

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONIUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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Issue 142

September 1956

Polish Balloon Races for the Gordon-Bennet Trophy

by MARJAN DUŃSKI

The First International Free Balloon Races for the Gordon-Bennet trophy took place in Paris, in the year 1906. The transient trophy cup was founded by the well-known American journalist Gordon-Bennet. These races took place eight times prior to World War I, that is up to 1914. After the War the International Balloon Races were resumed in 1920.

Poland, in the years 1933-1938 won four times, namely:

1st—in 1933 in Chicago;

2nd and 3rd—in Warszawa in 1934 and 1935;

4th—in Brussell, Belgium, in 1938.

The 27th International Balloon Races were scheduled for September, 1939 in Lwów—but the outbreak of World War II cancelled these plans. The greatest triumphs harvested American and Belgian contestants. Americans took the first award 10 times.

Poland for the first time tried its luck in 1932—without success. But in the next three years in succession—1933-1935 Poland won—for keeps—the Gordon-Bennet trophy cup, founded by the Chicago Daily News. The last trophy, for 1936, was sponsored by Poland. Its designer was S. Szukalski.

In the 21st International Balloon Races in 1933 held in Chicago, Poland took the First Award with the Polish balloon "**Kościuszko**," manned by Capt. Hynek and Capt. Burzyński. Starting from Chicago, they flew 1360 km. in 39½ hours, and landed in Canada.

In the 22nd International Balloon Races, which opened on 23.9.1934 in

Warszawa—Poland again won the First Award with the balloon "**Kościuszko**" and manned this time by Capt. Hynek and Lt. Pomaski. During this race two balloons, the "**Syrena**" and "**Legionowo**" carried the balloon mail. Besides postage stamps, labels of the Aeroclub of the Republic of Poland were affixed and the mail pieces were handstamped: "**Gordon-Bennet — 1934 — Warszawa — 23.9.1934. Wysłano balonem 'Syrena'**" or "**wysłano balonem 'Legionowo.'**" This three-line stamp was applied either in black or violet color. Also another stamp was used bearing the inscription: "**Expedie par ballon 'Syrena'**" or "**'Legionowo.'**" Both balloons landed in Szczuczyn Białostocki.

The 23rd International Balloon Races for the Gordon-Bennet trophy took place in Warszawa on September 15, 1935.

A total of 13 balloons started from the Mokotow Airfield. The participating nations were: Poland, Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, and U.S. America.

Poland took the First Honors for the third time in succession, thus winning permanent possession of the Gordon-Bennet trophy. The first place won the Polish balloon "**Polonia II**." The second place in this race was won by Poland with the balloon **Warszawa II**. In the third place came the Belgian balloon "**Belgica**."

On September 15, 1935 the balloon "**Legionowo**" took the balloon mail. On the balloon mail items special cancellation were impressed with the following

inscription: **"Międzynarodowe Zawody balonowe 19.9.1935 — Gordon-Bennet—Warszawa 31.,** and a second, box cancellation: **"Poczta balonowa—par Bal-lon."** The balloon landed in Sokołów Podlaski and the mail pieces received the date cancellation of that Post Office: **"Sokołów Podlaski 16.9.1935 r."**

Since the Gordon-Bennet trophy cup became Poland's permanent possession, Poland founded a new award for the next races, which were held again in Poland.

The 24th International Balloon Races for the Gordon-Bennet trophy took place on August 30, 1936 in Warszawa. Participating nations were: Poland, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain and Switzerland. The result:

1st place won the balloon **"Belgica"**—Belgium.

2nd place won the balloon **"Lopp"**—Poland.

3rd place won the balloon **"Deutschland"**—Germany.

With Belgium taking first honors, the next races of 1937 were held in that country.

To commemorate the International Balloon Races for the Gordon-Bennet trophy, the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs reprinted two stamps and overprinted them with a two-versed overprint **"Gordon-Bennet 30.8.1936"** Scott's catalog No. 306, Zumstein No. 328 (value 30 groszy, featuring the Castle at Mira: color rose red overprinted in blue, and 55 groszy, blue, featuring the Raczyński's Library in Poznań, overprinted in rose red—Scott's No. 307, Zumstein 329. Total printing 250,000. Excellent counterfeits exist. (Polonus Bulletins No. 40 and 54.)

The Warszawa Aeroclub's balloon **"Legionowo"** carried the balloon mail.

Cancellations: 1. Date stamped: **Warszawa 31—30.8.36. 12. Letter "b" or "c".** 2. Rubber stamp **"Gordon-Bennet—Warszawa — 30.8.1936 — Międzynarodowe Zawody Balonowe."** The balloon landed at Peliszcze and the flown mail was stamped with the daily date of the Post Office **"Peliszcze 30.8.1936. Letter "a."**

The 25th International Free Balloon Races for the Gordon-Bennet trophy were held at Brussels, Belgium. There were five nations participating with a

total of 12 balloons, namely: Belgium 3, France 2, Poland 3, Switzerland 1, Germany 3.

The score:

1st place—Belgian balloon **"Belgica"**

2nd place—Polish balloon **"Polonia II"**

3rd place—Swiss balloon **"Zurich III"**

5th place—Polish balloon **"Warszawa II"**

6th place—Polish balloon **"Lopp"**

The 26th Int. Free Balloon Races for the Gordon-Bennet trophy were again held in Belgium from the Airport of Liege, with 4 nations taking part and entering nine balloons: Belgium 3, France 2, Poland 3, Switzerland 1. The result of this race was:

First place and the Gordon-Bennet trophy for Poland was won by Capt. Janusz and Eng. Janik on the Polish balloon **Lopp.** Other Polish balloons **"Warszawa II"** took the 3rd and the **"Polonia II"** the 5th place. Since Poland won the first award, the next races for the Gordon-Bennet trophy were to be held in 1939 in Poland.

The 27th International Free Balloon Races for the Gordon-Bennet trophy were to start on Sunday, September 3, 1939, in Lwów. The coming races portended a great deal of attraction. The well-known Belgian balloon pilot Capt. Demuyter was chosen to carry the **"Belgica."** Besides the postage stamps balloon mail on the Belgian balloon also three labels were to be used of 25 gr., 75 gr., and 1 zł. value.

On August 26, 1939 the daily press reported that Capt. Demuyter left Antwerp aboard the SS **"Cieszyn"** . . . but that story for another time!

Article written for the **"Polonus Bulletin"** to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the first balloon races and the 20th Anniversary of the 24th International Balloon Races for the Gordon-Bennet trophy in Warszawa—by Marjan Duński.

This article was translated from the Polish by Walter Szymlek.

APPLICANT PENDING

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POLES ARE NOT PRAYING TO THE RIGHT ST. HEDWIG

by EDWARD NOWAK, SR.

(Reprinted from MEKEEL'S WEEKLY STAMP NEWS of 8/6/56)

The other day, lecturing on stamps of Poland, I was commenting upon the 1938 Polands "History Stamp Issue" and produced for better emphasis, a stamp picturing Hedwig, Queen of Poland (1384) and Jagiello, Prince of Lithuania. Stamp known as Scott No. 322.

This was the immediate cause for questions as to who was, or is, the real Saint Hedwig so familiarly known and deeply loved by all Polish and Lithuanian people.

For almost 500 years a great number of Poles and a large number of Lithuanians have thought that the saintly Queen Hedwig (Jadwiga) who during her life showed great devotion to Christianity is, in fact a recognized saint and are praying to her—when, as a matter of fact, the real Saint Hedwig, canonized in 1267, is an entirely different person and somewhat less well-known in Polish history.

Hedwig, Duches of Silesia, was born about 1174 at the Castle of Andechs, the daughter of Berthold IV, Count of Andechs and Duke of Croatia and Dalmatia.

One of eight children, two of young Hedwig's four brothers became Bishops. Of her three sisters one married the King of Hungary and another became the Abbes at Kitzingen. It was at this monastery of Kitzingen that the young Duches was educated—according to an old biographer—at the age of 12 was married to Henry of Silesia, who in 1202 succeeded his father as the Duke of that teritory.

Upon the death of her husband, she took up permanent residence at the monastery at Trebintz where she devoted herself to the spiritual exercises of prayer and mortification as well as continued her work of charity in the habit of Cistercian nuns.

She was canonized by Pope Clement IV in the year 1267. She was honored as the Patroness of Polish Silesia.

Queen Hedwig, on the other hand, pictured on the Polish stamp with Jagiello—which started this discussion



—are much better known in Polish history and the saintly life of the Polish Queen caused her to be honored, at least in Polish minds, as a saint and patroness of Poland. Many Poles and Lithuanians are under the impression, even today, that Queen Hedwig is the real saint and pray to Her.

Thirteen-year-old Hedwig came to Poland after the death of Ludwig, King of Poland and Hungary. Two days after her arrival she was crowned Queen of Poland on Oct. 13, 1384 at Krakow. Lithuania, at the time of Hedwig's coronation, was ruled by a pagan Prince Jagiello, who then sent emissaries to Krakow to ask 13 year-old Hedwig for her hand in marriage.

Hedwig accepted Jagiello's offer of marriage upon a condition that the Lithuanian Prince and his country embrace Christianity. The marriage of Hedwig and Jagiello brought about a union of Poland and Lithuania and Ruthenia. As a result, Russia, Germany, Prussia, Mongols and Tartars were hesitant to attack Poland and the world enjoyed peace.

In order to bring higher education to the poorest masses of Poles Queen Hedwig gave all her jewels to endow the Krakow Academy and with the help of Jagiello rebuild and enlarged that oldest seat of learning known today as Jagiello University. Among the many world renowned graduates, Nicolaus Copernicus is the most outstanding.

The pious Queen Hedwig lacked no bravery. When Jagiello was in Lithuania laboring with Catholic clergy to hasten that country into the fold of Christianity, Poland was invaded by Hungarians. Hedwig with sword in hand took charge of Polish Knights, met the enemy and defeated him driving the horde beyond the country's boundary.

At noon, July 17, 1399, the flag of mourning arose on the mast of the Wawel Tower. The devout Queen Hedwig was dead after reaching only her 28th birthday.

Because of her saintly life, her accomplishment of bringing all of Lithuania into the fold of Christianity, her charity and love of her subjects, the people of Poland still mistakenly believe that she, the Polish Queen Hedwig, is the saint—and pray to her.

A Polish stamp has brought out this beautiful story and brought to light the two Hedwigs. One a Queen but not a saint, the other, just a simple Silesian Duches—but regardless of philatelic facts, who can say no saint this Queen Hedwig?

One is canonized, the other is not, but the heroic virtue of both is a source of encouragement and inspiration to Poles and Lithuanians — as well as thousands of humans who like through philatelic study to learn of great personalities of every country in the world —That's philatelic research.

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THE VI. COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE, 1945

by MARJAN DUŃSKI

After surcharging the 25 groszy (Moscow printing) to 1 zł. value for domestic letters up to 20 grams, the bulk of the remaining 25 groszy stamps of that issue, from the second printing, was used as basic stock for further surcharges of two values, urgently needed for foreign mail. For ordinary letters up to 20 grams—2 zł. and registered letters 3 zł., creating thus the IV consecutive issue.

Simultaneously they were used to commemorate the re-organization of the chief Departments of the Government—as clearly stated in the postal regulation, authorizing this issue.

Regulation

For the occasion, on December 31, 1944, of the transformation of the Polish National Liberation Committee into Temporary Administration of the Republic of Poland—the following postage stamps will be issued:

a. Value 2 zł. surcharged from the 25 groszy, with the National Emblem, and overprinted "P.K.W.N. (31.XII.1944)"

"Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego."

b. Value 3 zł., surcharged on the same Issue and overprinted:

"31.XII.1944 (R.T.R.P.)"

"Rząd Tymczasowy Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej."

This regulation is effective from January 15, 1945.

Minister,

(—) Eng. T. Kapeliński

Commemorative Issue

Honoring the Government Agencies on the occasion of transformation of the "National Liberation Committee" into the "Temporary Government of the Republic."

Stamp No. 4—25 groszy, red with black typographic overprint. Overprinted by the graphic firm of Pietrzykowski, Lublin. Perf.: 12,1/4.

No. 7—2 zł.—value (P.K.W.N.)

On 25 groszy, red.....200.000

Same, Inverted overprint..... 100

Same, Double overprint..... 100

No. 8—35 zł.—31.XII.1944 (R.T.R.P.)

On 25 groszy, red.....200.000

Same, Inverted overprint..... 100

The overprinting was carried out with much less care than the previous one. Shifted overprints are common. Of closer interest are the **vertical shifts**, causing the printing of the values either at the bottom of the stamps, missing altogether from stamps of the bottom horizontal row (the 5th and 10), finally printing of the value at the top and bottom on the stamps of the 5th row.

A singularity is noted by A. Laszkiewicz in his catalog:

"ZNAKI POCZTOWE POLSKI
DEMOKRATYCZNEJ"

(Second Edition, 1949)

Namely on stamp No. 7 the lines are interchanged—second with third. 2 zł. 31.XII.1944 (P.K.W.N.)

The characteristics compare to those of stamp 48 (98) and it was used on a philatelic letter: Lublin 1 r. 06.45-8.

The gum is either flat or glossy. The printing form encompassed 50 overprints. It was composed first for the 3 zł. value and then remade for the 2 zł. value by exchanging the corresponding types. The height of the overprint is 18.5 mm; length of the initials "R.T.R.P." 2.00 mm; of the "P.K.W.N." 20.5 mm.

The dimensions between the horizontal dashes—in relation to the adjoining stamps in the sheet are:

Between the:	1&2	2&3	3&4	4&5	5&6	6&7	7&8	8&9	9&10
	4.4	4.5	3.6	4.5	5.	4.4	4.4	3.5	4.4
	4.4	4.5	3.6	4.5	5.	4.4	4.4	3.5	4.4
	4.5	4.5	3.6	4.5	5.1	4.3	4.5	3.5	4.4
	4.5	4.4	3.6	4.5	5.1	4.4	4.4	3.6	4.4
	4.5	4.5	3.7	4.5	5.1	4.4	4.4	3.5	4.4

Characteristics, deviations and flaws in the type of the overprint show:

Stamp No.:

- 6—Damaged cipher "9" at the top. (only on the 2 zł.)
- 16—The right dash broken (only on the 3 zł.)
- 17—Cipher "9" damaged at top.
- 20—The oblique line of "4" broken.
- 25—The right dash broken.
- 30—The initial "P" damaged (only on the 3 zł.)
- 40—Incision in the second "4".

Also the stamps in the vertical rows: 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34, 39, 44, 99 have the **left** horizontal dash thinner from the **right**. All these distinctive marks would make position identification or plating possible—so much easier, if in larger blocks—and when compared with a whole sheet.

Known are also vertings or creases in sheets, showing oblique or vertical overprints of stamps No. 7 and 8 on the gummed side of the stamps. Although both, the III and IV Issues, values 1, 2, and 3 zł.—were adapted to the postal rates—they did not fulfill the expected task in postal services, because, as commemorative Issues, they were promptly sold out in large quantities for philatelic purposes, leaving in strict sense as ordinary postage stamps only the 50 groszy of the II Issue—(Moscow printing)—for all frankings till the end of March, 1945.

Despite the fact that the provisional Issues, values 1, 2 and 3 zł. are of two different editions, introduced for use by two separate postal regulations, the 1 zł. by P. Regulation from December 28, 1944, the 2 and 3 zł. by P. R. from January 12, 1945—they are catalogued as one Issue and spaced in albums as one set because they refer to the transformations in the Government of the Republic of Poland and both are commemorating these events.

The 1, 2 and 3 zł. Commemoratives, III and IV Issues were withdrawn from postal usage on April 15, 1945. The concerning regulation by the Ministry of P. and T. is printed on page 140-6 of "Polonus Bulletin," describing the III Issue.

Bibliography:

The same as described with the III Issue, plus: Prof. St. Mikstein: "Czwar-

te wydanie z dnia 15.1.1945," "Pionier Filat," Nr. 2-1945.

This article was translated from the Polish by Walter Szymlek.

TID BITS

At the last meeting in July Dr. M. Uznanski brought down a box of cigars and passed them out to the members. The occasion—he and his missus celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. Congratulations!

* * *

Anyone interested in corresponding with philatelists in Poland, write to our secretary. He will furnish you with names and addresses.

* * *

At the last August meeting George Kobylka showed us the proofs on the Post War Poland album pages he is publishing. He goes into detail and shows the date of issue, type of printing, colors, designers, engravers etc., and quantity printed (where this information was available). He has a system whereby you can collect these issues specialized or just straight. You merely remove the loose leaf sheets showing varieties if you don't want to specialize.

This is the first album of its kind to ever be published and is ideal for the English speaking Poland collector.

* * *

J. EDWARD VINING DIES

Word has reached us that J. Edward Vining has suffered a fatal heart attack at his home in Tampa, Florida. At the time of his death, he was the Executive Secretary of the SPA. He was also an Ex-President of the SPA.

With his ultimate passing to his eternal reward, we join with his many friends in the Polonus Philatelic Society and the SPA in expressing to his family our sincere and deep feeling of sorrow and mourning at the loss of a true and respected friend.

* * *

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POLONUS THIRD ANNUAL PICNIC had the biggest crowd ever — over 100 attended. The races went off well, the egg-throwing contest raised the most laughs, and most tiring were the volleyball games and swimming. Food dished out at Doc Kozy's Aquilla Resort was delicious. Free goodies were distributed to the kiddies and the festivities were climaxed with a wienie and Polish sausage roast. During the afternoon members gathered for this snapshot:



First Row: Joe Kupiec, Zdzislaw Wagrowski, Chester Mikucki, Barney Fialkowski. **Second Row:** Roman Reinowski, Stefan Kochanski, Chester Makowski, Leo Topolinski, Dr. Kozakiewicz, Anne Mikucki, Ben Reeves. **Third Row:** Victor Hermanowski, Mathias Pristika, John Skotnicki, Ant. Leman, M. E. Kot and Adam Kloskowski.

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POLISH KINGS AND THEIR LENGTH OF REIGN

by John Skotnicki

Since so many Poland stamps show different kings, and because of the recent interest of numerous members in Polish Coin collecting, I herewith submit an index of the different Polish Kings with Length of Reign —

MIESZKO I	960 — 992
BOLESŁAW I	992 — 1025
MIESZKO II	1025 — 1034
CASIMIR I	1039 — 1058
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JADWIGA in 1386 and united Lithuania	
with Poland and co-reigned with	
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CASIMIR IV JAGIELŁO	1447 — 1492
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STEFAN BATORY	1576 — 1586
SIGISMUND III WAZA	1587 — 1632
WŁADYSŁAW IV	1632 — 1648
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MICHAEL	1669 — 1673
JAN SOBIESKI III	1674 — 1696
AUGUST II The Strong	1697 — 1733
AUGUST III	1733 — 1763
STANISŁAW AUGUST PONIATOWSKI	
Last King of Poland	1764 — 1795

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Polonus Philatelic Society is non-political. The views expressed by the authors of articles appearing herein do not necessarily express the views of the Polonus Philatelic Society.

FROM THE SPA CONVENTION

The August SPA Convention held at Grand Rapids, Michigan with the Kent Philatelic Society as host, was well attended by Polonus members led by Ben Reeves (who also happens to be the SPA President).

Besides being a booth holder, our Society had many member's exhibits on the floor. In the Court of Honor we found Steve Rich's Cape of Good Hope Triangles and Ben Reeves' Heligoland. The Research Award Class included Dr. Uznanski's Przedborz Locals. The Historical and Biographical Class included W. Kolakowski's Polish Concentration Camp Murnau exhibit.

Dr. L. P. Kozakiewicz was the instigator of the Slavic Countries Class. He donated the trophy. In this class were Myron Steczynski's Krakows, Dr. Uznanski's Przedborz, W. Kolakowski's Groszy Overprints, C. Schafer's Central Lithuania and C. Mikucki's Montenegro.

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