

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Meets 2d & 4th Friday of each month at Polish Falcon Hall, 1062 N. Ashland Av.

Issue #77

September 1949

Polish Stampless Covers Before 1800

by Stephen G. Rich



MITAU

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3



4

Eighteenth century Polish stampless covers are not plentiful. Even an adequate listing of them has hardly been available hitherto. The most adequate record of them is in Dr. Mikstein's 1917 book, published by "Ikaros" at Bialystok. This is in Polish. The only listings in our language are those in the Domanski & Rich article of 1942 (Stamp Specialist, Orange Book), and in my article adding thereto (Stamps, Feb. 28, 1944). By a curious mischance, Dr. Mikstein's records as published, were not available to Mr. Domanski and myself when we wrote in 1942. Thanks to Mr. W. E. Harriman of Coulsdon, Surrey, England, it is now possible to combine the Mikstein information with what we previously had, for a comprehensive listing.

Poland's "earlies" to 1800 fall into four groups, with only two aberrant items outside them. These are the groups:

1. Crown and initial.
2. Crown and posthorn with office name in circle.
3. Reversed "white letter" crown and posthorn in oval with office name.
4. Straight line marks.

There is no time-sequence of these types. All four were used simultan-

eously, and apparently without any particular size or type of office using any particular type. They begin thus: Crown and initials in 1773; Crown and posthorn circles in 1773; straight lines in 1775; and reversed white letter ovals in 1785. Thus the only sure fact is that the reversed-letter ovals begin a decade later than the other types.

The Crown and initial type is adapted from the postmark type in use in France at that period. The French type is without border but most Polish examples have it. The straight line types are exact replicas of those in use in various countries of Western Europe at this period. But the two Crown-and-posthorn types are Polish designs, not previously found elsewhere.

Crown and initial type marks known are, as shown in Fig. 1; (all in black) D in oval 16x18 mm.; Dubno, Nov. 10, 1789.

K in oval 15 x 17 mm.; Krakow, July 15, 1787.

L in oval 14 x 15 mm. (perhaps a poorly struck circle); Lublin, 1780 to 1791 (also used later under foreign rule to 1802).

W in 20 mm. circle; Warsaw, 1773 to 1786.

W in 16 mm. circle; Warsaw, 1778 to 1787.

W without border; Warsaw, Feb. 24, 1790 and Jan. 17, 1794.

Straight lines known are, as shown in Fig. 2; (all in black)

KOWNO, gothic capitals 3x13 mm. 1792-1795.

MINSK, roman capitals 3x13 mm. boxed, single-line box 5x15 mm., 1783-1784. (From Minsk Litewski).

MINSK, reversed or white letters on black ground, white double line border; box 7x23 mm. Two lines of wording; (letters before and after town are really ornaments of approximate shape)

U C MINSK O U

R. 1778 IAN UI

MITAU, italics 4x21 mm. capitals, March 29, 1775.

Petricovia, roman upper and lower case, 4(caps) /2 (l.c.) x 21 mm. 1781 (From Piotrkow).

Crown and posthorn types are, as shown in Fig. 3 (all in black save one from Zamosc):

BIALYSTOK, 17 mm. circle, Dec. 1797
BIELSK, 16 mm. with wreath instead of plain outer border and crown in border at top, 1778 and 1779.

BIELSK, 15 mm. circle, Nov. 3, 1784.
CRACOVIA, 16 mm. circle, March 21, 1773.

GRODNO, 15 mm. circle, Dec. 20, 1786, Mar. 30, 1787.

KALISZ, 15 mm., 1787

KRZEMIENIEC, 21 mm. double border circle, Apr. 5, 1788.

KRZEMIENIEC, 17 mm. double border circle, 1790.

KRZEMIENIEC, 17 mm., very close double border circle (looks like single), date not known. Not the same as the 1790 type.

LEOPOLIS, double border oval 16x20 mm., prior to 1779 but date not exactly known. From Lwow.

LUCK, 16 mm., 1789. Crown and posthorn very sketchy and almost like long blobs in only pictured copy.

MERECZ, 17 mm. circle, Dec. 10, 1786.
MITAU, 17 mm. circle, 1783.

PIASKI, oval 23x20 mm., 1791.

PULAWY, 18 mm. circle, 1789.

TORVN, 18 mm. circle; KP and PP each side of crown; date unknown

WINNICA, 16 mm. circle, 1778.

ZAMOSC, 16 mm. circle, 168 black; red at unknown date.

Crown and posthorn white letter types known are, as shown in Fig. 4; (all in black)

BIELSK, 15x17 mm. oval, no white

border line, 1785.

BRZESC, double white border, outer one of white dots, oval 15x17 mm., 1792.

PRENY, single white border, 18 mm. circle, Aug. 19, 1793.

TULCZIN, double white border, oval 19x21 mm. 1785, 1788.

Two Austrian marks, in the parts of Poland seized by Austria, are much like the crown and posthorns, but have the Austrian double eagle instead of crown. Both in black:

CASIMIR, 18 mm. circle, date unknown, but is 1795 or later, from Kasimierz.

LEMBERG, 18 mm. wavy circle, 1776. From Lwow.

Two aberrant marks found on Polish early stampless complete the list: 20 mm. circle, July 14, 1788, with

KAMIEN:

PODOL: in two lines between rules, with rule between and short rules at top and bottom within circle. Crudely hand-cut.

24/19 mm. double circle? March 21, 1792, used from Miedzyborz:

Between circle:

FIZYLIE. ARKO. BATAILLION:

In center: MILITA

RIA

in two lines with line above and below across inner circle.

This list is believed to include every 18th Century Polish Stampless listed by Polanski, Rachmanow, Mikstein, Domanski and myself in any publication anywhere. It is the first attempt at such a listing in the English language.

MISSING BOOKLET

A small volume on Polish Stampless Covers presented to the Society by Prof. Mikstein has been missing from our library for some time. Members are asked to check and see if they have this missing booklet. It is needed badly. An article on Stampless Covers is being formulated and this booklet is needed to complete it.

AN APPEAL FOR ARTICLES FOR THE BULLETIN

The Publications Committee is in need of articles for future issues of the BULLETIN. If you have thought of writing on some phase of Polish philately which interests you, we urge you to do so. Send material to Chester Makowski, 2215 W. Cortez St., Chicago 22, Ill.

Stwosz, Giant of Polish Art

by John Switalski

(Reprinted from LINN'S WEEKLY STAMP NEWS)



Four centuries ago an old sculptor, laying aside his hammer, his chisel, and his carving knife, passed into the Great Beyond. Little today is known about the life of Wit Stwosz but among art lovers the world over his name is honored and remembered from his works which rank him among the great masters of the middle ages.

The masterpiece of Stwosz is the high altar of St. Mary's Church in his native city of Krakow, that most interesting of all Polish towns. Carved entirely from wood, it forms a huge triptych which, when closed, has the appearance of a box, 42 feet high and 35 feet wide, on which are carved twelve beautiful scenes from the life of Christ and His Mother. When opened, a magnificent sight greets the eye. On each of the side wings are three more biblical scenes and in the vast middle section, with statues of greater than life size, is depicted the death of Mary in the arms of the Apostles and Her Assumption into Heaven. One cannot but be awestricken by the tremendous dramatic power and realism that characterizes this work of art, which unquestionably is the finest example of wood-carving in the whole wide world. Possibly the only works that can approach it are the creations of the same artist in Nuremberg, Germany. Also to be found in this church is a remarkable stone-carved crucifix which illustrates the wide versatility of Stwosz's genius.

After having embellished his native city with monuments in wood, in stone and in bronze, the sculptor, whose fame had spread throughout Europe was invited to Nuremberg. There, Veit Stoss, as the Germans called him, became the inspiration of the famous Nuremberg School which produced Al-

brecht Durer, Adam Kraft and Peter Vischer.

Early in 1933 the Polish postal authorities announced that a stamp would be issued commemorating the 400th anniversary of the death of Stwosz. However, when the time came to decide upon the type of stamp, the officials realized it would be impossible to reproduce satisfactorily a photograph of the artist's masterpiece, the high altar in Krakow's Church of Mary. This altar is so vast that on the largest of stamps a picture of it would never show clearly enough even the principal figures in the main portion of the altar. A picture of a fragment of the altar was also quite unsatisfactory. What to do? After going into a huddle the officials decided to issue a series of 32 special stamped postcards, each bearing a picture of a fragment, with titles in Polish and in French. With the exception of one, all of the pictures on the post cards show sections of the altar. The one exception is the picture of the crucifix in the side aisle of the same church.

In spite of the appearance of these post cards, Polish philatelists still wanted a postage stamp and continued their demands until the authorities heeded.

The Wit Stwosz Commemorative is the largest Polish stamp that has so far been issued, measuring nearly two inches in length and one and one-eighth inches in width. Because of this unusually large size the picture shows fairly distinctly the main group in the central section of the altar. Though it is an exceptionally attractive stamp, anyone who has not had the good fortune to see this altar cannot begin to appreciate its beauty from the picture that it bears.

A Discussion About Counterfeit Stamps

by Julian T. Baber, U. S. Secret Service

(Reprinted from STAMPS of April 16, 1949)

Editor's Note: The following is an address delivered by Julian T. Baber, U. S. Secret Service, before the Collectors Club of Washington, D. C., March 29, 1949.

Any discussion of counterfeit stamps before a group of stamp collectors, it seems to me, is comparable to carrying coal to Newcastle, for the collector who graduates from the beginner class is always on the qui vive for bogus issues, which he shuns instinctively through his ability to detect their fraudulent character. The serious-minded collector provides himself with strong magnifying glasses, watermark detectors, perforation gauges, and other devices useful in identification of certain genuine as well as counterfeit issues. He also may have access to laboratories fitted with ultra-violet and infra-red lighting equipment. Such collectors are truly students of the Hobby of Kings.

The counterfeiter who turns to postage stamps is generally an expert in the graphic arts field. Nevertheless, regardless of his skill as a hand engraver, photo engraver, or lithographer, his handiwork can not stand the scrutiny of close inspection. Faulty gumming is one of his weaknesses, and his success with the perforating machine has never been noteworthy, notwithstanding the availability of modern devices designed for this purpose.

As jealous guardians of United States currency, coinage, and other Federal obligations, the Secret Service wages war relentlessly against that segment of the underworld which ventures into the counterfeiting field. Whenever a bogus postage stamp appears, the urge to suppress it arouses as much interest on the part of the Secret Service as a new counterfeit bill, even though the penalty for the offense is not quite as severe.

Regarding counterfeiters of postage stamps, the United States Criminal Code, Section 501, Title 18, which was revised by the 80th Congress, has the following to say:

"Whoever forges or counterfeits any postage stamp, or any stamp printed upon any stamped envelope, or postal card, or any die, plate, or engraving therefor; or

"Whoever makes or prints, or knowingly uses or sells, or possesses with intent to use or sell, any such forged or counterfeit postage stamp, stamped envelope, postal card, die, plate, or engraving; or

"Whoever makes or knowingly uses or sells, or possesses with intent to use or sell, any paper bearing the watermark of any stamped envelope, or postal card, or any fraudulent imitation thereof; or

"Whoever makes or prints, or authorizes to be made or printed, any postage stamp, stamped envelope, or postal card, of the kind authorized and provided by the Post Office Department, without the special authority and direction of said department; or

"Whoever after such postage stamp, stamped envelope, or postal card has been printed, with intent to defraud, delivers the same to any person not authorized by an instrument in writing, duly executed under the hand of the Postmaster General and seal of the Post Office Department, to receive it

"Shall be fined not more than \$500 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both."

Section 502 (formerly Section 349) relating to postage stamps of foreign governments reads as follows:

"Whoever forges, or counterfeits, or knowingly utters or uses any forged or counterfeit postage stamp or revenue stamp of any foreign government, shall be fined not more than \$500 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both."

Insofar as the Secret Service is concerned, a counterfeit stamp has the same status as a counterfeit coin or bill, and whenever one comes to our attention, either through observation or information, it is our duty to seize it and investigate its origin as far as possible. It has been said that many stamp collectors have a few counterfeits in their albums—some as space fillers, perhaps—and there are others who make a specialty of collecting counterfeits. I am quite sure these collectors are unaware that it is illegal, under existing statutes, to possess such stamps, and they will probably voice violent protest when they are called upon to surrender them to the

government. For the information of collectors, as well as dealers, in this category, Section 492, Title 18, of the U. S. Criminal Code reads as follows:

"All counterfeits of any coins or obligations or other securities of the United States or of any foreign government, or any articles, devices and other things made, possessed, or used in violation of this Chapter, or of Section 331-33, 335, 336, 642, or 1720, of this Title, or any material or apparatus used or fitted or intended to be used, in the making of such counterfeits, articles, devices or things, found in the possession of any person without authority from the Secretary of the Treasury or other proper officer, shall be forfeited to the United States. Whoever, having the custody or control of any such counterfeits, material, apparatus, articles, devices, or other things, fails or refuses to surrender possession thereof upon request by any authorized agent of the Treasury Department, or other proper officer, shall be fined not more than \$100 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both."

It has been argued by some collectors and dealers that counterfeit stamps are necessary to their study of stamps to protect themselves against bogus issues. As a stamp collector, I do not subscribe to this theory, even if it were legal to possess counterfeit issues. In my opinion, the best way to determine the validity of a stamp is to examine the suspect issue against a stamp known to be genuine. In other words, if you know a genuine stamp when you see it, you will not be deceived by a counterfeit of the same issue. In support of my opinion, may I refer to a book by Hermann Schloss, international stamp expert, intended as a guide for the student of stamps to help him distinguish between genuine and counterfeit issues of the old German States. In this treatise, Mr. Schloss takes an entirely different approach to the study of counterfeits from that contained in other works. Instead of pointing out the variations and discrepancies in existing counterfeits, he stresses the distinguishing characteristics of the genuine stamp. And may I say that examination of a counterfeit stamp of a certain issue will not help you to identify the distinguishing characteristics of the genuine stamp which the counterfeit simulates.

Suppose the average citizen should

be permitted to possess counterfeit coins and bills for the reason I have just outlined from the philatelic angle. The law provides that any person possessing counterfeit coins or bills, knowing them to be counterfeit, must surrender them to any authorized agent of the Treasury Department. If he refuses to comply, steps will then be taken through the offices of the United States attorney having jurisdiction. To my mind, Section 492 is crystal clear, and I am confident stamp collectors generally will observe its provisions.

In browsing among local stamp shops, I have observed counterfeit United States stamps on display and it has been my duty to confiscate them and ascertain something of their history. A few weeks ago, a local dealer exhibited counterfeits of three U. S. newspaper stamps (Scott Nos. PR1, PR2, and PR3. Genuine stamps of this issue were printed in 1865 by the National Bank Note Company. Inquiry disclosed that the owner obtained the counterfeits in a miscellaneous collection purchased at auction. On another occasion it became necessary to seize a counterfeit 90c blue postage stamp of the 1857-61 issue. This counterfeit was made in Germany soon after the date of original issue and was discovered among other stamps acquired by a collector during a tour of Europe a few years ago. Incidentally, these counterfeits were not offered for sale as genuine, and the dealer was unaware of the provisions of Section 501, Title 18.

In conducting an educational campaign 10 years ago to protect the public against counterfeit money, which was circulating actively at that time, the Secret Service adopted the slogan "Know Your Money" and emphasized the point that persons who know genuine money will not be deceived by spurious issues. This slogan may well be considered by stamp collectors in changing it to "Know Your Stamps," for collectors who know genuine stamps when they see them will not be fooled by bogus issues.

Plans are being made by the Program Committee for the 250th meeting of the Society. This meeting will fall on the second Friday in November.

RESIGNED

Mitchell Lisiewicz

The Secret of Dr. Frank Disclosed!

by Tadeusz Gryzewski

(Translated from PRZEGLĄD FILATELISTYCZNY)

For a long time now there appeared in international philatelic publications a 20 groszy General Government stamp showing "Governor-General" Dr. Frank.

The story that prevailed with this stamp was that when the Hitler regime was slowly dying out, Dr. Frank who lived at the king's castle at Krakow, had visions of becoming the chief executive of the General Government. Secretly he ordered the printing of stamps with his portrait on them at the Government Printing Office at Vienna. Hitler learned of this action and disapproved of it.

The editor of the "Austria Philatelist" personally went to the Vienna Printing Office but could not trace the above story. His hypothesis was that these stamps were printed elsewhere in Vienna by the Polish Underground which was to use them on letters containing death sentences sent to high Nazi officials in the General Government.

The fact that the stamps were not printed at the Government Printing Office—we can agree to as the stamp itself is crude in comparison. The paper is thinner, perforated 12½, the gum is different. Besides this the stamps do not have the margins we see on the regular General Government issues.

The stamp is of a 20 groszy value olive brown in color. It appeared in London (brought there from Vienna) and there aroused inquiries.

Quite by accident, I met a person who was a mediator with the Polish Underground and the anti-Hitler Austrian Underground. This person disclosed to me the secret of Dr. Frank.

Being in Vienna in 1943 at the request of the Austrian underground, this person enroute to Warsaw took along a parcel containing about 100 of these stamps together with Austrian Underground newspapers which illustrated this stamp and had an explanatory article. The article said that Hitler's power is coming to an end, and that Dr. Frank who wants to become the head of the General Government has declared himself free of the influence of Hitler and Himmler, and evidence of this action is that he ordered the issuing of his special stamps.



The mission after a successful landing in Warsaw, was extended to an anti-Hitler organization in Germany. The German Underground sent these newspapers in envelopes franked with this stamp to numerous high Nazi officials there. Evidently they wanted to confuse and undermine the Hitler authorities.

During the occupation I saw original letters franked with this stamp together with a pair of Hitler 2 groszy stamps. Recently, I received from the President of the Vienna Police A. Klauser, a photograph of an original letter with this stamp pasted on the back. It was cancelled "Warschau C 2" with the letter "o" and the date "20.6.43—17." The letter is addressed to "Arlo Otto Dr., Wien 1/1, Franz Josefs Kai. 43." I learned from the Police President that in the Police Criminal Section in Vienna, in the department that handles counterfeit stamps there is another similar letter. This letter was received in its time by the Detective Bureau in Vienna from the Main Police Criminal Office in Berlin. The letter had this stamp and the cancellation "Kielce 13.6.43" and was addressed to "M. Bartolsa in Dortmund, Albert Voegler Str. 63, event. Sanatorium Glotterbad, Sudlicher Schwarzwald by Freiburg and Br." This cover does not have a receiving cancellation as it was confiscated by the Police. The third letter was reproduced in the "Austria-Philatelist" bearing the Dr. Frank stamp and the cancellation "Warschau C ", 20.6.43.

As we see it, the Dr. Frank stamp was not officially issued nor was it an intended issue. It was not postally issued but it was used on letters. Without a doubt, it is a curiosity, reminding us of the so called "spy stamps"

of World Wars I and II issued by the Bureau of Intelligence.

The question arises (a question that is repeatedly asked) does it belong in a collection? My opinion is that (if you can get one) it should be in a specialized General Government collection only because of its historical connection—depecting the situation at that time.

INFO FROM POLONUS MEETINGS

Another theme for the 1950 Polpex seal has been suggested. Dr. Kozakiewicz said that next year will be the 550th anniversary of the marriage of the Polish queen Jadwiga to Jagiello of Lithuania which resulted in the Union of Lithuania with Poland.

A membership drive was proposed by Barney Flalkowski. Discussions followed, and it was decided to start the ball rolling next month.

Treasurer Adam Koskowski reported a treasury balance of \$600.15.

Lately, after every meeting of the Society we've been having a small

Beeba. Food was provided at different meetings by John Wendt, Dr. Kozakiewicz, and by a regular Polonus visitor—Sid Shayman.

Congratulations to our newly married member Thaddeus Dombek. He attended the last meeting fresh from his honeymoon out West.

NEW MEMBER

John C. Czarnowski

14214 Maine Street, Detroit 12, Mich.

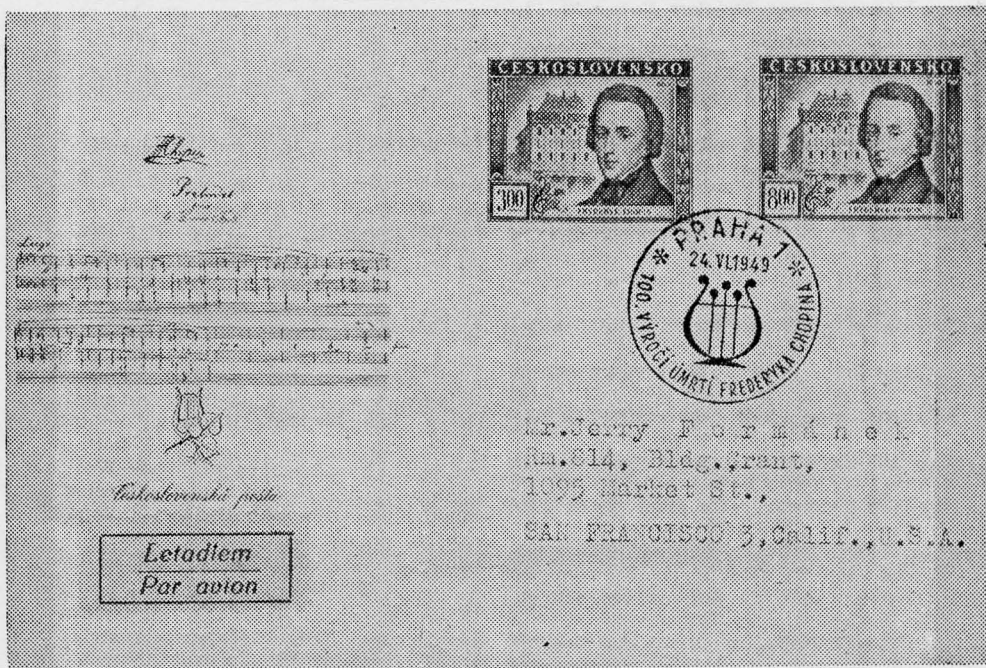
APPLICATION PENDING

Robert J. Dybas

39 Hibbard St., Amsterdam, N. Y.

RE: PROF. MIKSTEIN'S ARTICLE

Regarding the article "Postage Stamps and Their Classification in Polish Philately" by Prof. S. Mikstein that appeared in the last two issues of the BULLETIN, Dr. Kozakiewicz summed up the general attitude of the membership. Dr. Kozakiewicz said that philatelists would agree with Prof. Mikstein 100%, as he kept his classification of stamps "straight to the line."



A first day cover from Czechoslovakia with a commemorative set of Frederic Chopin stamps. The pictorial cancellation shows that the stamps were issued June 24, 1949, at Prague. The stamp shows a portrait of the Polish pianist and composer, with the Polish National Theater in the background. The cachet reproduces a Chopin manuscript for one of his famous Preludes. (Cut courtesy WESTERN STAMP COLLECTOR).

NEW ISSUES

by Jack Domar

The first of the new series printed by the modern offset methods, (bi-metallic offset) were released on July 22nd which was the 5th anniversary of PKWN. Although this method is not as fine as steel engraving, it is much superior to the old normal offset.

The set consists of three values—10, 15 and 35 zloty.

On the 10 zloty-gray is shown the East and West highway in Warsaw as seen from the Silesia Bridge. The 15 zloty-red, President Bierut, is similar in design to the present issue, with the exception that it is enclosed within four panels. Across the top "Piec Lat Polski Ludowej" (5th Anniversary of the present Polish Government). On both sides is the date 22-VI-1944 and across the bottom 15/Poczta Polska—two line/Zl. On the 35 zl. blue is shown the new antenna of the Radio station at Warsaw.

The 10 and 15 zl. stamps were designed by Prof. Wacław Borowski, the 35 zloty was designed by Mr. Richard Kleczewski. They were etched by Bogusław Brandt (10 zl.), Marian R. Polak (15 zl.) and Stefan Łukaszewski (35 zl.)

They were printed in sheets of 100 and perforated—total issued 1,000,000 and printed in PWPW in Łódź.

It is probable that any commemorative issues to be released until the 1st of the year will be printed by offset in PWPW in Łódź. The present current issue (President Bierut) are printed in Kraków. It is planned however that after the first of the year all stamps will be steel engraved.

The much discussed 500 zloty Air-mail stamp has been officially approved. The design is by Mr. J. Wilczyński, (on a background of a modern city, the torso of a worker is shown looking skyward at a plane flying by). However, since it is to be steel-engraved, it probably will not appear before early in 1950. It is also rumored that 2, 3 and 400 zloty values will also be issued.

The G. P. O. announced that designs will be accepted for 3 new series. 1st "Men of the Year" Mickiewicz, Pushkin, Slowacki, Chopin; 2nd, 75th Anniversary of the U. P. U. (three denominations); 3rd "30th Anniversary of the workers Trade Union (three denominations). Entries closed the 11th,

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2144 W. Potomac Ave.
Chicago 22, Ill.

Associate Editors this issue

Bert Powell

20th and 30th of July respectively.

Postal Cards

On July 22nd the current issue of cards will appear, but with two different excerpts taken from speeches by President Bierut.

Envelopes

An imprinted 15 zloty stamp also was released on July 22nd. They too contained 2 different excerpts from speeches by President Bierut.

At the same time an imprinted 15 zloty (The Spring of Nations) envelope with writing paper will be released for circulation. The price of this envelope plus writing paper is 20 zł.—Printed in the National Printing Office in Kraków.

J. Bieniecki

Przegląd Filatelistyczny

POLONUS MEMBERS AND CALPEX

At the recent CALPEX and 55th Annual convention of the S. P. A. held at San Francisco August 18th to 21, member Ben Reeves was presented the Langerndorf Medal for outstanding work in the S. P. A.

Among the exhibitors and winners of awards at this show were member Steve Rich with his Union of South Africa exhibit, member Leo J. Topolinski with his Prisoner of War—Woldenberg IIC exhibit, and Chester Schafer with his 19th Century Poland exhibit.

MEMBERS MART

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