

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Meets every 4th Friday at the Polish Youth Association Building,
(Dom Harcerski) 6434 West Belmont Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

Issue No. 499

Price \$2.00

Nov.-Dec., 1999

TRANSITION OF POLONUS INTO NEW MILLENNIUM

By: Hank Bieniecki

Impact of Technology: As the millennium approaches, virtually every facet of our lives is being challenged by rapid technological change. Competition for our time and dollars is intense. For any organization to complete successfully in this new environment, it must incorporate and use the power of this new technology. The Polonus Philatelic Society (POLONUS) is not exempt from this phenomenon. POLONUS as well as philately in general will have to evolve, or slowly fade into extinction.

Background: POLONUS was formed by a group of collectors in Chicago on 26 February 1939. The organization grew and expanded its membership throughout the world. However, for the last 60 years the heart of the organization has been a small dedicated group of Polish philatelists in Chicago. They have effectively promoted Polish philately via the Bulletin of the Polonus Philatelic Society (BULLETIN) and the annual POLONUS philatelic exhibition (POLPEX).

Transition Proposal: Given the proliferation of Electronic Mail (Email) and the World Wide Web (Internet), it is no longer necessary to place the entire burden of production of the BULLETIN and administration of POLONUS on those few loyal members who have performed this duty for so many years. Email and the Internet enables any member with a telephone and computer to actively participate in the operations of this society. The following proposals have been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors. They are effective for the year 2000.

- Annual dues raised to \$25.00 to cover increased costs of publication and mailings. To avoid undue financial hardship, any current member who is unable to afford the higher dues payment may request a Senior Discount and pay dues of \$16.00

- BULLETIN will be issued quarterly to provide sufficient time for preparation and communications by geographically dispersed members, using computerized publication technology.
- Establishment of a fully computerized membership database for the purpose of automating the administrative functions of the society.
- Development and implementation of a POLONUS Web Page on the Internet during the first Quarter of 2000, to accomplish the following objectives:
 - 1 Facilitate communications and exchange of information between society members via the Internet.
 - 2 Make available and promote POLONUS and its objectives to collectors and Polonia who utilize the Internet, but do not subscribe to traditional philatelic periodicals.
 - 3 Provide a site for a complete reference library and index of POLONUS literature.
- Establish communications with members of other Polish philatelic societies in North America, to promote consolidation of their activities with POLONUS into one national organization, having local chapters and a centralized philatelic exhibition.

Summary: Today and to a greater degree in the future, the Internet, Email, Scanners, Electronic Publishing and other new technology will have a significant impact on our personal lives, philately, and POLONUS. Fortunately our society has members that have the capability and willingness to use this technology to ensure the continued evolution and success of POLONUS. Members who are willing to support these efforts are requested to send their comments, suggestions and email addresses to the attention of **Polonus Millennium Program** at one of the following addresses:

Email: biistamp@charter.net

Mail: P.O. Box 100
Granite City, IL. 62040

Financial contributions and dues should be sent to the attention of Fred Szebel, P.O. Box 515, Mt. Prospect, IL. 60056

I would like to thank Dr. Stanley Kronenberg, Conrad Straub, Fred Szebel, and Chester Schafer for their support and assistance in developing the plans for POLONUS in the new Millennium.

Polish Military Internment Camps in Hungary

By ISTVÁN GAZDA

Reprinted From *AMERICAN PHILATELIST*

Several articles in *The American Philatelist* have covered Polish military internment camps in Hungary: Thomas J. Gobby wrote "Interned Poles of World War II: The Hungarian Experience" (July 1984). Updates followed by Jan Danielski (June 1985) and myself (July 1989 and March 1996). Since the publication of my March 1996 article, I have been contacted by several collectors abroad and at home with additional information.

PERIODS

I am revising the periods set up by Gobby, Danielski, and myself. Because the great evacuation program was over at the end of September 1940 and a large number of the camps ceased to exist up to the end of this month or shortly thereafter, I now set the first period from late September 1939--when the first camps were opened--to the end of September 1940. Within this period, I would like to set up a provisional period for those camps identified in italics in my March 1996 listing, because these camps existed for no more than two months and closed before the cold weather came.

The second period is from October 1, 1940, to March 19, 1944, the German occupation. The third period remains unchanged from March 19, 1944, to approximately October/November 1944, when the camps closed.



Figure 1. This post card originated in the pro-visional internment camp Rimaszécs. The card was canceled in the nearby town of Miskolc on October 9, 1939--the early part of Period 1.

CAMPS

Gustav A. Pohlig, another *AP* author, sent me a copy of a postal card from a camp in the provisional period. This pink-colored card is a field post card form, postmarked October 9, 1939, from the provisional internment camp Rimaszécs to a Polish prisoner of war in Poland (Figure 1). The postal cancellation is from Miskolc, a town nearby. The card received a Belligerent interné mark but no camp or censor cancel. It is no wonder, as this camp was set up only a few days earlier and was closed within a few weeks. I do not think a camp cancel was ever made for this camp. The mail probably was collected and taken to Miskolc. It is a typical provisional camp card, and I am happy to have it because it shows that some provisional camps had mail.



Figure 2. A Polish officer in Camp Selyp sent this postal card to a stamp dealer in early 1943 (Period 2), asking for a Michel catalogue. The card received a boxed Hungarian censor mark and a Selyp camp marking and date-stamp.

I had written in my article that the provisional camp Selyp had closed down on "6.IV.1940" and became a French camp thereafter. It

Figure 3. This cover represents a letter from the third period. As the cancel (right side, Zalacsány, August 2, 1944) confirms, Polish military internees had been transferred from Camp Gyöngyösapáti to the internment camp Zalacsány. The Hungarian "ELLENŐRIZVE" stamped in the top left corner means "controlled."



is true that it was intended to close down on April 6, 1940, but either this did not occur or it reopened shortly thereafter, still as a Polish Camp. I have found a postal card (Figure 2), which was written to a stamp dealer by a Polish officer in early 1943, asking for a Michel catalogue of 1943. When I looked into the matter, I found that Selyp emptied as a Polish camp on August 2, 1943. It became a French camp only thereafter and was closed in November 1944.

I also have found some mail from the third period. The most important of these is a letter written from Camp Zalacsány to Gencsapáti on August 2, 1944 (Figure 3). Upon reading that letter, it



Figure 4. A cover bound for the National Bank of Hungary in Budapest included a label (left side) identifying it as a value letter; the label's text is in Hungarian and French. The stamps were postmarked at the provisional Camp I/5, Zebegény, on January 13, 1940. The back of the value letter was closed with six wax seals.

became clear the Gencsapáti camp had been in effect transferred to Zalacsány, together with the camp and censor cancels. The Polish internee who had written the letter was a medical doctor, a Polish gentleman, or officer, who was on friendly terms with a lieutenant colonel at his previous camp station, Gencsapáti. The letter written in German was sent to him.

SOME INTERESTING MAIL

I have found some interesting postal items since the publication of my March 1996 article. One is a letter from the provisional Camp I/5, Zebegény, written on January 13, 1940 (Figure 4)—a money letter to the National Bank of Hungary. The text at the top reads, “Content 800 zloty = 80 pengő,” about US\$16 at that time. The National Bank of Hungary probably exchanged the zlotys into pengő.



Figure 5. A cover to the General Gouvernement from the Polish military internment camp of Eger on July 24, 1944, confirms that provisional camp was still functioning during the third period.

Another letter (Figure 5) was mailed to the General Gouvernement from the Polish military internment camp of Eger on July 24, 1944, during the third period. The registered letter was censored once at dispatch (the boxed cancel) and by the Germans (on the left side of the cover). It was sent back because the postal service was provisionally suspended, according to the label's French text. The back of the cover is missing, so the sender is unknown; nevertheless, it is a very interesting document showing not only war events but also the camp Eger worked at that time. A third item (Figure 6) came from camp Vámosmikola, which is located in the northern part of Hungary, like

Eger. Vámosmikola, too, operated during the third period, as documented by this postal card of July 27, 1944, written by a Polish



Figure 6. This postal card was datestamped on July 27, 1944, at Vámosmíkola, in the northern part of Hungary. Like the provisional camp Eger, it too was open during the third period.

engineer to a woman at Kispest (near Budapest) in more or less fluent Hungarian. While the card was no camp cancel, the cancel at the top right, the censor cancel in the lower left, the name and address of the sender, and the postal cancellation clearly show that it is camp mail written in the third period.

These last two postal items and the previously mentioned letter from Zalacsány indicate that mail came from the camps in the third period, too, but I don't know for how long. My latest date is August 2, 1944, on the Zalacsány letter (Figure 3). My guess is that correspondence was more or less continuous up to mid-October, when the Nazi takeover occurred. I am curious whether I shall find any mail thereafter, taking also into account that most of the camps must have closed due to the war events at the end of October or November.

The last item of interest is a letter (Figure 7) sent by a Polish interned soldier (or officer), probably for a medical treatment in budapest in January 1940. It was addressed to a Polish newspaper in Montreal, Canada, but the address probably was wrong and so it had been returned after going through the Dead Letter Office at Ottawa..

Because the air mail registered letter had no declared sender on the cover, it came into the Address Research Office of the post office

Budapest 62, after it was return to Budapest on February 13, 1940. The canceler (on the back) between the Ottawa Dead Letter Office

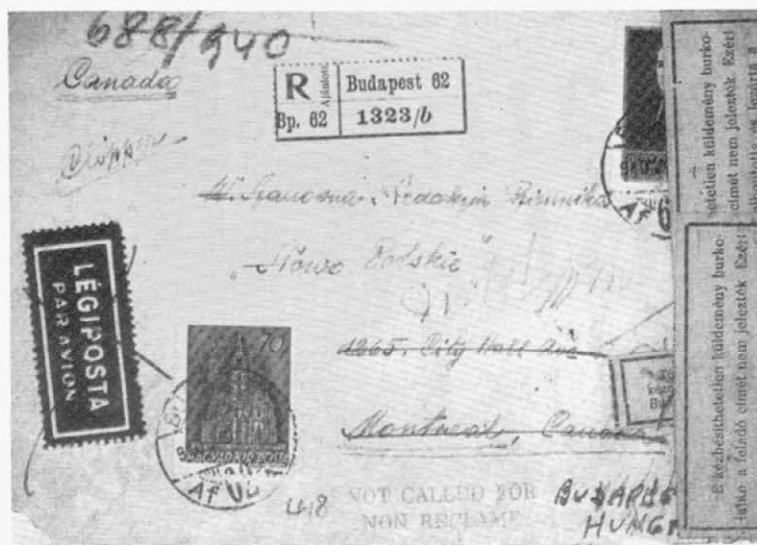
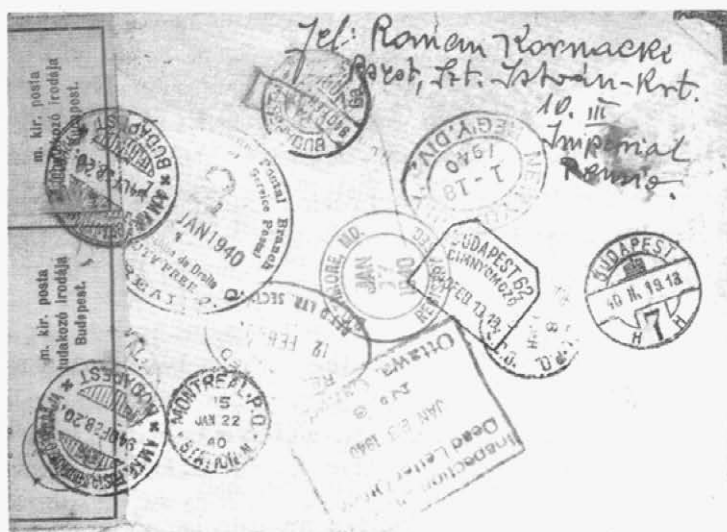


Figure 7. A Polish soldier at the Pension Imperial in Budapest sent this air mail registered letter in January 1940 to a Polish newspaper in Canada. As evidenced by the markings, the cover was returned by Ottawa's Dead Letter Office to Budapest. That city's oval Address Research Office marking, on the back of the cover, is dated February 19, 1940



and the New York Registry Division canceler is the address research canceler of Budapest. The Address Research Office opened the letter, then closed it again with labels identifying the fact--at the front right side--and found that the Polish soldier had been lodged, at least when dispatching the letter, at the Pension Imperial in Budapest and marked this fact on the back side of the letter. It surely delivered the letter to the sender. The letter is uncensored, since there was no censoring for civil mail to foreign destinations prior to June 1940 in Hungary--the censorship of domestic mail started much later in September 1944--nor had it be censored in Canada. The Polish soldier being out of the camp could, hence, easily mail it without censorship, since he did not declare his interneeship on the cover.

REVISIONS TO THE LIST OF POLISH MILITARY INTERMENT CAMPS IN HUNGARY 1939-44

Esztergom-tábor IX/X 1939-1942

Ipolyhydivég should read correctly Ipolyhidvég.

[This relates to Figure 5 of my March 1996 article.]

Lengyeltóti IX/X 1939-end of 1941? [partially transferred after 6.IX.1940 to motel Savoy at Balatonboglár.]

Miskolc [Because this was a provisional camp, the name should appear in italics.]

Selyp IX/X 1939-2.VIII.1943 [Probably closed for a while in 1940; thereafter a French camp until XI.1944]

Zalacsány 24.V.1944 [in italics]-X/XI 1944? [The camp Gyöngyösapáti had been transferred hereto.]

Note: Camp *formation dates* in italic were set up after IX/X 1939. A question mark (?) denotes uncertainty.

THE AUTHOR

István Gazda, a chemical engineer from Budapest, is an international judge with a variety of philatelic interests, among them censored mail, civilian and military, related to Hungary. It was through this specialty that he was led to the study of Polish internment camp mail.

MY 1999 VISIT WITH DR. S. KRONENBERG

BY FRED SZEBEL

After my trip to Portugal in May, 1999, I stayed with my sister in New Jersey. I then contacted Polonus member

To us, most interesting was his new acquisitions of 1998-99. We checked out his newest purchases of selected items from



Left to right: Zygmunt Kawczynski, Fred Szebel and Dr. S. Kronenberg

Zygmunt Kawczynski of Rahway, NJ, who took me to his home to see some of his stamp collections. After lunch, together we drove to Dr. Kronenberg's home in Skillman, NJ. On the way we got lost, but after a few hours we found his place which is well hidden in the woods.

Dr. Kronenberg and his wife were waiting for us. We looked over some philatelic material which he has in over 75 volumes of complete Poland, including proofs, overprints, and all possible varieties.

the late Dr. Kuderewicz collections as well as other varieties he has received since my last visit. He showed us rare Krakow overprints sent to him to be expertised. Dr. Kronenberg is not a specialized collector, but collects general Poland and is a well respected expert on stamps of Poland, Danzig, and associated countries.

If you have any questions, he will expertise stamps for a reasonable fee. His home phone is 609 466-3713 or write: Dr. Stanley Kronenberg, Hollow Road, Skillman, NJ 08558.

NEW ISSUES

CHINA WORLD PHILATELIC EXHIBITION

Issued for the China 1999 World Philatelic Exhibition held August 21-30 in Beijing on the 50th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. The sheet shows a dragon (a symbol of happiness) and sea waves. First day of issue was March 31st at Warsaw 1. Offset printed on fluorescent paper in a quantity of 900,000. Designed by Małgorzata Osa.



ST. MARY OF KOZIELSK

Issued in connection with the martyrdom of Poles in the East during World War II.



The 60 gr shows a sculpture of St. Mary made by a prisoner of the Soviet camp for Polish officers in Kozielsk. The 70 gr shows St. Mary from Katyń made by Stanisław Bałos of Grzechinie near Maków

Podhalański. First day of issue was April 2nd at Warsaw I. Offset

printed on fluorescent paper. Quantities issued: 60 gr 2,700,000; 70 gr 2,600,000. Designed by Janusz Wysocki.

ACCESSION OF POLAND TO NATO

Issued for the celebrations of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty NATO, held in 16 NATO member protocols on the Poland, the Czech Hungary to NATO 16th, 1998. First



North-Atlantic Organization, April. Heads of countries signed accession of Republic and on December day of issue:

April 22nd at Warsaw l. Offset printed in sheets of 20 on fluorescent paper in a quantity of 2,900,000. Designed by Jacek Konarzewski.

POLPEX 2000

Polonus is planning POLPEX 2000 scheduled for March 17-18-19 at Przybylo's White Eagle in Niles, IL. A cacheted cover and souvenir sheet will be issued on this occasion depicting the theme of the Eightieth Anniversary of the Victory over the Bolszevik armies at the battle of the Vistula in 1920. Jozef Pilsudski led the Polish forces and prevented the spread of communism to other European countries. An exhibit of postal history from this period will be shown.

POLONUS PILATELIC SOCIETY

Publications Committee:
ARKADIUSZ WALINSKI
7414 Lincoln Avenue - D
Skokie, IL 60076-3898

President &
Bulletin Editor:
CHESTER SCHAFER
864 North Ashland Avenue
Chicago, IL 60622-5147

Treasurer:
FRED SZEDEL
P.O. Box 515
Mt. Prospect, IL 60056

The Polonus Philatelic Society is a Not-for-Profit Organization incorporated in the State of Illinois (1939). The opinions expressed by authors of articles appearing therein, do not necessarily reflect the views of Polonus Philatelic Society.

Annual dues, which include a subscription to the Bulletin, are \$25.00 (U.S. currency only) and should be sent to the Polonus Treasurer, Mr. Fred Szebel, 1615 East Central Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60005. Membership dues are payable by December 31st, for the next calendar year. New members will receive all the "Bulletins" for the year in which they join. Changes of address, problems with receiving the Bulletin, should be addressed to: Polonus Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 41452, Chicago, IL 60641. General matters pertaining to the Society, contribution of articles for the Bulletin, complaints or other matters should be directed to the President.