Restoration of the Arany documents of Nagyszalonta

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Our Library will restore the document collection of Nagyszalonta including some 4,000 items, the majority of which are books and the most precious part of which are manuscripts. The valuable collection arrived in Budapest in February 2018, following one-year of preparatory and administrative work.



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On February 8, 2018 László Boka, literary historian, Director of Research and Academic Affairs, NSZL, Zsuzsanna Rózsafalvi, literary historian, staff member of our Manuscript Collection, and Zsuzsanna Tóth, special restorer of NSZL traveled to Nagyszalonta in order to facilitate the restoration of the document collection of Nagyszalonta including some 4,000 items (books, manuscripts and other

documents).

The task of saving the document collection of Nagyszalonta and setting up a new exhibition of the so-called Broken Tower *(Csonka torony)* is rather complex. Experts of Petőfi Literary Museum will be responsible for museum work, while restorers of National Széchényi Library will restore the document collection of Nagyszalonta including some 4,000 items. Books make up the majority of the valuable collection, and the most precious part of the material consists of manuscripts. The documents have been delivered to Budapest following one-year of preparatory and administrative work.



[2]Zsuzsanna Tóth: “Our major task is to treat too acidic ink corrosion wherever it is possible, because there are many types of seals and other materials on the papers, which cannot be touched. At the same time, there are a lot of stains on the papers. Paper has to endure treatment without the writing ‘running out on it’, or without any damage caused to it. On top of that, the documents are rather wrinkled, ruptured, which we will correct, re-cast if necessary, and then they will be placed in new, acid-free storage boxes and so-called palliums.”

Zsuzsanna Rózsafalvi: “Out of the material stored in Nagyszalonta, including some 4,000 items, approximately one thousand pages of manuscripts have been delivered to Budapest. There are two highly important volume documents among these manuscripts: one of them is a copy of the translation of *Midsummer Night’s Dream,* made final by János Arany’s own handwriting, and the other one is the manuscript of *Murány ostroma (The Siege of Murány)*. Most of the delivered documents are pieces of family correspondence, but there are also a great number of official documents originating from the period of Salonta vice-notary, as well as official documents of the history of Arany Emlékegyesület (*Arany Memorial Association)*.”

László Boka: “After restoration, scheduled to be finished by June 2018, we will solemnly return

these documents to Nagyszalonta, to the keeper institution, and in addition to a temporary exhibition, we will present them organized into a bilingual print catalog together with János Arany Memorial Association. In the meantime, facsimiles, so-called noble copies are being made of the most precious documents, including Nagyszalonta-related Arany manuscripts stored in Budapest, either in NSZL or at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which will also be included in the permanent exhibition.

For stock preservation reasons, it is highly important that the original documents should not be included in the exhibition in the long run, because they require special temperature, illumination and humidity conditions. Total restoration costs of this priceless document collection, amounting to HUF 15 million, are provided by the Hungarian state.”
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