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THE FIRST ISSUE OF PRZEDBÓRZ LOCALS

By DR. MATTHEW E. UZNANSKI

(Reprinted from STAMPS of 8/14/56)

The stamps of Przedbórz have undoubtedly proved a stumbling block to almost every collector of Polish stamps. While a few articles of the peculiarities exist in foreign languages, I have yet to come upon a complete, concise and clear description of these stamps in English.

The first and second issues were authorized, printed and issued by the Austrian Military Field Post in order to supplement the service of the Field Post Office occupying that area. Therefore, these two issues have a different status from the next three issues and the ordinary local stamps issued in Poland. They are worthy of notice and study.

During this time, there were many local post offices in operation that issued local stamps without judgement or reason. In **Regent Encyclopedia**, the following definition of "Locals" is given:

"Stamps are said to be 'Locals' when their franking validity is limited to a town, or district or some restricted service by carrier, tram or packet boat. We do not apply the term to government issues of stamps which, prior to the extension of postal agreements, had no validity outside the country of origin. Locals issued by government authority are closely related to the ordinary governmental stamp issues. By far, the greater proportion of local stamps had their source in either municipal or local undertakings, many of them of

great interest as pioneers of postal progress, blazing postal routes long before slowmarching official demonstrations were moved to supply the public needs in the matter of cheap and frequent communications."

Therefore, a Local stamp is one having franking power within a restricted area or particular place. The restriction usually pertains to a municipality, town, or district, rather than the entire state or country.

The administration of these Local Posts is by the inhabitants, rather than by the state or country at large.

Some of the Local Posts were organized with the sanction of the State or Federal government, or during the war with the sanction of military authorities. Others were issued purely by the local government assembly, and finally, most of them by private sources, from a purely speculative standpoint.

Up to the year 1899, stamps (labels), postal stationery, and covers of private and local posts were looked upon by these early collectors as an essential part of their collections. Catalogs, stamp journals, magazines and papers gave as much prominence to them as to the official and government issues.

After 1899 the constant growth in the number of official stamps issued by the different governments created a continuous interest for the collection of these stamps and a rapid cessation of collecting private or local posts. Soon

the catalogs ceased to list them, and magazines discontinued articles about them, so that many present collectors are ignorant of their existence and the important part they played in the early postal history.

I wish to call to attention the fact that the By-Posts, Treaty Posts, Dockwra, Express Companies, and the Thurn and Taxis, were largely responsible for, and assisted in, the building of the present postal system as we know it today. No country's postal history is complete without a knowledge of its "Locals."

After the occupation of the Kingdom of Poland (that part of Poland under the Russian rule) by the Austrians in the south and Germany in the north, the civilian postal service was not only seriously disrupted in some parts, due to the prevailing war conditions, but in other parts ceased to exist.

Even the establishment of one Field Post Office in each district did not meet the needs of the civilian population. All civilian mail was dealt with by military authorities. These military field post centers were usually established at some railroad town. From there the mail was distributed to the adjoining towns. No carrier service was rendered; therefore, the civilians had to collect their own mail at the post office. This obviously caused great inconvenience to those who lived some distance from these military post offices.

An excellent example of this situation was the town of Przedsbórz, where Austrian armies had a military field post. This post had full charge of all civilian mail, but did not render any carrier service between the post office and the addressee. Some difficulty was encountered with the outgoing mail. Letters had to be brought to the Field Post Office, censored, a field post stamp applied and cancelled before the letter could be mailed.

The town of Przedsbórz is located above the river Pilica in the county (Powiat) Konecki, province (Województwo) of Kielce in southern Poland.

The closest railway stations are Radomsko on the Częstochowa-Warszawa railroad, and Końsk on the Łódź-Koluszki-Ostrowiec railroad. Końsk, the

closest, was twenty-three miles away.

Just before the war Przedsbórz had a civilian population of about 6,000. It is famous for its synagogue, dating from the eighteenth century, with a very interesting decoration carved in wood of the rustic style. This area was occupied by the Austrian army, and the postal system came under the jurisdiction of the Austrian Field Post Office.

A branch of the Austrian Military post office was located in Przedsbórz, which only took care of the military mail, and did not handle the delivery of civilian mail. All the mail from Warsaw, Kraków, Łódź and Częstochowa was delivered to Końsk. Here the military and civilian mail was checked and censored, then delivered to Przedsbórz. The military mail had priority and was sent immediately to its proper destination. Delivery of the civilian mail was slow and precarious, and at times had to wait until someone called for it at the local post office. This created a great inconvenience for the people of Przedsbórz and the surrounding villages.

The necessity of delivering the civilian mail to its addressee was finally realized, and in the early part of December 1917, the Austrian Military authorities gave permission for a civilian postal service to deliver the civilian mail. This service was organized under the immediate control of the Military postal authorities, who also provided a special courier between Końsk and Przedsbórz for the civilian local mail. The task of delivery of the local civilian mail was impowered to the town magistrate or village bailiff, who belonged to the particular military district. He was responsible for delivery of all civilian mail to the addressee and for the collection of all the outgoing mail and preparations of it for mailing.

At the beginning mail was delivered without any extra charge. This entailed a certain amount of expense for handling for which the town had no funds. Later, the military authorities permitted a carrier fee to be collected. Due to the lack of control and a great deal of financial misunderstanding, the military authorities ordered the printing of the First Issue of Przedsbórz stamps.

The ordering, printing and issuing of the stamps was completely under the supervision of the Military Field Post command. It is not known why this peculiar mail handling was instituted. It probably came about in accordance with an order rendered by the Chief of the Military Field Posts in that area to supplement the service.

Nowhere else in philately do we find a situation where the Field Post had complete charge of the mail service, and, in addition, issued stamps of a postage due nature for local carrier service. The validity of these stamps was restricted to the town of Przedsborz and the immediate outlying villages.

The mail was franked according to a standard set by the Field Post, and the carrier collected the fee according to the affixed stamps.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. First class mail | 4 groszy |
| 2. Registered First class mail | 6 groszy |
| 3. Cards | 2 groszy |
| 4. Printed matter | 2 groszy |
| 5. Telegrams | 10 groszy |

All mail matter had to be franked with these stamps before it could be delivered to the addressee. It also had to be cancelled by the following Field Post cancellation: K. U. K. ETAPPEN-POSTAMT / Przedsborz Kries Konsk / and date.

The revenue for delivery was not compulsory. The receiver could pay the assessed amount or accept the letter, remove its contents, and return the envelope to the carrier. These, in turn, were sold, and the money collected helped to pay the general expenses for handling the mail, or was turned over to charitable organizations.

The same holds true for the Second Issue of Przedsborz.

The third, fourth and fifth issues of Przedsborz have a completely different status, and are typical Local stamps, issued by the municipality with the sanction, but not under the direct control, of the Military Field Post.

If we assume that Postage Due stamps are used and applied to mail matter where extra postage is to be collected for delivery from the local post office to the addressee, then we can finally assume that the First and Second Issues of Przedsborz are truly

Postage Dues of Local nature, authorized, printed, issued and controlled by the Austrian Military Field Post at Przedsborz.

STAMPS OF THE FIRST ISSUE

The Przedsborz postal service during the Austrian occupation was under the Military Field Post and of the K.U.K. Ettappenpostamt Second Class.

The issue appeared on December 18, 1917. It consisted of two stamps:

- a. Two grosze —printed in carmine and white
total number, 3,000 stamps
- b. Four grosze—printed in blue and white
total number 5,000 stamps

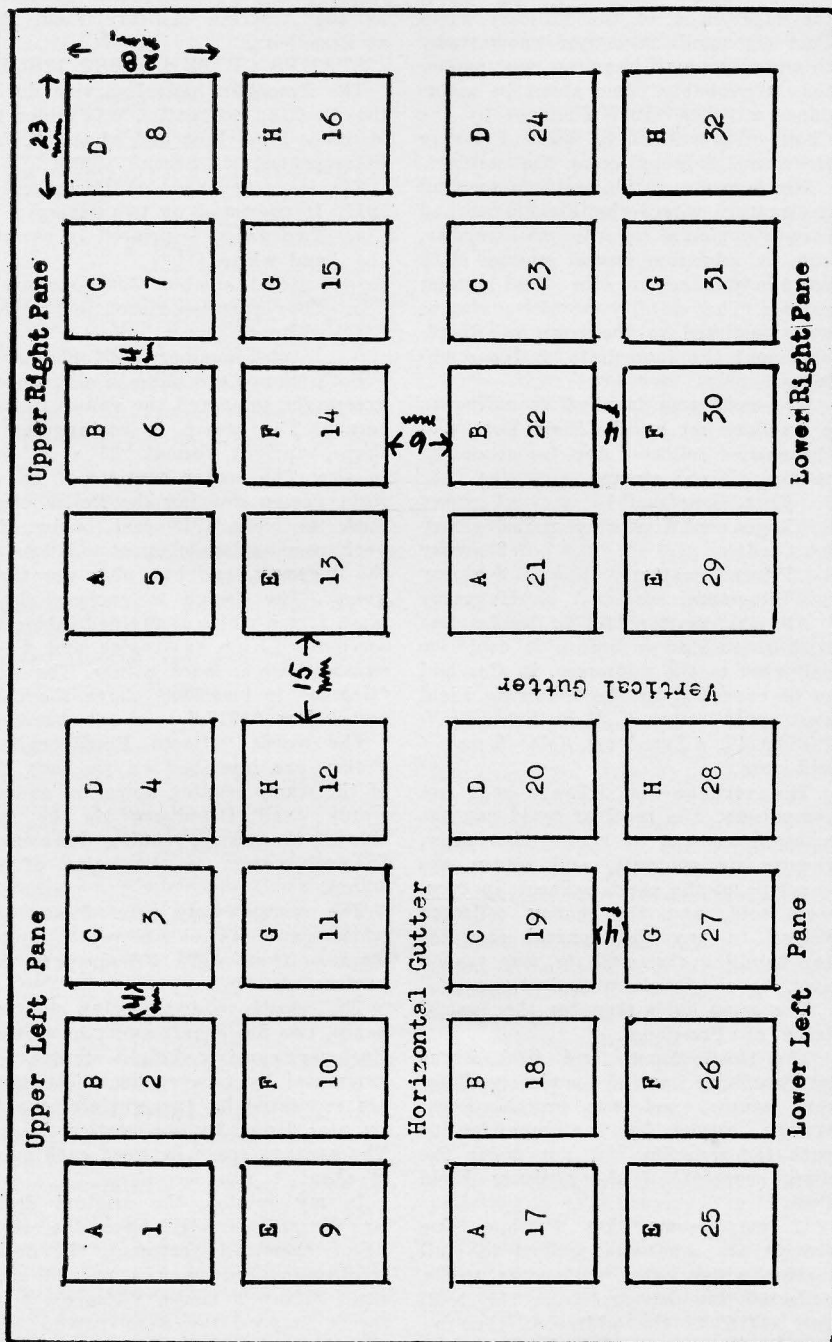
Both stamps are alike in all respects, except for color and the values in each corner. The stamp is rectangular in shape, upright format, 23 x 28 mm. in size. The center consists of an upright design showing the Polish eagle, with the year 1917 just below. The background is made up of red dots for the 2 groszy, and blue dots for the 4 groszy. The design is enclosed by a plain frame which is divided into eight sections: four rectangles and four squares, one in each corner. The word "Grosze" is inscribed above the eagle and below "1917."

The words "Miasto Przedsborz," in Polish, are inscribed on the left side of the stamp reading upwards; and the words "Stadt Przedsborz" on the right side of the stamp, reading downwards. In each corner is the value of the stamp.

The stamps were printed on plain white paper in sheets of thirty-two stamps. They were lithographed and perforated 11½.

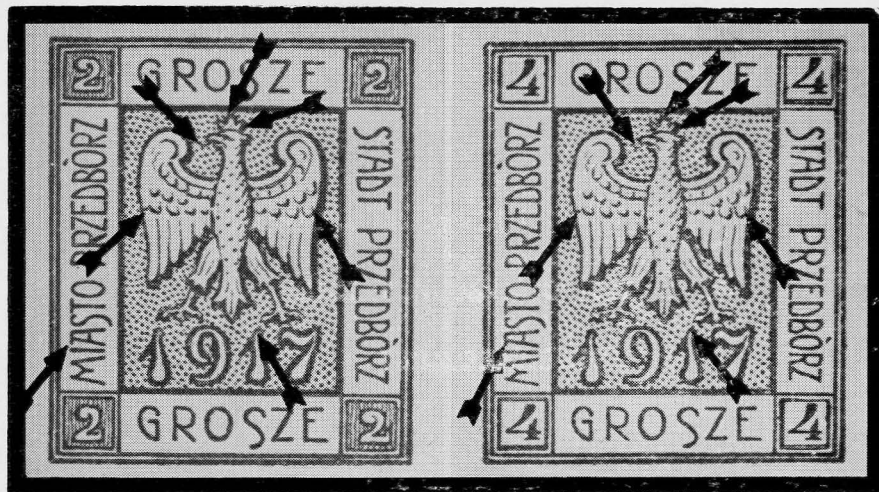
The sheets are made up of four panes, two horizontal and two vertical. Each pane consists of eight stamps, four horizontal by two vertical. The panes are separated by two gutters, one horizontal 6 mm. by one vertical 15 mm. The average space between each stamp is about 4 mm.

In my opinion, the original design was drawn directly upon the stone. After chemical treatment, the design was reproduced upon a special paper eight different times. These eight different impressions were pasted together in such a way as to make up a pane of eight stamps. These were trans-



Layout of a sheet of stamps of the first issue of Przedbórz, issued December 18, 1917. Sheet is made up of four panes: two horizontal, two vertical. Panes are separated by two gutters: one horizontal, one vertical. Each pane consists of eight stamps: two rows, four horizontal, two vertical. To locate a stamp in a pane a letter was used to indicate each stamp in the pane, starting with the first stamp in the upper left corner of the first row of the pane, and proceeding to the right to the end of the pane, then starting on the second row.

Stamps lettered from A to H indicate the number and position of each stamp in each pane in the sheet. To locate a stamp in a sheet a numeral was used to indicate each stamp in the sheet, starting with the first stamp in the upper left corner of the first row and proceeding to the right to the end of the first row in the sheet, then starting on the second row and proceeding as above until all stamps in the sheet are numbered. Stamps numbered from 1 to 32 indicate the number and position of the stamp in the sheet.



All cuts illustrated in this article are through the courtesy of STAMPS weekly magazine.

Illustrations A (left) and B, showing general characteristics found in each stamp in the pane.

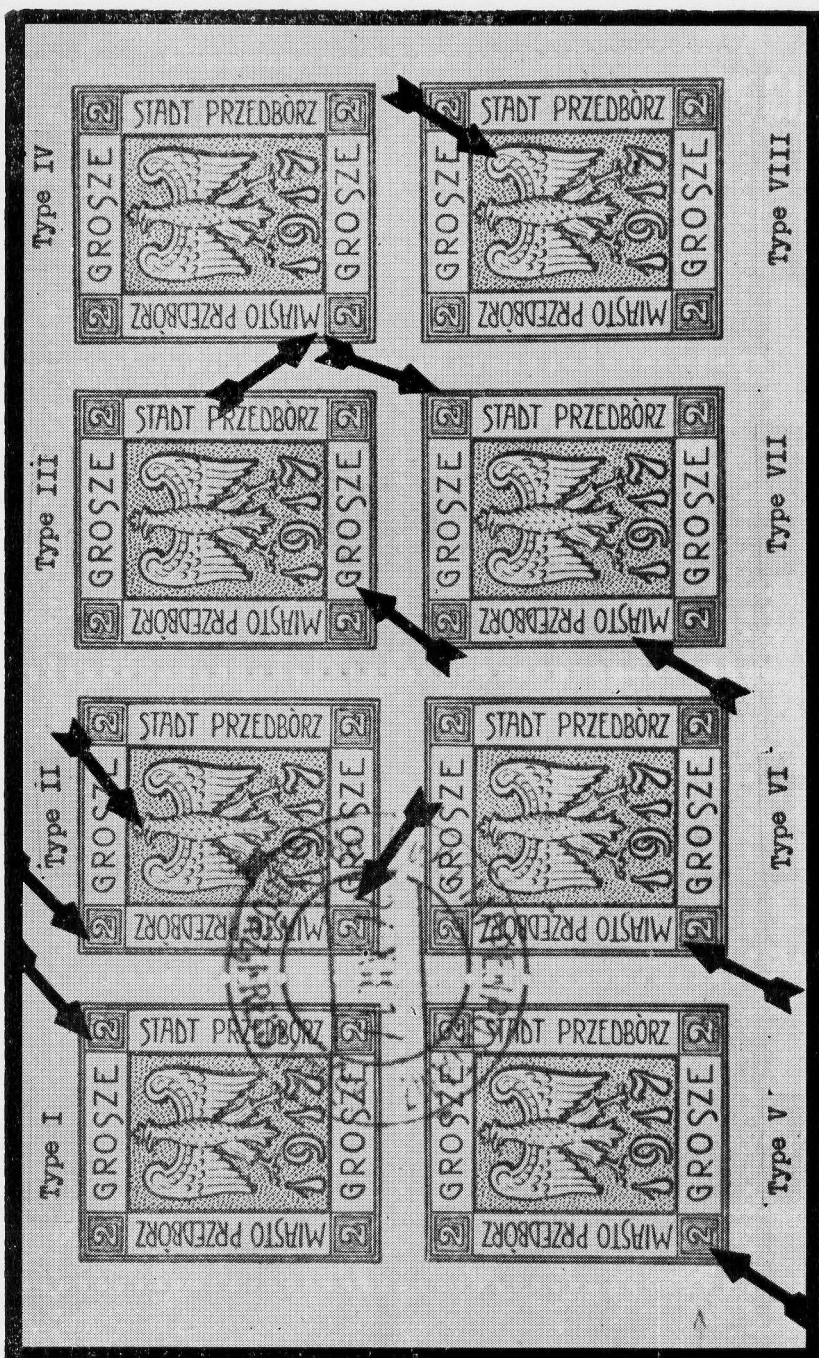


Illustration C, showing definite marks characteristic of each respective stamp in the pane, and repeating themselves in each pane in the sheet, on the 2 Grosze.

ferred onto a large stone, treated, and from this a cliché of a pane was made.

This pane was reproduced four times, from which the sheet of four panes was constructed, two horizontal and two vertical. This sheet was transferred onto a large stone, chemically treated, and from this stone the sheets were printed.

During the construction of the matrix for the first pane, definite minute flaws appeared on each stamp. Due to the inaccurate correction of these flaws, we can distinguish them as characteristic identification marks for each stamp in the pane. They repeat themselves exactly in the same position in each pane in the sheet.

Finally, from these flaws we can locate each stamp as to its number in the pane and sheet, and its position and location. We can also identify the forgeries by these marks.

With the view to aiding in identifying the original stamps of the First Issue, and to distinguish them from the forgeries, we point out certain characteristics which are found in each stamp of the pane, and there are those that are characteristic to each individual stamp in the pane, forming a definite type, and repeating themselves only once in each pane.

Those found in each stamp in the pane are (See Illustrations A and B):

1. The design and the stamp are clean cut.
2. The printing is sharp.
3. There is a dot near the inner border of the left wing.
4. There is a line or part of a feather connecting the row of feather with the border of the right wing.
5. The tongue is well defined.
6. The beak is well defined.
7. There is a line connecting the crown and horizontal line of the frame.
8. The dash above the letter "O" in Przedbórz is in the form of an inverted drop with the thin point toward the "O."

Apart from the foregoing there are definite characteristics of each respective stamp in the pane. These also repeat themselves in each pane in the sheet. (See Illustration C.)

2 GROSZE

Stamp I in the pane
(1-5-17-21 in sheet)

- a. The second vertical line of shading in the upper right square and to left of figure "2."
- b. On the right side between the letter "E" and "D" in the word Przedbórz near the frame is a small dot.

Stamp II in the pane
(2-6-18-22 in sheet)

- a. The front vertical line of shading in the upper left square and to the left of the figure "2" is broken.
- b. A spur appears over the eye.

Stamp III in the pane
(3-7-19-23 in sheet)

- a. There is a small dot before the outer curve of the letter "G" in the lower "Grosze."

Stamp IV in the pane
(4-8-20-24 in sheet)

- a. In the background of the upper left "2" the first vertical line is broken three times.
- b. The inner frame in the lower left square and left to the figure "2" is connected with the inner frame on the left side.

Stamp V in the pane
(9-13-25-29 in sheet)

- a. The left bottom figure "2" is smaller; has no ball nor serif.

Stamp VI in the pane
(10-14-26-30 in sheet)

- a. The top line forming the frame around the lower left figure "2" is broken at the left corner.

Stamp VII in the pane
(11-15-27-31 in sheet)

- a. The outer and inner frame line on the right side at the top of the stamp merge together forming a thick solid line.
- b. There is a dot in the upper part between the letters "A" and "S" in the word Miasto.

Stamp VIII in the pane
(12-16-28-32 in sheet)

- a. On the ornament of the left wing of the eagle there is a small dot.

4 GROSZE

Stamp I in the pane
(1-5-17-21)

- a. There is a small dot just below the figure "4" in the lower right corner.

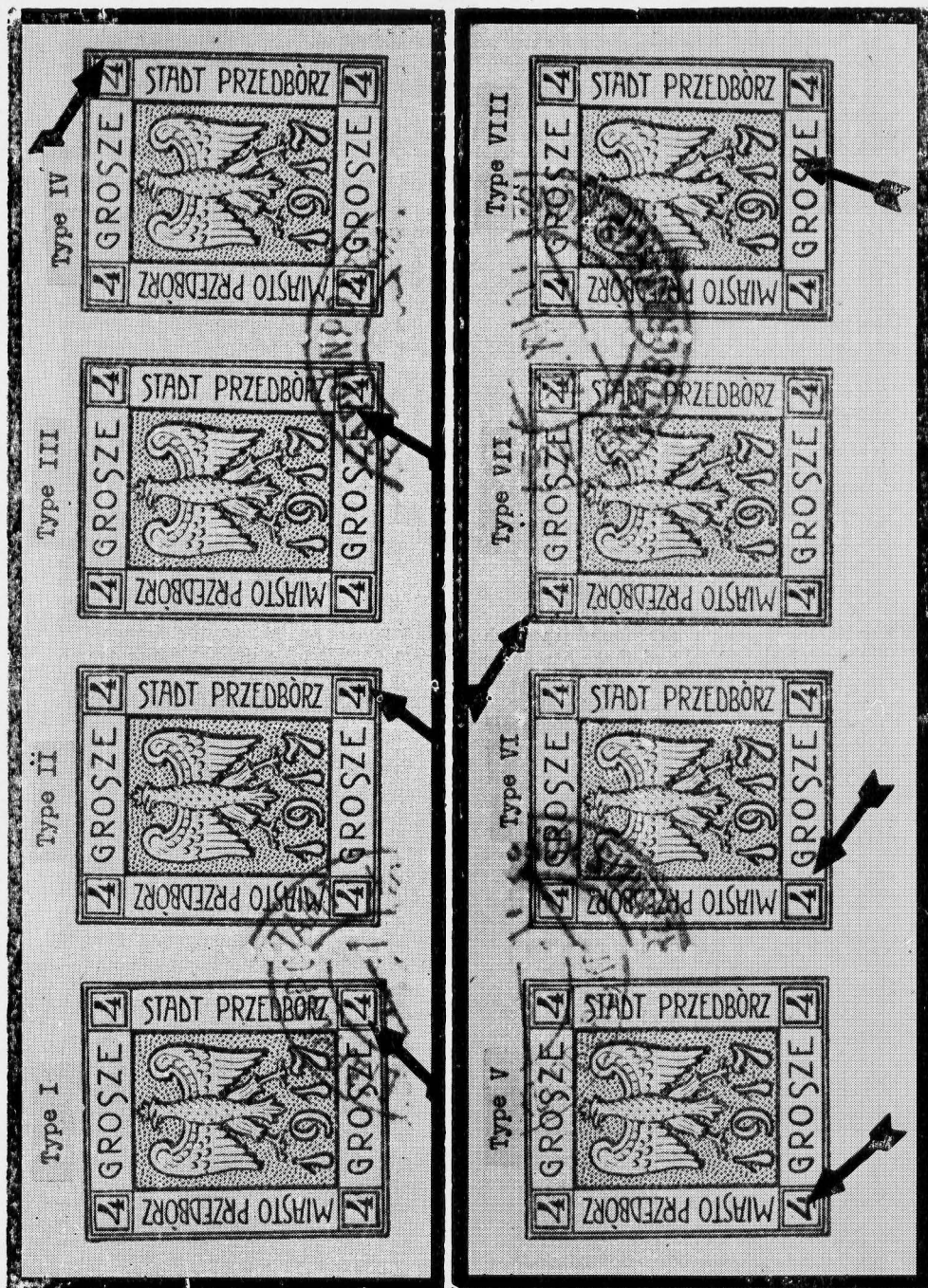


Illustration D, showing marks characteristic of each respective stamp in the pane, and repeating themselves in each pane in the sheet, on the 4 Grosze.

Stamp II in the pane

- a. There is a small dot in the right bottom corner of the right bottom "4" square.

Stamp III in the pane

- a. There is a small dot nearly halfway down the left side between the outer and inner frame lines of the right bottom "4" square.

Stamp IV in the pane

- a. The outer and inner frame lines at the right of the top "4" square merge into one.

Stamp V in the pane

- a. The left bottom "4" has a uniformly straight top stroke.

Stamp VI in the pane

- a. There is a small dot just to the right of the frame of the lower left "4."

Stamp VII in the pane

- a. No prominent marks except for the dot in the right wing.

Stamp VIII in the pane

- a. There is a dot in the top apex of the "Z" in the top "Grosze" and on the top of the "Z" in the bottom Grosze.

In a short time the 2 groszy stamp was exhausted, so the 4 groszy was used, bisected, to cover the 2 groszy rate. This can be found on letters where 2 groszy rates were used.

In February forgeries began to appear to defraud the post office. Many forgeries can be found in singles, blocks, panes, and sheets. Also forgeries can be found cancelled, even on letters cancelled with a genuine cancellation. The authorities learning of this situation immediately printed and issued a new set of stamps to replace the First Issue. It consisted of a 2 groszy, 4 groszy, 6 groszy, and 10 groszy stamp.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

Friday, December 28, 1956 will be remembered for a long time to come by the members and friends who attended the Polonus Christmas Party. Never before was a Polonus table laden with such delicious and varied foods. Those who attended ate jelled pike, roll mop herring, marinated fish tidbits, three different kinds of potato salads, stuffed egg shells, pickled plum tomatoes,

hor'd'oures, poppy seed cake, assorted pastries, etc. Mrs. Zdzisław Wagrowski was responsible for preparing this feast. Roman Reinowski topped off the meal with a case of golden brew which was his contribution.

The party began with a program meeting at which past presidents were called on to give short talks. Lester Jankowski, Myron Steczynski, J. J. Domar, A. Kloskowski, Dr. M. Uznanski, Chester Mikucki, John Bobo, Dr. L. Kozakiewicz and Anton Banasiak were among the past presidents present who talked and reminisced about the past. Some very interesting stories were told. Jack Domar told us how back in 1940-42 Polonus was recognized as an outstanding philatelic club in the country. Scott's Catalog was the first to recognize Polonus as an authority on stamps of Poland. We were the first to have a STAMPS magazine special Polonus issue, which carried all articles on Poland stamps. Polonus was instrumental in making the U.S. Poland Flag Stamp first day sale here at Chicago.

The name "Polonus" was suggested by Dr. L. P. Kozakiewicz. This is the Latin for "Polish." Doc Kozy related how he first came across this word back in 1919 when he served with the Allied Commission on the Plebiscites of Marienwerder and Allenstein. He found the name "Polonus" alongside of the name "Nicolas Copernicus" written on various documents on exhibit in Polish museums. He further studied the works of Copernicus and found more such instances where Copernicus signed his name with the word "Polonus" after it. From Latin authorities he learned that the word meant "Polish."

Many members brought their wives and children to this Christmas party. Carols were heard continuously in the background and a happy holiday spirit was exhibited by everyone present.

The Christmas party chairman Zdzisław Wagrowski is credited with a job well done.

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Error in the VI Polish Philatelic Exhibit at Poznań Issue

By DR. M. A. RAYALL DE RAGAN



Purpose—To commemorate the Sixth Polish Stamp Exhibition at Poznań.

Date issued—July 7, 1955.

Type—Semi-postal.

Subject—The Poznan Town Hall.

Value—3 złoty face plus 1.50 złoty surcharge.

Amount issued—200,000.

Format—Miniature sheet with design printed vertically. Sheet size: 49 x 70 mm (1-15/16" x 2-23/32").

Stamp size—21 x 25.5 mm. (1" x 13/16").

Color—carmine red and light brown.

Paper—white wove.

Imperforate.

Watermark—none.

Printing—from engraved plate.

Printers—Polish Government Printing Office (Państwowa Wytwórnia Papierów Wartościowych) at Warsaw.

Cancellation—Commemorative steel face handstamp "VI Ogólnopolska Wystawa Filatelistyczna, Poznań 1955" — date — Town Hall at Poznań and Posthorn (freely translated means: Sixth National Polish Philatelic Exhibition, Poznań 1955.)

Full sheet consisted of 16 miniature sheets, 4 x 4.

Varieties and errors—Inscription under the stamp "VI Ogólnopolska Wystawa Filatelistyczna Poznań 1955" has the numerals "VI" broken at the top.

This printer's error repeats itself in all sheets and apparently resulted from damage done to the printing plate. Since this error occurs on all the sheets of 16, the damaging of the plate occurred before the printing began. Because the error was a minor one, it

passed by the inspection and the entire issue was released for public sale.

NEW ISSUES

By J. J. Domar

On December 12, 1956 two stamps were issued for different purposes, the:

Seventh value of the Olympic set, 1.55 zł. depicting a girl jumping. In my opinion, it was issued to honor the young lady who won the gold medal in the Olympic broad jump contest. Colors of the stamp are gold and brown and the printing is rotogravure.

The other stamp was issued upon the occasion of the reopening of the Postal Museum at Wrocław; depicts a postman of the 15th century. Value of 60 gr.; printed in blue and black; designed and engraved by S. Bernacinski.

A special souvenir folder beautifully ornamented with the original six values of the Olympic stamps affixed on it is available from the Philatelic Dept. of "ARS" Polonia for \$1.50.

— "A.R.S." Polonia
"Prasa i Książka"

TID BITS

S. P. A. President Ben Seeves, who recently retired, received a gift upon his retirement from 31 of his philatelic friends. The gift consisted of an expensive volume from the Royal Philatelic Collection of Sir John Wilson Bart. Among those who chipped in for the gift were seven Polonus members.

Upon his retirement, Ben opened a stamp business at 4359 N. Elston Ave., Chicago 41, Ill. His specialty is covers. Drop him a line or a visit!

* * *

The Poland album pages are proving a great help to Polonus members. Many specialists and semi-specialists have found an easy way out in mounting up their material. George Kobylka has made a worthy contribution to Polish philately in this country.

* * *

Polpex Arts chairman Myron Steczynski announces that the design of the souvenir sheet will be based on Polish-Hungarian Friendship and will show the Poland stamp of Fr. Chopin and Fr. Liszt.

Eighth Issue of the Republic of Poland

By MARIAN DUŃSKI

This issue commemorates the Kościuszkó Uprising and the Oath of Thaddeus Kościuszkó.

The official regulation by the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs Eng. T. Kapeliński of April 7, 1945, published in "Dziennik Taryf" No. 2, pos. 16 runs thus:

1.

"For the occasion of the Anniversary of the Kościuszkó Uprising and the Oath of Thaddeus Kościuszkó, a postage stamp will be issued for usage of 5 zł. value.

2.

The stamp will feature the Kościuszkó portrait on green background, line-framed rectangle. On the lined background is placed the bust. Above the portrait in the left corner is the value given in red letters and numbers: "5 zł." In the right corner the original value "50 gr." is blotted out.

Below the portrait is shown the date "24. III. 1794." Under it is the inscription "Pocztá Polska."

3.

This regulation will be effective on 9. IV. 1945.

CATALOG DATA

1945—April 9. Issue commemorating the Kościuszkó Uprising and the Kościuszkó Oath.

New printing of stamp No. 2 with red, typographical overprint.

Printed by the Postal Graphic Works in Łódź.

Paper—thick, spongy, gummed before printing

Perforation:—Line 11.

23. 5 zł. on 50 gr., red overprint, 100.000

a) green, with clear drawing lines

b) dark-green, with spotted drawing lines on face

n) Imperforate

on) Inverted and imperforate

vn) Without overprint, imperforate

v) Without overprint, perforated

The new printing of stamp No. 2 was at Łódź in 30 stamp sheets (5 x 6). The typographical overprint in red shows some wavering in color but specific characteristics are not known. Imperforates with and without overprints, normal and inverted, are derived from

printer's waste, of which there were 1,100 copies. Due to the faulty performance of the perforating machine there are some sheets, in which one of the vertical rows of perforations is in parts not punched out. From these sheets are the vertically imperforated pairs obtained.

Stamp No. 23 originally used, is very rarely found. Because the stamp was issued in such a small quantity, it was a very short while in circulation. The Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs Eng. T. Kapeliński in "Dziennik Taryf" No. 2, 1945" pos. 24 announced: "With the first of June, 1945 the withdrawal from usage of the postage stamp, value 5 zł., with the portrait of Kościuszkó and reprinted from 50 gr. introduced for usage on April 9, 1945. (2.) The Post Offices and Postal Agencies will exchange it until June 15, 1945."

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A FEW WORDS ON POSTCARDS OF GENERAL GOUVERNEMENT

By Marian Duński

The "Polonus Bulletin" No. 141 of 1956 contained a very interesting article by Mr. Derek Palmer "Postal Stationery of Poland," describing the entireties from 1939-1945.

I would like to add here the description of items the author has omitted in his article and which I have in my collection.

The German postcard with Pres. Hindenburg and overprint No. 101 was in general public use. But Polish postcards with Pres. Mościcki — 30 gr. No. 110, were not in postal use for the general public. These were used for correspondence by "Versandstelle für Sammlermarken, Krakau" as "Postsache." This was the office catering to stamp collectors and accepting subscriptions for new issues. The reverse of the card carried printed announcements or answers. I have such a card No. 110, dated 18/9/42, "Stempelstelle Versandstelle für Sammlermarken" with printed announcements that they cancel stamps of the General Gouvernement.

Other interesting postcards in my possession, not described by Mr. D. Palmer are:

I.

Postcard for the Post Office in Gdańsk "Poczta Polska Port Gdańsk" 15 gr. (on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of Independence) 1938 P. P. T. T. X. 1938 — 100,000. Overprinted as No. 110 and "Deutsche Post Osten / Postkarte" over the Polish imprint "Karta Pocztowa," and in the left half of the postcard with the inscription "Nadawca—Postsache."

II.

Postcard on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of Independence — 30 gr. rose P. P. T. T. X. 1938 — It has the same overprint as No. 110 and was used by "Versandstelle" in 1942/43. Of these I have five — some bearing the date cancellation of the Kraków Post Office "Krakau 1 c 3-6-42; Krakau 3 11-6-43 17c."

III.

Postcard 10 gr. overprinted on postcard of 1933 — 20 gr. (Ikaros No. 52) M. P. T. IX. 1933. Overprint as 110

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but with only four instead of five horizontal bars over the stamp and inscription "Deutsche Post Osten" on the left half "Postsache" at the bottom. Mailed from "Versandstelle" in April 1942.

Polish postcards of 1938/39 surcharged with the Nazi emblem, General Gouvernement "Postkarte" at top center and new value on stamp — were in wide general use. Of these I have:

- 1) 12 on 15 gr. blue-black (Scott A81) imprint X. 37. Slogan: Telefon zaoszczędza pieniądze."
- 2) 12 on 15 gr. blue-black (Scott A-81) imprint VI. 1938 were issued with three slogans:
 - a) Telefon usprawia życie zblizaj i przyspiesza.
 - b) Telefon między miastami usuwa odległości.
 - c) Telefon zaoszczędza czas i pieniądze.

General Gouvernement definitive issues 1940:

150 — 12 gr. green Courtyard and monument, imprint IX. 40. The same postcard was issued in 1941 and should be listed as:

150-a — 12 gr. green Courtyard and monument, imprint 11. 14. Authoritative description of postcards 1944-1954, based on Regulations from "Dziennik Taryf" will be presented to Polonus readers in another article.