; A. BOŁDYREW, *Produkcja...*, p. 107; T. GRABARCZYK, *Jazda...*, p. 100.

⁴⁸ А. БОЛДЫРЕВ, Т. ГРАБАРЧИК, *Ротмистр Александр Сенявский герба Лелива и его конная рота в 1557 году*, „Stratum Plus. Археология и культурная антропология” 2022, № 5, p. 432; IDEM, *Озброєння козацької роти Бернарда Претвича в 1557 році*, [in:] *Історія давньої зброї. Дослідження* 2020, Київ 2023, p. 83; T. GRABARCZYK, *Rota Mikołaja Sieniawskiego z 1557 roku*, „Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Archaeologica” 2021, no. 36, p. 349; О. ШИНДЛЕР, *Русские шлемы XVI века*,

We know nothing about the offensive armament of the above-mentioned soldiers. There are no crossbows recorded in their equipment, as in the case of the shooters equipped similarly in terms of protective armament. There is also no indication that they had pole weapons; however, it can be assumed *a priori* that each horseman must have had a sword or sabre. It can therefore be concluded that these six soldiers were so-called swordsmen (*gladiatores*, Polish: *mieczownicy*). They were mentioned by Ostroróg, according to whom this category of horsemen should be equipped with an armet helmet, shield, and sword.⁴⁹ Sword prices in the first half of the 16th century ranged between 20 and 30 groschen.⁵⁰

Table 3

Categories of riders in Jan Buczacki's *rota*

Category	Heavy lancers	Arbalists	Demi-lancers	Swordsmen
Number	28	105	30	6 (8)*
%	16.96	63	17.54	3.5 (4.7)*

* Including two signallers in shooter's armour.

Source: Own compilation based on CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 2–12v.

To give a complete picture of the *rota*, it is necessary to include information about the horses that belonged to rittmeister Buczacki's soldiers. The registry records 200 horses, of which 171 were ridden by soldiers and 29 by squires. The scribe's task was to describe the horse in such a way that it could be identified in the event of theft or swap. To this end, the animal's colouring (e.g. *szwyathlognyady*, *szwronaszywy*, *gorczyczathy*, *gnyady*) or distinctive features (*s byalą grzywy*, *gwiasda na czele*) were described in great detail. Information on their size was also recorded in the register. Horses are listed in the said register with the following terms: *rowny*, i.e., probably average, typical size (30 horses). In addition,

[in:] *История военного дела: исследования и источники*, т. 8, 2016, pp. 204–205, http://www.mil-hist.info/2016/05/10/schindler_3/ (access: 19 III 2023); W. KWAŚNIEWICZ, *Leksykon...*, p. 75.

⁴⁹ J. OSTORÓG, *Memoriał...*, p. 41.

⁵⁰ M. GŁOSEK, *Broń biała*, [in:] UWPS, pp. 25–32; A. BOŁDYREW, *Piechota...*, p. 196; T. GRABARCYK, *Piechota...*, pp. 113–114; M. PLEWCZYŃSKI, *Wojny...*, vol. 1, p. 56; Э. ОКШОТТ, *Оружие...*, pp. 214; Z. ŻYGULSKI, *Broń...*, p. 110.

medium-sized horses (87 horses) and small horses (24 horses) are mentioned. In the case of 61 shooters' horses, it was noted that they were geldings (30.5%).

The mounts were divided into two basic categories: heavy lancers' horses and shooters' horses. There were 56 heavy lancers' horses in the unit (28%) of which the majority (46) were assessed as 'good.' These were powerful mounts – such horses usually cost between 10 and 15 florins.⁵¹ As many as 137 (69%) of the mounts in the *rota* were shooters' horses, lighter and of finer build than the heavy lancers' horses. These animals were not expected to have great physical strength but were valued for their agility. 74 of the shooters' horses were described as 'good.' The price for such a horse was 5–7 florins.

Six horses, including 4 'good' horses, were not qualified either as heavy lancers' or shooters' horses. It is difficult to determine the reason for omitting such information – perhaps it was a simple oversight on the part of the scribe. Out of this group, four horses belonged to arbalists with crossbows, the fifth to the aforementioned soldier with a lightweight lance (*drzewem*) and shield (*puklerz*), and the sixth was ridden by a squire.⁵²

Information about visible wounds and diseases in the animals was also recorded in the registers. Thus, we read that one horse had a wound on the neck (*s przebytyą szyją*) and another had a cut on its left ear (*s raszrządzanym uchem lewym*).⁵³ Another horse was diagnosed with an eye disease – glaucoma, and yet another was generally described as 'unwell' (*neszdrzawij*).⁵⁴ Horses were valuable and, as a result, they were cared for, as evidenced by the fact that when two heavy lancers' horses from Umiński and Kartkowski's retinues fell ill, it was decided to treat them. The cost of treatment for both horses was 5 florins in total. Also, we have general information about 7 lost shooters' horses (while the treatment of Mikołaj Szramek's horse was valued at 2 florins). Ultimately, 2 heavy lancers'

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 617; J. SZYMCAK, *Rycerz i jego konie*, Warszawa 2018, p. 58–66.

⁵² „Item bedavia gnyadaszmyatha dobrą szbroya strelcza kusha”, CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 3v; „Item bedavia wrona dobra panzarsz puclarsz drezwcze; Item kon byaly bedavya strelcza szbroya strelcza kusha”, CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 4v; „Iszdebszky Paul[u]s strzelec. Item kon podnym szgnyadaplesznvij sprothymij noszdrzamy szryednij dobry szbroya kusha”, CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 10v; „Item kon szyvy pod pacholącym szryedny dobry”, CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 11.

⁵³ CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 2, 3v.

⁵⁴ *Item valach czyszawi szloyerzowathy lyszy nyeszprothymij neszdrzawij szbroya strelcza kusha* CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 4; *Item kon szywy drugij yabcobythy prawe oko yaszkrane szbroya strelcza kusha szryedny*, CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 4, 12v.

horses and 5 shooters' horses were irretrievably lost during service. As compensation for the lost mounts, the soldiers received 90 florins in total.⁵⁵

In total, 125 (62.5%) of the 200 horses were described as 'good' in the register. On the other hand, horses described as *przednij dobry* should be regarded as 'very good' mounts. There were three of these (1.5%) in the unit, two of which belonged to the rittmeister himself.⁵⁶ In the case of a few sick horses, information on their treatment was recorded. Thus, the condition of the mounts in Buczacki's *rota* can be considered satisfactory.

Table 4

Horses in Jan Buczacki's *rota*

Horse type	'Good' heavy lancers' horses	Heavy lancers' horses	'Good' shooters' horses	Shooters' horses	'Good' horses	Horses	Total
Number	46	10	75	63	4	2	200
%	23	5	37	32	2	1	

Source: Own compilation based on CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 2–12v.

Summary

Consisting of 171 soldiers and 29 squires, Jan Buczacki's *rota* was a typical unit in terms of size. With regard to the armament, the following categories of soldiers can be distinguished: heavy lancers with lances, so-called demi-lancers, arbalists with crossbows and handgonnes, and soldiers who probably belonged to the group of swordsmen (*gladiatores*). The function of signallers was performed

⁵⁵ "In iste comitiva duo equis hastares in dampnis, Item reformationem duobus equorem quinque flor. sagittare septem equi in dampnis. Summarum pro omnibus equis facit in toto nonaginta flor(enorum)", CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 5, 7v, 10, 10v, 12v.

⁵⁶ „Johannis woyewodycz rothmistr kon pod nym cyszawy lysy przednij dobry koń kopijniczy zbroya zupełna kopynicza | gniady pod pacholęciem przedny dobry kopijniczy ma na czele gwiazda", CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 2; „kon szrydzaplesznywy ma na czele lyszyna, lewą nogą była szadną kon strzelczy dobry przednij zbroya strzelcza", CAHR, ACT, Division 85, sign. 5, c. 2v.

by two armed soldiers equipped respectively with drums and a trumpet. The average size of a retinue was seven men.

In terms of organisation and armament, therefore, the unit was typical of the Polish cavalry guarding the south-eastern borderlands of the Kingdom of Poland in the early 16th century. There was a visible tendency to reduce the large number of heavy lancers and replace them with lighter-equipped horsemen, who were better adapted to clashes with opponents representing the eastern style of combat.

The task of the *rota* discussed in this paper, like that of other units mobilised in 1501, was to defend the local population against an anticipated Tatar attack. Though the Tatar attack did not materialise, the region of Pokuttia was invaded that summer by the army of the Moldavian hospodar Stefan III the Great (1429–1504). It is not known, however, whether Jan Buczacki's *rota* took part in the battle against the Moldavians at that time.⁵⁷

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⁵⁷ M. PLEWCZYŃSKI, *Wojny...*, p. 161; IDEM, *Wojny i wojskowość...*, pp. 89–93, 132–133; *vide*: T. GRABARCZYK, *Udział wojsk...*, pp. 402–412; Z. SPIERAŁSKI, *Z dziejów wojen polsko-moldawskich*, „Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości” 1965, vol. 11, part 2, pp. 77–82; L. KOLANKOWSKI, *op. cit.*, pp. 142–143.

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ROTA KONNA JANA BUCZACKIEGO Z 1501 ROKU

Streszczenie. Artykuł jest poświęcony uzbrojeniu zaczepnemu i ochronnemu, strukturze organizacyjnej, kondycji koni jazdy zaciężnej rotę dowodzonej przez Jana Buczackiego w 1501 r. Oddział ten, był na służbie króla Polski, wchodził w skład tzw. obrony potocznej. Była to jedna z rot, które miały odpierać najazdy tatarskie i mołdawskie na południowo-wschodnie ziemie Królestwa Polskiego. Podstawowym źródłem, na którym oparto ten artykuł jest rejestr rotę J. Buczackiego przechowywany w Archiwum Głównym Akt Dawnych w Warszawie. Oddział ten liczył 200 koni, w tym 24 dowódców pocztów (tzw. towarzyszy), którzy zostali odnotowani z imienia i nazwiska (lub przydomku). Imion pozostałych żołnierzy nie odnotowano. Rota liczyła 171 żołnierzy (w tym 24 towarzyszy, oraz 2 muzykantów wojskowych) i 29 pachołat. Na kartach źródła odnotowano 135 elementów uzbrojenia zaczepnego (102 kusze, 30 lekkich kopii – tzw. drzewek, 3 rusznice). Zostały również zapisane 174 elementy uzbrojenia ochronnego (28 zbroi kopijniczych, 106 zbroi strzelczych, 5 pancerzy, napierśnik, hełmy typu łębka i przyłbica oraz tarcza). Charakter uzbrojenia poszczególnych jeźdźców pozwala podzielić ich

na cztery kategorie: kopijników, strzelców, półkopijników, mieczowników. Bardzo szczegółowo zostały opisane konie podzielone na dwie główne kategorie: konie kopijnicze, których odnotowano 56 oraz strzelcze, występujące w liczbie 137. W przypadku pozostałych 7 wierzchowców nie określono żadnej kategorii. Oddział Buczackiego był typową dla tego okresu rotą.

Słowa kluczowe: Królestwo Polskie, Ruś, Podole, uzbrojenie, zaciężni, jazda