



BULLETIN OF THE **POLONUS** PHILATELIC SOCIETY

533

WINTER, 2008



Letter from the *CENTRALNY KOMITET ŻYDÓW POLSKICH*

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World War I:

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POSTWAR JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN POLAND

Paul J. Phillips

Throughout World War II the large Jewish external aid organizations such as the *Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society* (HIAS; in New York), HICEM (formed by a merger of three organizations; based in Lisbon during WW2), the *Comite pour l'Assistance a la Population Juive frappee par La Guerre* (RELICO; in Geneva) and the *American Joint Distribution Committee* (JOINT) did whatever they could to help the victims of the Nazi oppression, but local Jewish organizations could only function within the closed ghettos themselves. It is always quite amazing to read the chronicles of the ghettos that were written at the time, hidden and recovered after it was all over. They tell contrasting tales of tremendous communal charitable work but also of the greed of some richer inmates. However, these wartime stories, documents and covers will be left for another article.

In the aftermath of World War II in Poland and the near annihilation of the nation's substantial Jewish population, the surviving Jewish population began to organize themselves. In many ways this was not only because of the need to find each other, but also for self-protection as persecutions began anew and many Jews decided to leave Poland. The external organizations continued to function and generate significant aid, however, the major problem was locating the survivors, especially in the smaller locales.

The internal Polish organizations were generally spontaneously formed in locales where there were enough survivors to find each other, but they existed for only of a short duration. In over twenty years of collecting the postal history of Poland, I have never come across an article on them. Hence, this article is designed to record what I know personally of these organizations, as gleaned from return addresses and on the occasional printed titles of such organizations.

The City of Warsaw in 1938 had a Jewish population of 368,000 out of its total population of 1,265,000. Following the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto it has been estimated that 2,000 of its inhabitants survived deportation to concentration camps and labor camps in western Poland. Another 20,000 survived hidden in Polish areas of the city. Many of these people had escaped the ghetto through the sewers. Many of them fought in the uprising in the summer of 1944. After the Germans were dispatched, thousands of Polish Jews began to congregate in Warsaw, ultimately reaching 15 – 20,000, most of them not belonging to the prewar community. Following emigration, mostly to Israel, only 2,000 remain in Warsaw today¹.

Of the national organizations, the one that appears to have been the biggest and best organized is the **CENTRALNY KOMITET ZYDOW POLSKICH**² (the Central Committee of Jews in Poland) which was located in Warsaw in Praga at Szeroka 5 in 1945 (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1 Letter from the CKZP to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva mailed from the Warsaw 16 post office.



By 1947 it had moved to ul. Sienna 60 and used a pre-printed return address on its envelopes (**Figure 2**).

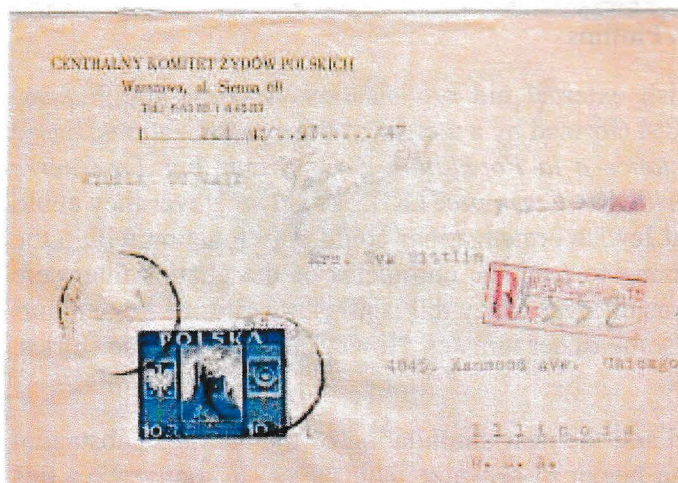


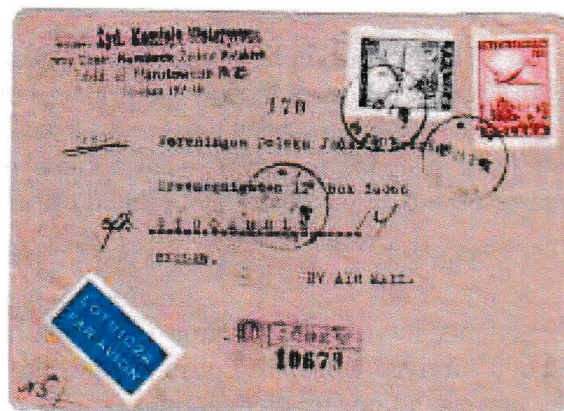
Figure 2. Letter from the CKZP in 1947, located at ul. Sienna 60; sent registered but underpaid

Another branch of the Central Committee of Polish Jews was based in Łódź and used a rubber stamp with purple ink to apply its return address in correspondence. It was the CENTR. ZYD. COMISJA HISTORYCZNA, or Central Jewish Historical Commission, which sent a letter in 1947 to the Society of Polish Jews in Sweden (**Figure 3**). Many Polish Jews were able to escape to

Sweden and spent the war there. Being the closest strictly neutral country to Poland, it was a haven for organizations and operations. The Association of Polish Jews in Sweden must have been a very active organization as I have a second cover addressed to them from an unidentified sender.

Figure 3. Central Jewish Historical Commission of the CKZP in 1947 to Association of Polish Jews in Sweden.

One of my most prized possessions in my WW2 collection is a handmade reply postcard sent to an émigré Rabbi in Sweden early in the war. The sender was a tailor who stitched together two postal cards, since the General Government did not print reply cards, placed stamps on them both and sent his message. The rabbi must have replied using a less obvious method or the entire object would not be in my possession.



One other national organization that I have recorded is a student's organization, AKADEMICKI ZWIĄZEK SYJONISTÓW DEMOKRATÓW (the Democratic Zionist Students Union; based in Łódź) which sent a registered letter to the World Union of Jewish Students in London in December of 1946 (**Figure 4**). I have not been able to find any information during on-line searches for this organization. Presumably, as it was a Zionist organization, ~~as~~ the students wanted to emigrate to Palestine and would have done it ultimately. The imposition of the Communist government in Poland served as an impediment to emigration from 1947-48 and persisted for several decades.

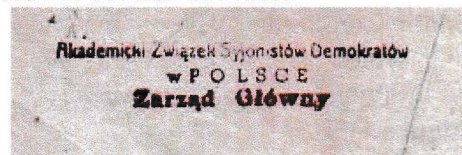
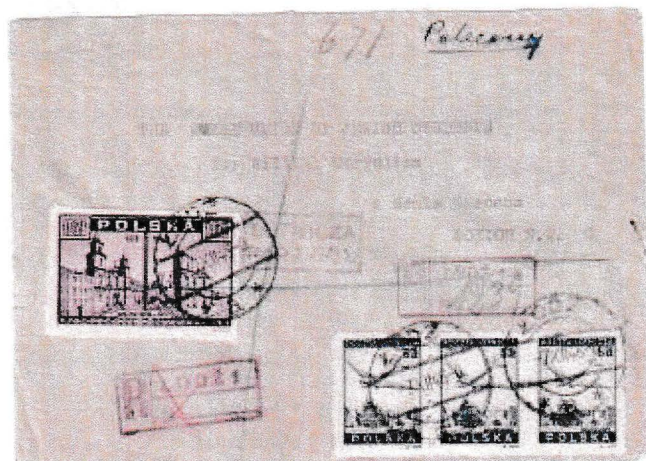
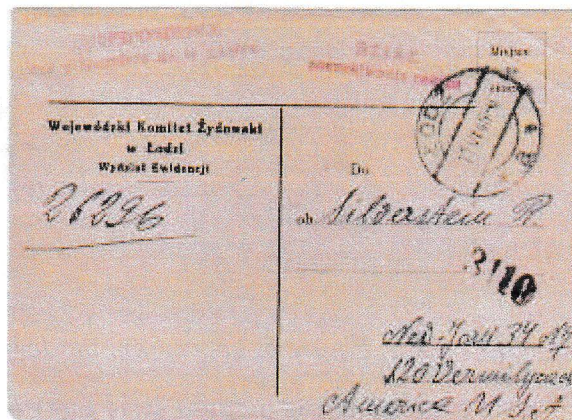


Figure 4. Letter from the Board of the Democratic Zionist Students Union (based in Łódź) to the World Union of Jewish Students in London, sent registered air in December of 1946.

The local organizations are really quite difficult to find, as in most cases there is no

printed or stamped return address and it is necessary to decipher the sometimes difficult handwriting. Judging from its printed postcard the local organization in Łódź must have been a good size and well organized. The evidence committee, Wydział Ewidencji, of the WOJEWÓDZKI KOMIET ZYDOWSKI W ŁÓDZ (Provincial Jewish Committee of Lodz) sent a card to New York in June of 1946 (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Card of WOJEWÓDZKI KOMIET ZYDOWSKI W ŁÓDZ (Provincial Jewish Committee of Lodz) sent to New York in June of 1946



This is the only communication on printed stationery that I have seen from a local committee. When the ghetto was formed in 1940 it had over 160,000 inhabitants and when the war ended there were 900 survivors. Despite these small initial numbers, it became the largest post-war Jewish center as somewhere between 10,000 and 20,000 Jews who had survived the Nazi camps, or in Russia, returned to Łódź. In the fall of 1945 the city had 20,000 registered Jews and 40,000 temporary residents¹. (The total number of Polish Jews surviving WW2 and living temporarily in postwar Poland is believed to be between 180,000 and 240,000.) Figure 6 shows the ID of one of the 900 survivors of the ghetto who was able to become an Israeli citizen.



Figure 6. ID issued to Łódź Ghetto survivor Szmula Wolberg by the Jewish Refugees Welfare Society for emigration to Israel 16 Feb. 1949

The next class is local committees with a handstamp; I have only seen one of these. The example I have seen is boxed and in two lines on the back of a letter from Powiatowy Komitet Żydowski w KAMIENIÓGORZE (the Jewish Committee of Kamienna Góra) to New York (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Letter from the Jewish Committee of Kamienna Góra in 1948



Kamienna Góra is the name given to Landeshut in Lower Silesia when it was incorporated into post-war Poland in the voivodeship of Wrocław³. The Jewish population of Landeshut was only 14 in 1939, due to emigration, and it is presumed that they were eliminated¹. A similar case, an envelope with a

handwritten return address from the small town of Dzierzoniov was sent to New York in 1948 and registered. It is also a former German town, Reichenbach in the same area, which had only 19 Jews in 1939 who have also been assumed to have perished¹. In this case, it is a letter with Dzerzoniow Polny Slysck Komitet Zydofski (**Figure 8**). I have not been able to find any information on where the post-war



Figure 8. Letter from the Jewish Committee of Dzierzoniow to New York

Jewish population came from. It is known that about 10,000 Jewish refugees arrived in Wroclaw (Breslau) immediately after the war, as did many Poles from the Lwow area of Galicia (now Ukraine), so they probably were part of the migration from the western Ukraine when it was taken over by the Soviets. It is believed that as many as 50,000 to 170,000 Polish Jews were repatriated from the Soviet Union.

I have no covers from a Jewish Committee in Wroclaw, but have come across a letter addressed to them. This beautiful item was sent registered airmail (75 mils) from Ramat Gan in Israel on 23 February 1946. The trip for the cover was remarkably rapid as it was backstamped in Tel Aviv on 25 February and in Wroclaw on 14 March 1946. On the way it received a second type Polish censor mark. The envelope is addressed to the Jewish Committee at an address of Wallstrasse 9 in Wroclaw (**Fig. 9**).

Figure 9. Registered airmail envelope sent from Ramat Gan in Israel to the Jewish Committee in Wroclaw (Breslau) in 1946

Finally, a case of a large German city that became Polish after the Potsdam Conference is Szczecin (Stettin) in the north. A card from a Jewish organization in this case is a one sent to New York with the name of the organization in manuscript, obviously the writing of an old lady. This card was sent in June of 1946 by a lady who is trying to find her sister. The card has a return address of Polska. M.Szczecin (sic), Niebussowo Komitet Zydowski, which is the Jewish Committee of Szczecin, but the intermediate word does not translate, perhaps because I cannot read her writing very well. However, it appears to be related to the Polish for German (**Figure 10**).



These are the sum total of what I have been able to find after 20 years of looking at the return addresses of covers in dealer's stocks all over the United States and England. There must be more out there. Hopefully this article will encourage the readership to check the return addresses of covers in their collections from 1945 to 1948. I give this short range as emigration to Israel became possible in May of 1948 and appropriate IDs became easily available after that date. Presumably the Jewish population became so low that the organizations were no longer needed, although new ones have been springing up in recent years.

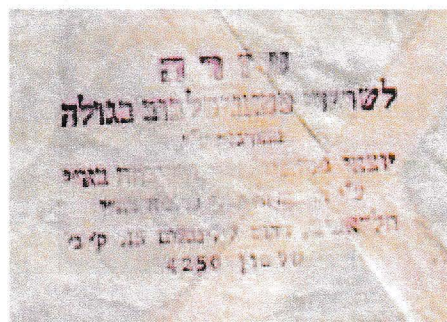


Figure 11. Reused envelope from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, October 1945 ►►►

POSTSCRIPT

Remarkably, additional information on Aid Organizations related to Polish Jewry can be found in the strangest places. In my collection of the British Mandate period in Jerusalem is a cover which seems relatively uninteresting – to begin with! It is a reused envelope with a wartime economy label over it from the Official Press Bureau of the Government of Palestine. It was sent from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv on 31 October 1945 (**Figure 11**).

The Press Bureau handstamp is not all that common, but on the back is an extremely rare “handstamp” (**Figure 12**). Because of the nature of this rubber handstamp, it seems unlikely that it was placed by the Government, but probably was applied when the envelope was first used – from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem on the 12th of October. This one was spotted by a dealer who could read Hebrew. When translated into English it reads :



HELP
The survivors of Stanisławów
[West Ukraine] in the diaspora
Organized by the people of Stanislawow and area in Eretz
Israel
The organization of the Polish Olym in Eretz Israel
Chaim Baunstein, Tel Aviv, 15 Lilienblum St., 3rd floor
Telephone 4250

Figure 12. Slogan cachet on the reverse – Help for the survivors of Stanislawów

References

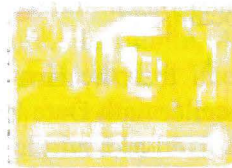
1. Shmuel Spector, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life, Before and During the Holocaust*, Yad Vashem & New York University Press, 2001
2. Wikipedia entry - **Centralny Komitet Żydów Polskich (CKŻP)** - polityczne przedstawicielstwo Żydów w Polsce, powołane w dn. 12 listopad 1944, jako następca Tymczasowego Centralnego Komitetu Żydów Polskich powstałego miesiąc wcześniej, w celu ich reprezentowania wobec władz państwowych oraz organizowania opieki i pomocy Żydom, którzy przetrwali Holocaust. Istniał do 1950 gdy wraz z Żydowskim Towarzystwem Kultury powołał TSKŻ.
 Jego skład ustalono w czerwcu 1946 r. według klucza partyjnego na zasadach kompromisu między zalegalizowanymi stronnictwami żydowskimi: sześć miejsc mieli żydowscy komuniści (tzw. żydowska Frakcja Polskiej Partii Robotniczej), cztery Bund, cztery Ichud, trzy Poalej Syjon-Lewica i trzy Poalej Syjon-Prawica, jedno Haszomer Hacair. Przewodniczący od 1944 Emil Sommerstein z Ichudu, od 1946 Adolf Berman z Poalej Syjon-Lewicy, od 1949 przedstawiciel zespołu PZPR przy CKŻP Hersz Smolar.
3. G.K.Kay, *Postal Place Names in Poland*, G W Kay, Edinburgh, 1992.

Fund Raising labels for the UNEMPLOYED

It appears that most of these fund raising labels were produced and used during the inflationary period in the 1920's and then during the recession in the 1930's;



Wojewodzki Obwodowy Komitet Miejski Pomocy Najbiedniejszych. w Lodzi
Provincial Committee to Aid the Poorest in Lodz
Date unknown – Values unknown



“Standing Peoples Committee to Aid the Unemployed” Date Unknown



Same as above, but value increase – 3 gr. orange overprinted 10 gr.



“Winter help for the Unemployed” – Dates Unknown



“Winter Help for the Unemployed – circa 1935



Issued in Upper Silesia –

1931 – “Aid for the Unemployed”

“Fund to Aid in the Fight Unemployment” – Date Unknown



“Winter Help for the Unemployed” – dates of usage is unknown

Cinderella Study Group

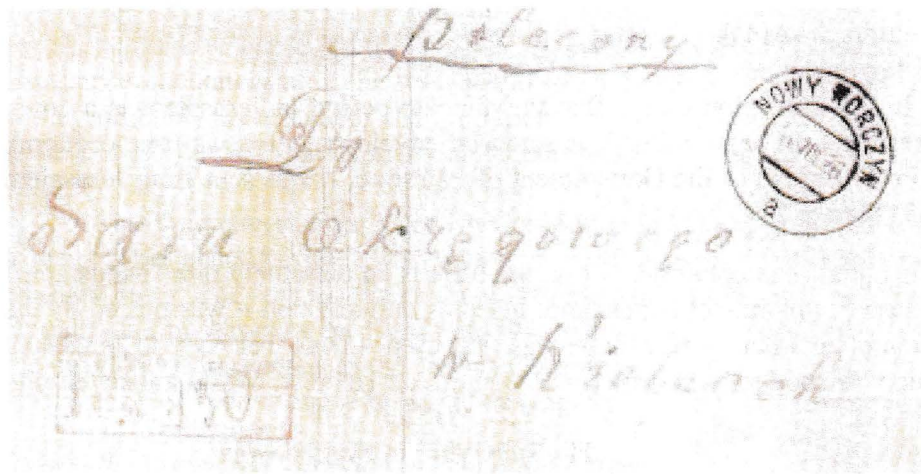
Compulsory 1 Grosze Charge Raises Funds for the Unemployed

Chris Kulpinski

Many of us have seen labels from Poland marked "*Fundusz Pomocy Bezrobotnym*"- "Fund to Aid the Unemployed". These national fund raising efforts were prevalent between the two World Wars.

What I discovered recently was that there was in 1926, with an exception, a compulsory surcharge on all mail. Exempt from this surcharge was printed matter for the blind (that's correct – the blind!) and bulk mailings. A 1 grosze surcharge was added to the postage and the monies passed to the national *Fundusz Pomocy Bezrobotnym*.

This practice lasted 4½ months; from the 15th of April to the 31st of August, 1926. The stamps used were Fischer 182 (Scott 215) (1) and later Fischer 205 (Scott 227) (2), both 1 grosze stamps and therefore fulfilling the surcharge.

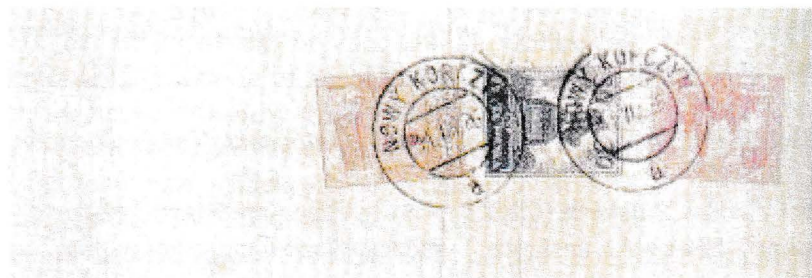


(1)



(2)

When postal rates were increased on August 31, 1926, the 1 grosze surcharge was abolished and the 1 grosze stamp had no other use except to use with numerous other stamps to make up the proper rate. Since that time, Poland no longer produced a 1 grosze stamp.



Shown is a registered cover (reduced), dated August 31, 1926, from Nowy Korczyn to Kielec. On the reverse, a 1 grosze stamp is added to the 45 grosze rate for registered mail up to 20 grams.

If you are a collector that studies rates, I hope this information provides some clues as to that extra 1 grosze surcharge on the various mailings. Very likely these covers are scarce because of the short and common usage. There was no incentive for a person to have saved the cover.

This information was provided by Jacek Tatarski in his article in the September, 2006 issue of *Filatelista*.

The following page shows several fund raising label used to raise funds for the unemployed.

Collecting Warsaw Locals – A Random Walk

Gerald O. Zedlitz

This is the second of a series of articles related to the collecting of the Warsaw Local Issues that were issued during the period from September 1915 to October 1916 in Warsaw, Poland. As the title implies, these articles will be random in nature and will, hopefully, illustrate the collecting possibilities that exist within this local issue.

You will recall that the first article "Finding A Gem!" (Whole #522) focused on the search for the Circular Cancellation with Date Bridge containing the sub-letter "a". To recapitulate, the search for the sub-letter "a" revolved around the fact the canceller was stolen and was in use for only thirteen days. Our Random Walk in this article continues with this theme.

Another Gem!

During the past year or so a small Warsaw Local collection was acquired sight unseen with the hope there may be some interesting and unidentified varieties within the collection. The collection contained numerous mint and used items with only a few covers. The seemingly better items, Fischer Nr. I, II, 3 & 4 although present, were illusionary as many turned out to be forgeries.

However, the purpose of this article is not to describe the pitfalls of such purchases but to illustrate that even interspersed with the "bad and ugly" some "hidden gems" may be found. The acquired collection's layout randomly displayed cancellations essentially by emission type, a not uncommon layout practice with Warsaw Local collectors. Initially the collection was examined for its color background types rather than cancellation types as this seemed to be its strength. My eyes were soon drawn to the numerous 10 Groszy pairs (Fischer Nr. 2) within the collection for potential color varieties. During this examination, staring me in the face, were two clear, almost 100 per cent present, Circular Cancels with Date Bridge containing the sub-letter "a". "Another Gem" was found!

Illustrated is the 10 Groszy pair with the Circular Cancellation with Date Bridge containing the sub-letter "a" along with a 10 Groszy block of four example of the Circular Cancellation with Date Bridge containing the sub-letter "b".



Each 10 Groszy example is typed according to color with the Aniline Red/Yellowish color being one of the more difficult colors to find. But "colors" are a future story in our Random Walk.

So be patient and enjoy searching for there are still more "Gems" hidden waiting to be found!



GEMS OF POLISH PHILATELY

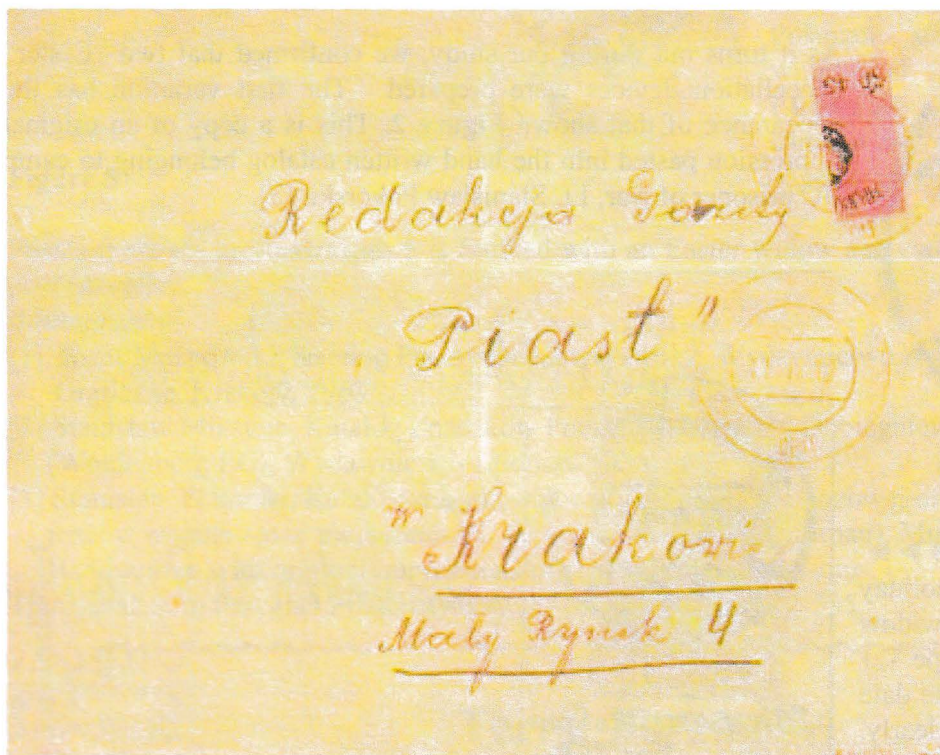
Jim Mazepa

When Poland regained its independence on November 11, 1918, the new state was confronted with integrating the delivery of mail from three different postal administrations that used three different currencies, three different postal rates, and having to produce postage stamps to meet these needs.

In the areas that had been occupied by the Germans and Austrians, the local administrations overprinted German and Austrian stamps into Polish stamps as an emergency measure. In Lublin, Austrian Field post stamps were overprinted with the Polish eagle and new denominations. The short lived "Karlfonds" issue, now known as the First Lublin Provisional Issue, was overprinted on December 5, 1918. The three values did not meet the existing rates and were soon followed by the Second Lublin Provisional Issue. These ten stamps were issued between December 19, 1918, and January 8, 1919.

Not all post offices received all needed values. The correct postal rate for a normal letter within Poland from the former Austrian occupied territories was 25 heller. The postmaster in Ozarow (Opoczno District) did not have any 25 heller stamps and so bisected what he had on hand, the 45 heller stamp, which resulted in a 22 ½ heller stamp.

A small under franking (or over franking) was not uncommon during this time due to the lack of stamps with the appropriate values; however, the bisected stamps are rare. The letter was sent on February 11, 1919. It is a proper non-philatelic usage, and is the only recorded example of a bisected 45 heller stamp. It is not recorded in the catalogs.



Ozarow, Feb. 11, 1919

(Editor's note – We will be trying to make "Gems of Polish Philately" a regular installment in the Bulletin. If you have any items which you consider to be unique, please contact me.

chris@kulpinski.net

Cancellers Used During the Easter Mailing at Camp IIC Woldenberg in 1942

Leslaw Schmutz, Jerzy Walocha

According to Machowski, [1]: “ Even before Easter, 1942, it was decided to initiate a two day post, whose purpose would be to facilitate the exchange of traditional Holiday greetings and increase funds of the Widows and Orphans Fund (Fundusz Wdow i Sierot, FWS). A total of 11,039 labels of the widow design were printed with a value of 10 fennig, and 1,087 of a Postman design with a value of 20 fennig. A canceller with the fixed dates 5-6 April, 1942 was designed and prepared.”

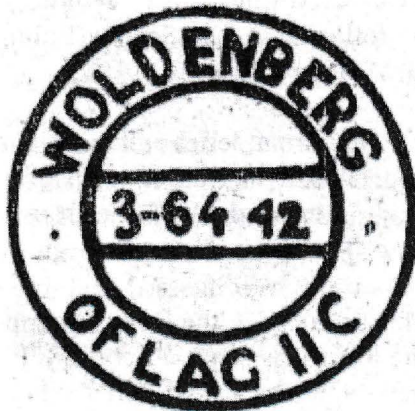


Figure 1.

In J. Machowski's catalog, there is no illustration of this first canceller. Up to this time, its perceived likeness is shown on page 29 of the catalog [2] **Figure 1**. This is a drawing based, perhaps on some unclear impression of the first Easter canceller. Apparently, this is how the catalog's author imagined it. This first canceller had a date error, indicating a 3, instead of 5 of April, which did not coincide with the first day of the Easter Holiday. (*Editor's Note: Easter fell on April 5th in 1942*) In addition the letters and calendar numbers have a different appearance than those of impressions of a majority of the actual Easter mailings, which will be discussed later in this article.

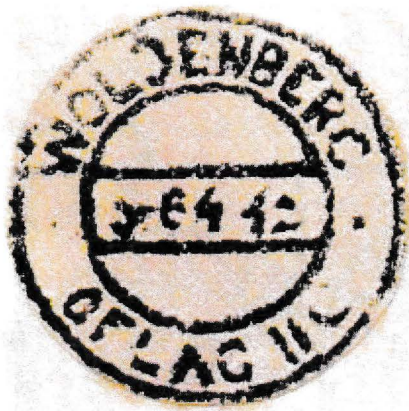


Figure 2.

As it turns out during our study, we confirmed that two “Easter” cancellation devices were prepared. The first variation has the appearance of that shown **Figure 2**. This is a copy of an original impression pasted into the hand written catalog belonging to camp IIC prisoner of war, Lt. Stanislaw Pokorski. [3].

Figure 3 ►►

In **Figure 3**, we exhibit a holiday post card with the Easter widow canceled with this Type 1 canceller. The numbers in the date of this canceller printed unclearly, which is probably why it was retired and a new improved one canceller was created. **Figure 4** depicts an Easter postcard bearing a widow label canceled with the new



corrected and improved version of this cancellation device. Widows bearing the Type 1 canceller are somewhat scarce. The author of the Prisoner of War Catalogs, J. Machowski did not know of the existence of two types of “Easter” cancellers.



Figure 4.

These variations indicate two types of “Easter” cancellers - **Figure 2** – Type one, **Figure 4** – Type 2.

Both types had non-interchangeable (fixed) dates; “5-6 4 42”.

Beginning on May 7, 1942, with the inception of internal postal service at camp IIC and the issuing of “widow” and “postman” stamps, the use of a canceller with interchangeable dates – **Figure 5** was put into service. It was also used to cancel stamps of the series commemorating the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Order of the Virtuti Militari.

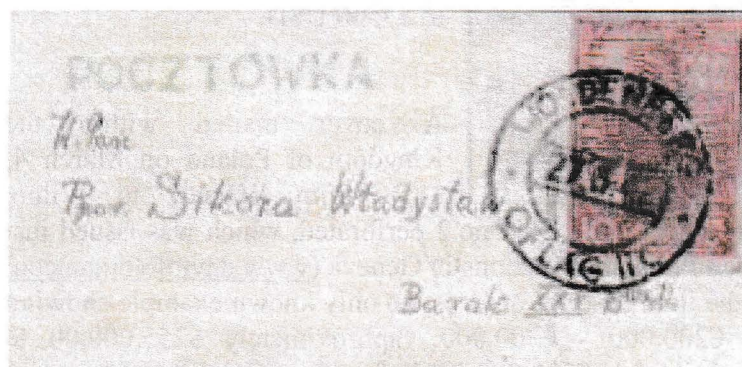


Figure 5

This Type 3 cancel is occasionally found on the first issue Widow's, as the camp recognized the validity of the Widow and Postman stamps until their official withdrawal on 15 September, 1942. Effective on that date first two cancellation types were withdrawn from usage by the post of Camp IIC Woldenberg.

Postcard shown in **illustration 5** is franked with an Easter widow and cancelled with the Type 3 camp post canceller.

Bibliography:

- [1] Jozef Machowski, Katalog Poczty Obozowej . vol.2, Wydawnictwo Artystyczno-Graficzne, Krakow, 1963
- [2] Stanislaw Mikstein, Katalog Znaczkow Poczty Obozowej w Dobiegniewie (Woldenberg IIC), Wydawnictwo “Pionier”, Krakow, 1945
- [3] Stanislaw Pokorski, Katalog znaczkow pocztowych poczty obozowej oficerskich jencow wojennych w niemczech IIC (Woldenberg), VIIA (Murnau). Murnau, 1945

Handwritten with original impressions of cancels from both camps.

Translated from Przegląd Filatelistyczny, 11 (62) / 2007, pp.502-505

Terry Kurzinski

I buy old stamps and Mail

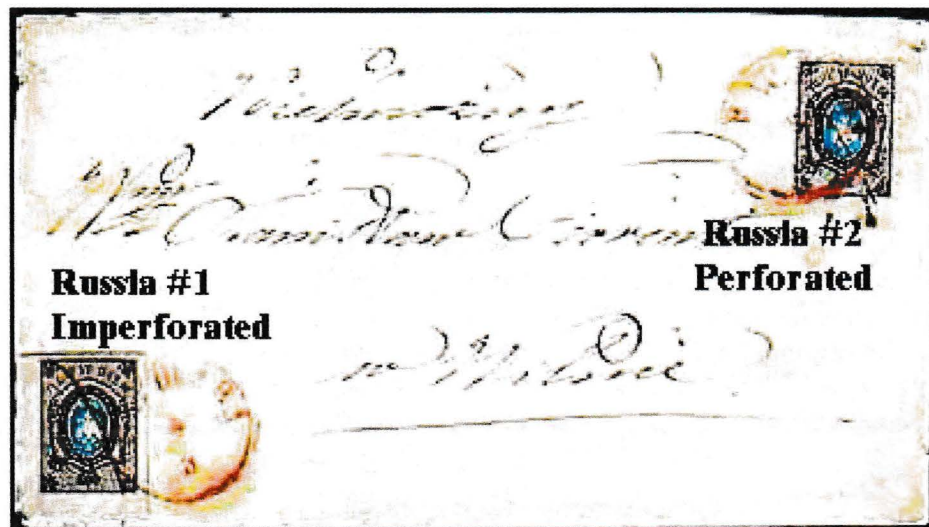
P.O. Box 5845
Rockford, IL 61125
H 815-332-3264
C 815-262-9117 TKURZINSKI2002@YAHOO.COM

During the third quarter of 2008, very interesting Polish and related philatelic items surface at auction in the United States and Switzerland.



In September, Cherrystone Philatelic Auctions (www.cherrystoneauctions.com) offered a number of lithographic screen proofs of the Wodzisław issues of 1944. Six different colors on various papers were offered with an opening bid of US \$500. One of the examples in Venetian Red on thin paper sold for US \$12,000. Five others in different colors on various types of paper sold for prices ranging from \$240 to \$7500 USD.

A cover mailed within the Kingdom of Poland on March 4, 1858 from Warsaw to Wilno, franked with one each of Russia no.1, imperforated and Russia no.2 perforated, which was issued just one month later, was offered by David Feldman Philatelic Auctions in Geneva (www.davidfeldman.com) at the beginning of October. According to the item description, it is the only known example showing such usage. Pre-auction estimates were €200,000 - €300,000. (approximately \$255,000.00 to \$380,000.00). The cover sold for €260,000 (approximately \$330,000.00) before commissions.



GERMANY'S VISTULA FLOTILLA IN WORLD WAR I

Alfred F. Kugel

Prior to the First World War, the Vistula River (known as the *Weichsel* in Germany and as the *Wisła* in Polish today) was a major artery of commerce and communications flowing north from the Carpathian Mountains via Krakow in Austrian Galicia, past Warsaw in Russian Poland and through West Prussia into the Baltic Sea near Danzig. Indeed, toward the southern end of the river was the famous "Dreikaiserreichs-Ecke" (or three empires' corner) at the junction of the pre-1914 borders of three of the major powers of the day -- Austria-Hungary, Germany and Russia. (See map below)

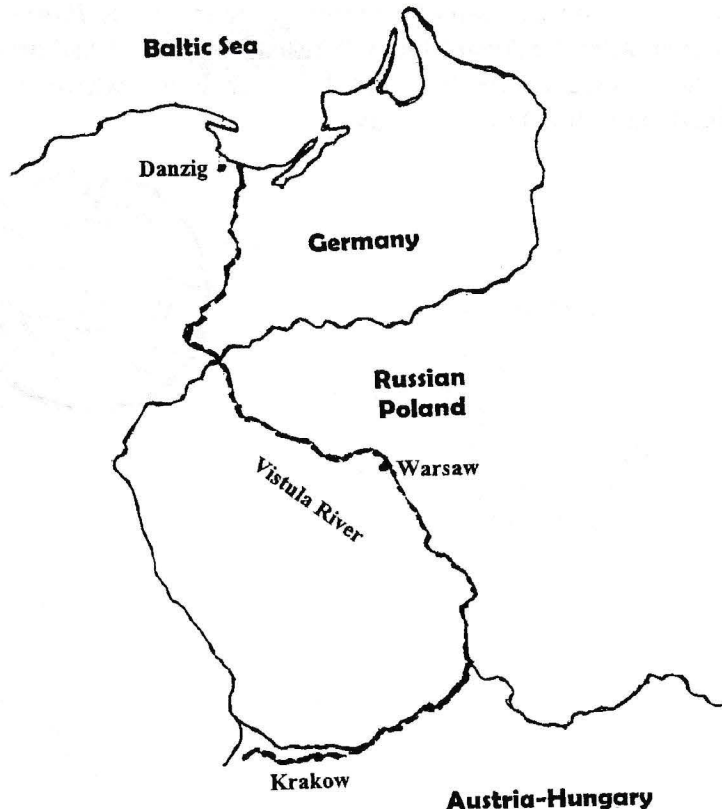


Figure 1. Map showing the location of the Vistula and the borders in 1914.

The actual conflict that was to become WWI, was triggered when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914 as a punitive action in response to the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to its thrones, by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo a month earlier. At that point, the complex system of alliances that had been constructed by the great powers in Europe operated automatically to draw in other countries like dominoes.

Russia declared war on Austria to aid the Serbs, which required Germany to come to the support of its Austrian allies, and France to join in to back Russia. When the Germans invaded neutral Belgium to get at France, Great Britain declared war on Germany. Eventually, the conflict would involve tens of millions of men fighting on four continents, with loss of life and destruction of property on a scale previously unimaginable. Interestingly, by the end of the war, all three empires had collapsed and faded into history.

Because of its location on the borders, the Vistula was the scene of considerable fighting between the Central Powers and the Russians. In addition to battles between land forces in 1914 and 1915, there was naval activity as each of the powers had boats patrolling the river and escorting the barges that moved military supplies to the troops.

One unusual aspect of these operations was the creation of a Volunteer Motorboat Corps (*Freiwilligen Motorboot-Korps* = FMK) in September 1914. It was headed by a former admiral in the Imperial Navy, and its members were civilian boat owners who placed their vessels at the disposal of the military as a means of assistance in the conduct of river operations.

Initially, in 1914, its vessels were employed in the East Prussian theater of war and along the Vistula. The Corps even arranged for the construction of an armored gunboat, the *Panzerboot Weichsel*, which became its flagship. However, after the Austro-German offensive in 1915 had driven the Russian forces out of Poland, most of these vessels were transferred further south, where they joined the Austro-Hungarian Danube Flotilla in patrolling that waterway.

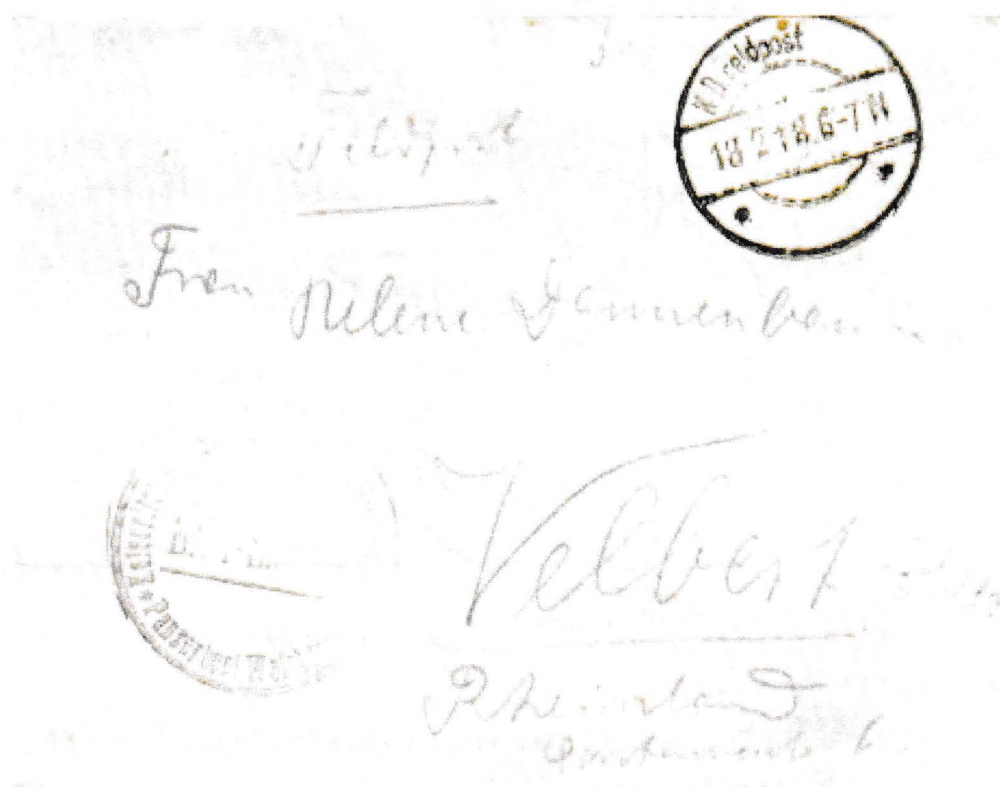


Figure 2. Cover sent from the *Panzerboot Weichsel* through FPO 310 while it was serving on the Danube in February 1918. Cachet is inscribed "Imperial German Motor Boat Flotilla on the Danube" in addition to the name of the vessel.

Like other members of the German military forces at the time, all of the sailors and other personnel of the flotilla could send cards and letters free of postage. In order to qualify for the free franking, an official unit cachet was to be applied to the covers. Thus, a variety of such markings was provided, some of which are very elusive. In a few cases, cachets were provided to individual vessels.

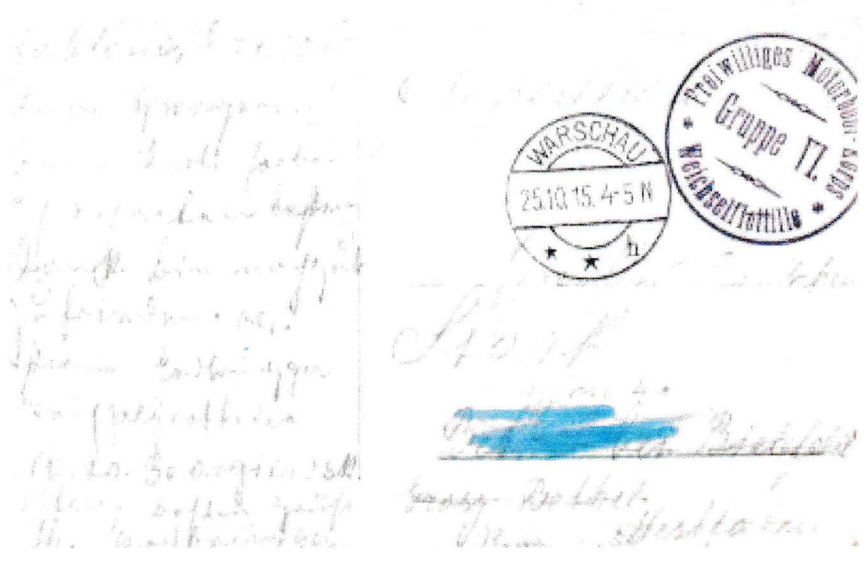


Figure 3. Fieldpost card mailed from Warsaw in October 1915.

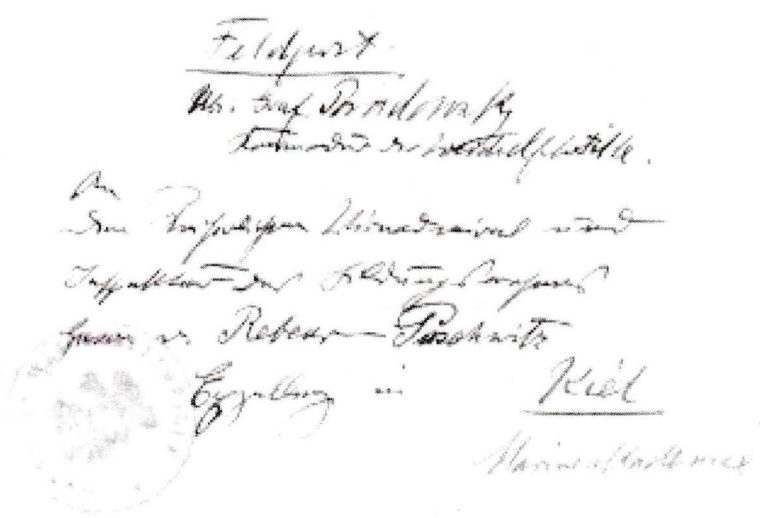
It has an official cachet of Group VI of the FMK



Figure 4. Picture postcard from Warsaw mailed to Berlin in April 1916.

It bears a cachet inscribed "Vistula Flotilla/Steamer Stör."

Figure 5. Fieldpost cover sent from the headquarters of the Vistula Flotilla. It has the appropriate cachet but was apparently delivered to Kiel without any postal markings.



However, most of the special markings were provided for the men in the shore facilities, including the flotilla headquarters at Thorn (Figure 5) and administrative shipping offices there and elsewhere (Figures 6, 7 and 8) and inscribed "Station," "Navigation Office" or something similar.



Figure 6. Fieldpost card mailed from Modlin to Stuttgart in March 1916 with two-line cachet inscribed "Vistula Flotilla/Station Nowo Georgiewsk."

Figure 7. Cover sent from the Navigation Office in Thorn to Bohemia in February 1918.



Figure 8. Cover sent from the Mobile Harbor Office in Modlin to Bohemia in June 1916.

- ▼
- ▼ It bears the only example of an
- ▼ intaglio cachet seen by the
- ▼ author.



The story of the Imperial German naval operations on the Vistula is a very modest one involving only a small number of men and vessels relative to the other military activities that were going on at the time. However, it does provide a highly interesting sidelight for modern day students of military postal history.

References:

"Motorboote im militärischen Einsatz" *Deutsches Schiffsarchiv* (DSA) 24, 2001, published by the Deutsches Schifffahrtsmuseum, 2002.

"Austria-Hungary's Vistula Flotilla in World War I" by Alfred F. Kugel, *The News of Hungarian Philately*, July-September 2002.

"Postage Paid" Oddity

Chris Kulpinski

Every once in a while you come across something and wonder – "gee, I've never seen one of those". Maybe you buy it or maybe you don't, but you never see one again.

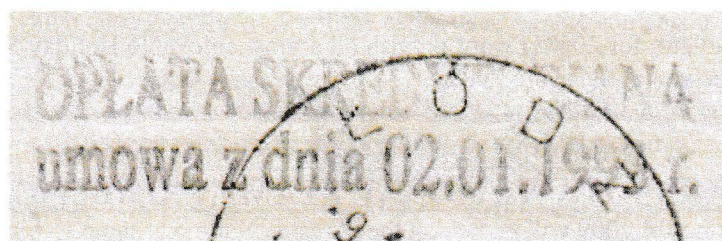
Rifling through my "odds and ends" cover box, I came across a cover that I have not looked at for years. I don't even recall where I got it or how much I paid for it.

There is nothing seemingly different about the cover – a commercial advertising cover with a registration label and a "polecony" (registered) marking in red.

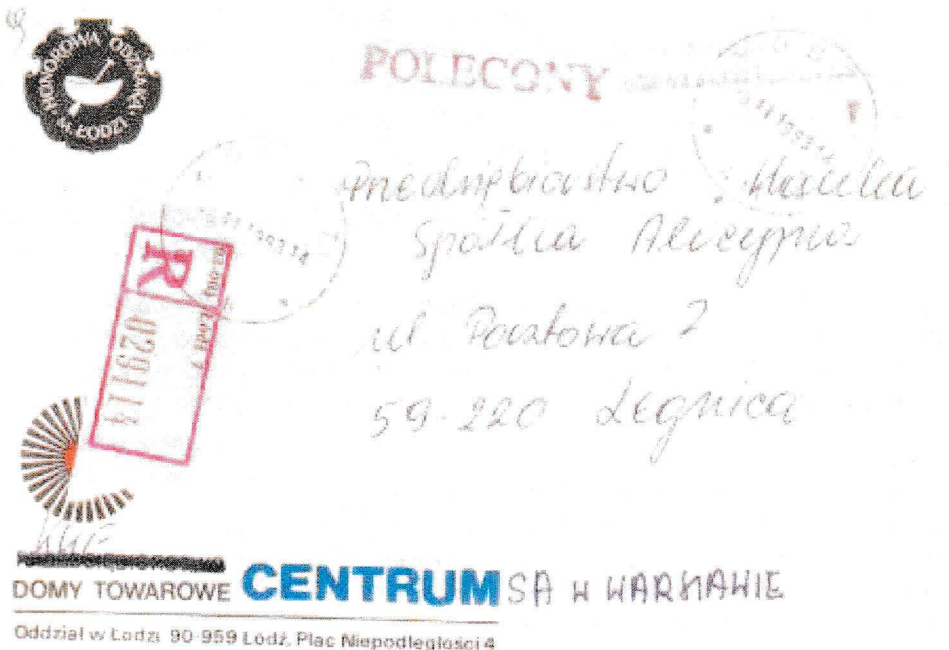
It is the fact that the cover has no stamps that originally caught my attention and since the cover is from Łódź it seemed inconceivable that the post office would have run out of stamps.

At first I thought that the 2 line marking stated that the postage was paid, a common handstamp notation from another era. Closer examination reveals the legend – **"OPLATA SKREDOWANA // UMOWA z DNIA 02.01.1993r"**. Literally translated it states that postage was paid from a credit account established (or agreed upon) on January 2, 1993.

Does anyone else know anything about this payment arrangement? Obviously there should be other covers, but they seem so mundane that they might have ended up in the trash can.



Enhanced scan of payment notation



If you have an item of interest, please share it.

Message from the President

Bob Ogrodnik

These are difficult and unsettling times.....global recession, financial meltdown, plummeting stock market, unemployment and foreclosures on the rise, changes in the Government for better or worse, etc. causing us all great concern and anxiety. However, it is during times like this that I find an effective antidote in my philatelic hobby. I certainly hope that each of you is also finding comfort and enjoyable diversion from these times with your collecting interest.

All the more reason to consider attending and possibly exhibiting at **Sarasota 2009**. In this Bulletin you will find an excellent outline of coming attractions for **Sarasota 2009** by Jim Mazepa. Also note, this bulletin contains a **Sarasota 2009 Attendance Form, which we request that you complete and forward to us (e-mail, snail-mail or fax) promptly**. This will help us to prepare nametags, information packets, and plans for Society events. We look forward to your attendance at our 2009 Annual Meeting and Exhibition.

As mentioned in our previous Bulletin (#532) we plan to introduce our new **Membership Directory at Sarasota 2009**. In the coming weeks you will be receiving a **OLONUS Member Information Validation Form** which we need you to complete and return. The Society will use this information to (1) improve communications with each of you, (2) facilitate communications between members and (3) to ultimately produce the **Membership Directory**. **Your board of directors requests that each of you take the 5 minutes to complete and return this form in the self address stamped envelope we are providing.**

With this being the last Bulletin for 2008, I want to wish all a most enjoyable Holiday Season and better times in the New Year. I hope to see you at **Sarasota 2009**.

POLONUS ANNUAL MEETING: SARASOTA NATIONAL STAMP EXHIBITION

Our Polonus Annual Meeting for 2009 will be held at the Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition in Sarasota, Florida, February 6-8, 2009. The SNSE is regarded as one of the top five national exhibitions in the United States.

There are few better places to be in February than Sarasota, Florida! The weather is fantastic, highs in the 80f's and lows in the 60f's. We are on the Gulf of Mexico and have some of the best beaches in the world. There are many reasons to make this a family event. Besides the beaches, there is world class shopping at St. Armand's Circle, boutique shops in the downtown area (five minutes from the show hotel), the world famous Ringling Museum, a first class national treasure and art museum, including the renowned Circus Museum and Ca d'Zan residence (www.ringling.org/). Selby Gardens is one of the largest botanical gardens in the United States, just a short ten minutes from the exhibition. For the children there is "Jungle Gardens" with real live Florida Alligators and other wild life. A short distance away is Ellenton Mall, one of the largest discount shopping malls in Florida. World famous Bush Gardens is an hour from Sarasota and Disney World is about an hour and a half.

The Sarasota National Stamp Exhibition is extremely popular, but one of the smaller national exhibitions with 200 frames. Polonus has 60 frames reserved, and these will be held only until December 15th. There is ALWAYS a waiting list of exhibitors, so it is VERY IMPORTANT to get your entry form in as soon as possible. The entry forms and prospectus are available on the SNSE Website, www.sarasotastampclub.com

The tentative schedule is:

February 5th: Set up 4:00pm to 6:00pm. No Host dinners to follow

February 6th: Show opens at 10:00am to 6:00pm. 50 dealers will be at the reception
6:00pm: Reception at the home of Dr. James Mazepa

February 7th: Show opens at 10:00am to 6:00pm.

Polonus Board Meeting: 10:00 Hotel Indigo

Polonus General Meeting: 12:00 Hotel Indigo

Awards Banquet at 7:00pm, Sarabay Country Club

February 8th: Show opens at 10:00am to 4:00pm. Take down NO EARLIER than 4:15pm. Please schedule your departures accordingly.

I strongly advise making your air and hotel reservation early, remember, this is high tourist season in Florida. Do try to fly into Sarasota. Delta is the primary carrier (code share Northwest, Continental, Air France) into Sarasota. From Chicago AirTran flies direct, also from other cities through Atlanta. The other option is Tampa which is about 60 miles from Sarasota and will require that you rent a car. However, they may have better air fares on United and Southwest.

Our hotel is the Hotel Indigo, Sarasota (877 270 1392). This elegant boutique hotel is directly across the street from the exhibition. The rate is \$183.00/night, single, double, or triple. Ask for the POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY rate. Suites are \$213.00. The organizing committee has not made arrangements with other hotels, but one might check the websites of La Quinta and Best Western. However, these require a car to get to the exhibition.

I will be happy to provide transportation to/from the Sarasota air port, just let me know your travel plans. With this or any other questions, please email me at jmazepa@comcast.com

Remember, U.S. national exhibitions are very strict about take down time, so plan you departures accordingly.

Welcome to Sarasota! We do look forward to Polonus members attending

Roy Koczarski wrote - I got my copy of the Polonus Bulletin over the weekend. Your article on the ABC's of Exhibiting was very enlightening, but you have misrepresented my Title and Synopsis pages.

The Synopsis page that presented was actually my Title page and the Title page that was presented was my second page of the Title, which described the in detail the camp itself, so the contents of my Synopsis page was not presented.

Sorry for the mix up Roy. However, hopefully the readers were able to realize that there is no one way to win a Gold medal. Thanks for your efforts in exhibiting and contributing to Polish philately.

The **World War I Study Group** is without a leader. **Anatoly Chelnov** had to step down for personal reasons. If anyone is willing to step up and head this group, please contact me (chris@kulpinski.net). If no one steps forward, the group will be delisted.

USEFUL WEBSITES

Following is a list of web-sites relating to Polish philately that you may find useful. Very likely there are others and if you know of any, please let us know so that we can include them in future listings. This list will be published on an ongoing basis so that you do not have to look through old copies of the Bulletin to find the information you are seeking.

American Association of Exhibitors – www.aape.org/index

American Philatelic Society – www.stamps.org

Cherrystone Auctions – www.cherrystoneauctions.com

E-bay – www.ebay.com

Fischer Catalogue – www.fischer.pl

History of Poland on Stamps – www.gopoland.com/history

Polish Collecting – www.polishstamps@yahoo.com

Polish Post Office – www.poczta-polska.pl

Polish Philatelic Literature in English – www.PolishPhilatelicLiterature.com

Polish Philatelic Society – www.polonus.org

Polish Stamp Auction – www.stamps-pl.com

Polish Stamp Encyclopedia – www.home.zonnet.nl/ben_nieborg

Polonica – www.polonica.info/index.html

Stamp Domain – www.stampdomain.com

Thematic – Przedbórz - www.prz.ginsburgs.org

Polish themes on non-Polish stamps - - www.polonica.info

Translation site – www.poltran.com/pl.php4

Worldwide Experts and Forgeries – www.filatelia.fi

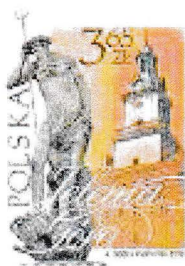


The Beijing Olympic Games

Date of Issue	August 8, 2008
Sheet Format	20 Stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Janusz Wysocki

As one of the sponsors of the Polish Olympic Team, Poczta Polska issued a series of four stamps to commemorate the Games held in Beijing. The Olympic disciplines features on the stamps are swimming, volleyball, fencing and the pole vault, all of which represented the events in which

Polish athletes stood the best chance of winning medals. The stamps are offered in two printing forms: sheets of individual stamps and blocks containing all four stamps. The number eight (8) is considered a lucky number in China, hence the special emphasis on the number in the year 2008. Poczta Polska has been issuing stamps related to Olympic Games since 1956, commemorating the 16th Olympic Games held in Melbourne, Australia. During the next couple months, the Olympic Center of the Zoliborz district in Warsaw will house an exhibition of all of the Olympic issues.



Polish Towns and Cities – Jelenia Góra

Date of Issue	August 1, 2008
Sheet Format	100 Stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designer	Andrzej Gosik

Jelenia Góra appears for the first time on a postage stamp and it is the 19th city in the series “Polish Towns and Cities” issued by Poczta Polska since 2002. The issue celebrates the city’s 900th anniversary with an illustration of the 18th century Town Hall and a baroque fountain of Neptune. Jelenia Góra, a city called the “Pearl of the Karkonosze Mountains”, was built by Bolesław Krzywousty in 1108. In 1742, when Silesia became incorporated into Prussia and later Germany, the city name was “Hirschberg”.



Bridges in Poland

Date of Issue	August 29, 2008
Sheet Format	16 Stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Andrzej Gosik

Poczta Polska issued a series of 4 stamps with famous Polish bridges constructed in the 19th, 20th and 21st century. The Ernest Malinowski Bridge in Toruń is an iron truss bridge for railway built between 1870 and 1873. It was destroyed two times in WWII – by Polish troops in September 1939 and by German troops in January 1945. After the war, the bridge was rebuilt and names for

Ernest Malinowski, a famous engineer who constructed a railway line in the Andes. The Poniatowski Bridge in Warsaw was built between 1904 and 1914 as Warsaw’s third bridge on the Vistula River. It was on this bridge when in 1926, during the May Coup d’état, that Józef Piłsudski met Stanisław Wojciechowski. This bridge was destroyed by German troops during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. It was rebuilt in 1946, however, without the decorative balustrades and benches that were featured in the original design. The Bridge in Maurzyce is the first welded bridge in the world and was designed by Stefan Bryła in 1928. It was built on the Słudwia River. The benefit of welding is significant weight reduction. The Siekierkowski Bridge in Warsaw was built between 2000 and 2002. It is one of the elements of the 8-km long Trasa Siekierkowska yet to be finished. It is the seventh bridge on the Vistula River and is a cable-stayed bridge supported by two pylons, with no pillars in the river’s current. Its characteristic orange cables are to warn and protect birds against crashing into them.



Date of Issue	September 15, 2008
Sheet Format	3 Stamps on Block
Printing Method	Engraving and Rotogravure
Designer	Maciej Jędrzyk

450 Years of Polish Post (1558-2008)

The three stamp block commemorates the 450th anniversary of the Polish Post. Printed on a background of historic panoramas of Kraków and Venice are portraits of three important figures who contributed greatly to the development of the first Polish Post. King Zygmunt August established a permanent postal route from Kraków to Venice in order to manage new affairs in Italy, which arose after the death of Queen Bona, his mother. Thus, on October 18, 1558, the Polish postal service was created. Prosper Prewana, a courtier of Italian descent, was commissioned by King Zygmunt August to supervise the postal service. Sebastian Montelupi took over the administration of the Royal Postal Service in 1564 and is credited with the establishment of regular postal exchanges with foreign countries (weekly deliveries) and uniform rates based upon distances. Postal service was interrupted in the 17th century due to devastating conflicts. However, during King Stanisław August Poniatowski's reign, postal service was made available to all the citizens at flat rates and Postmen (known as "pocztylion" or "kursor") were issued official uniforms and post horns. In 1860, the first Polish postage stamp was issued, twenty years after the first stamp issued in the world, the Penny Black from Great Britain. In 1919, the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs was created and the Second Republic of Poland was admitted to the Universal Postal Union. Many important events in the history of Poland involved the postal service, like the heroic defense of the Poczta Gdańska post office in 1939 or the participation of the Scout's Postal Service in the Warsaw Uprising.



Presidents of the Republic of Poland in Exile

In September 1939, when Germany and the Soviet Union

Date of Issue	September 24, 2008
Sheet Format	6 Stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Agnieszka Sobczyńska

invaded Poland, the Polish government, led by President Ignacy Mościcki, went into exile. The initial plan to reach France failed, as allied countries did not respect agreements prior to the outbreak of war. When France capitulated in 1940, the Polish government accepted the hospitality of London and located its seat in the building at Eaton Place 43, dubbed "The Castle". This served the Polish government in exile until 1990, when following the fall of communism and free elections, the symbolic act of transferring the Presidential Insignia to Poland was taken. Poczta Polska issued a series of six stamps, in a sheetlet format, with images of the Presidents of the Second Republic of Poland in Exile. These are: Władysław Raczkiewicz (1939-1947); August Zaleski (1947-1972); Stanisław Ostrowski (1972-1979); Edward Raczynski (1979-1986); Kazimierz Sabbat (1986-1989); and Ryszard Kaczorowski (1989-1990).



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Date of Issue	September 24, 2008
Sheet Format	6 Stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Agnieszka Sobczyńska



400th Anniversary of the Poles' Arrival in America

The ship "Mary and Margaret" reached Jamestown on October

1, 1608 with a group of new settlers, including five Poles. The group, which also included Dutchmen and Germans, were recruited as a qualified workforce expected to develop industries in the new colony, such as, tar, potash, lye and blown glass. In addition to successfully exporting the first manufactured goods, the Poles were responsible for the first "work stoppage" or "strike", when in 1619 Jamestown announced its first local election and foreigners were left out. As a result of this protest, London central were quick to accede to their demands and the Poles received rights equal to the ones held by other settlers. Poczta Polska issued a commemorative stamp showing an Indian profile accompanied by a drawing symbolizing a Polish settler from 1608, placed against a background containing an outline of both continents. Sets of six stamps are printed on decorative sheetlets.

Date of Issue	September 30, 2008
Sheet Format	6 Stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Agnieszka Sobczyńska



100th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Łódź Sports Club (ŁKS)

ŁKS is the first sports club ever honored by Poczta Polska by the issue of a postage stamp. The stamp depicts in club's color the main sports that were or still are offered by club, i.e., football (soccer), hockey, basketball, tennis, and volleyball. ŁKS is the oldest and largest sports club in Łódź, founded in 1908 upon the initiative of young football fans that used to meet on the ground near factories and created a team called "Łodzianka". During WWI the club suspended its activity, however in the Interwar Period ŁKS was very successful and in 1927-1938 it was playing in the 1st league.

Date of Issue	September 30, 2008
Sheet Format	50 Stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designer	Marzanna Dąbrowska