

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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The National Assembly Issue of Poland

By Vincent Domanski, Jr.

On June 4, 1919, in commemoration of the first meeting of the National Assembly (SEJMU), the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs of Poland issued its first commemorative series of six different stamps. One may wonder why a series of stamps should be authorized and issued for such an occasion. Bearing in mind that at the conclusion of World War I, Poland was in the most difficult position of all the reborn or resurrected nations of Europe; that her territory was ravished, her finances reduced to chaos and that internal disputes concerning her government continued; that General Josef Pilsudski was unable to weld the country into an autonomy, with the future seemingly hopeless until Ignace Jan Paderewski, who commanded unlimited prestige, arrived from the United States early in 1919 and used his influence to promptly settle the various differences, so that it was possible to hold elections for a constitutional assembly. Poles truly were jubilant that after a century of oppression they were free and independent and able to govern themselves. A feat such as the opening of the National Assembly was indeed considered a great Roman Holiday for the Poles.

The Assembly convened June 4th, 1919, to pass a vote of confidence in the then existing Paderewski Government and to name Pilsudski as the head of the State. L. Gardowski, head

of the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs appointed Edmund Bartłomiejczyk, well known artist, to submit six designs suitable for such an issue.

The first submitted designs were all allegories having to do with the Polish State, with the inscription "ROK PIERWSZEGO SEJMU" (Year of First Assembly). These were not accepted but ordered changed to include portraits of Paderewski, Pilsudski and



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FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3



Trampezyński, as well as three allegories. I was fortunate to receive from Edmund Bartłomiejczyk, copies of the original signed drawings used for submitting the first designs. These sketches are shown above.

All the stamps were lithographed at Warsaw, on thick wove paper and some values are known to exist on a ribbed wove paper, all perforated $11\frac{1}{2}$. Perforation varieties likewise exist, such as clean, clear cut perforations,

and rough coarse perforations, and with small and large perforated holes. These stamps also have various kinds of gum, white, yellow and brown. All the stamps have been issued imperforate but were not sold to the public at the post offices. They are very RARE.

Many plate varieties are found, most prominent being scratches over letters, dots between, and over and under letters which are commonly found on

lithographed stamps.

The six final designs are all inscribed with the words "POCZTA POLSKA SEJM 1919 ROKU." They are as follows:

10 Fen.—A vertical stamp, design of Polish White Eagle crowned in tribute to ancient Poland, in red lilac, with a variety of shades. Number of stamps issued was 14,584,800.

15 Fen.—A horizontal stamp, with the portrait of Ignace Jan Paderewski, printed in red, with varieties of shades. Number of stamps issued was 26,787,200.

20 Fen.—A large square stamp, 21 mm. x 25mm. with the portrait of Wojciech Trampeczynski, once professor of law and social economics at St. Petersburg and at Warsaw, the first Speaker of the National Assembly. Printed in brown, with varieties of shades, two distinct dies are noted. In the first, the numeral 20 can hardly be distinguished, and in the second the background lines were fuller which makes the numerals stand out. The total number issued, both dies, was 13,992,000 stamps.

This same design was also issued in a smaller size, 17mm. x 20mm., of which 1,000,400 stamps were printed in brown. These were shortly withdrawn as the size was found to be unpopular with the postal clerks.

25 Fen.—A horizontal stamp with the portrait of General Jozef Pilsudski, with the same design as that of the 15 Fen. printed in olive, with shade varieties. Number issued was 59,650,800 stamps.

50 Fen.—A large horizontal stamp, with an allegorical design, depicting the White Eagle, watching the Polish Ship of State once more sailing the seas. Printed in blue green with varieties in shades. Number printed was 66,345,400.

1 Mark.—A large horizontal stamp, with an allegorical design of a winged Gryphon (Poland) awaking and with its fore paws on Roman fasces (symbol of power) taking up the government as a free Republic. Printed in violet, light and dark. Number of stamps issued was 21,430,000.

Attention is called to the fact that there were two distinct printings. The first was coarse, the second was more detailed, clear and outstanding. While the National Assembly (SEJM) was in session the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs had a special cancellation killer made and used for these stamps.

MEET THE NEW MEMBERS

Member No. 193. Derek Palmer, Cassilla 2393, Santiago de Chile, Chile, So. America. (EPP)

Member No. 194. August J. Hrivnak, 174 Addison Rd., Riverside, Illinois. (U. S., Czecho-Slovakia, Poland)

Member No. 195. Augustus Cihanowycz, 615 Front St., Dunellen, New Jersey. (EPP, Italy, Hungary, Netherlands, Dutch Colonies)

Member No. 196. Miss Celena K. Gorski, Nanticoke State Hospital, Nanticoke, Pa. (U. S. and General)

CORRECTED ADDRESS

Miss Regina B. Sierowiecka,
3568 East 117th St., Cleveland, Ohio

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

At the Sept. 10, 1943, meeting of the Society the amendment to the constitution creating a new kind of membership—life members—was passed. Dues for life members is the sum of \$25.00, and no more dues or assessments. Applicants for life membership must be members of the society for at least one year.

How about it members? Become a Life Member! Send \$25.00 and your name to the Secretary, J. J. Domar, 3715 Clinton Ave., Berwyn, Illinois.

It really would be quite a tribute to our Society if we could publish a large list of Life Members in the next issue of the BULLETIN.

CHESTER MIKUCKI

The Navy claims another of our members. On Sept. 14, 1943, Chester Mikucki left civilian life and became a member of that splendid fighting machine, the U. S. N.

Chester leaves us with a record of accomplishment which is difficult to match. From the very first thought of getting the collectors of the stamps of Poland together until the day of his leaving to serve his country, he was engaged in the activities of the society. First as Treasurer for two years, then as Librarian and Historian for two years and all the time in addition he had charge of the sale of souvenir sheets. He was also Program Chairman, during which time he instituted the "BEEBAH" as a part of the activities of International Philatelic Week.

All of the members, officers and directors wish him God Speed and a safe return.

