



Lead Author e-mail: [piotr.kohler@uj.edu.pl](mailto:piotr.kohler@uj.edu.pl)

**Title:** *The first Polish expedition to the Arctic*

**Piotr Köhler<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>**Z. Czeppe Department of Polar Research and Documentation, Institute of Botany, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland**

International Meteorological Committee during the meeting of the directors of meteorological institutions held in 1929 in Copenhagen determined that Second International Polar Year will take place in 1932-1933. Polish National Polar Year Committee developed three variants of the course of Polish research in the frames of IPY II. The option assuming establishing a permanent station on the Bear Island and observations lasting for over a year was selected to implement. Due to limited financial resources to participate in the expedition were selected three persons: Czesław Centkiewicz (1904-1996), Władysław Łysakowki (ca. 1906-?) and Stanisław Siedlecki (1912-2002). In the initial stage (up to mid-September 1932), also Jean Lugeon (1898-1976) and Jan Gurtzman (?-?) took part in the expedition. Initially Polish press had a negative attitude towards the expedition.

The expedition set off on July 12, 1932 from Legionowo near Warsaw. It arrived on Bear Island on August 5, 1932, and left the island on 18 August 1933. A vast variety of data collected with considerable difficulties during the stay on Bear Island by the expedition was developed (at least partially) after returning to Poland. Four books of *Résultats des observations de l'expédition polonaise de l'Année Polaire 1932/33 à l'Île des Ours* and several other papers were published.

The first Polish expedition to the Arctic proved to be extremely successful venture. Its scientific goals were almost completely realized. Poland effectively and positively appeared on the scene of world science. The experiences gained during this expedition were profitable yet for years to both the participants and the entire Polish science.