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POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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POLPEX 2003 JOHN PAUL II EXHIBITION 14-16 MARCH

By: Chester Schafer

25th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE PONTIFICATE



POLPEX STATION

MARCH 14, 2003

NILES, IL 60714

**Polpex
Cancel**

OF POPE
JOHN PAUL II 1978-2003

Great plans for celebrations in the Chicagoland area are now being made honoring the 25th Anniversary of the Pontificate of John Paul II, who was elected Pope October 16, 1978. They include: an exhibition of books, paintings, and stamps at the Polish Museum and Cultural Center; a Youth Gathering; a Paderewski Symphony Orchestra concert at SymphonyCenter; Highlights of the Pope's Journeys presented at St. Mary of the Angels Church; a Symposium; a Banquet at Rosemont Convention Center; a Mass, and more.

One of the first celebrations will be POLPEX 2003 on March 14, 15, and 16 at the White Eagle, 6839 North Milwaukee Avenue in Niles, Illinois. More postage stamps have been issued by nations over the world honoring the Pope than there have been of any other person. An outstanding collection of such stamps, cancellations, and covers have been assembled by our secretary, Arkadiusz Walinski. A portion of his collection will be shown at POLPEX 2003.

We are asking for a few other Poland exhibits from members. They do not have to relate to the Pope. All exhibitors will receive a special Pope medal. For applications write immediately to:

**Arkadiusz Walinski, 7414 Lincoln Ave. #D, Skokie, IL 60076-3898,
847 674-4286. Space is limited.**

Also participating is the Polish American Numismatic Association which is assembling a Pope medal collection to be shown at the exhibition.

POLPEX 2003 will have a bourse of some 20 dealers, a cacheted cover, and a special cancellation will be available at the U.S. Post Office on the premises. Hours of the show are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and admission is free.

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The Polish Post In Upper Silesia 1922 - 1923

By: Joachim Thomas Bielski

(Translated by Stanley T. Wlodek from "Filatelista" No. 5, 2001, P. 249)

The 20th of March of last year was the 80th Anniversary of the Plebiscite in Upper Silesia. During the Plebiscite period, Upper Silesia was governed by the International Commission of Government for the Plebiscite of Upper Silesia, which, up to July 1922, exercised both political and administrative control. In October 1921, based on the Plebiscite, Poland was granted by the Board of Ambassadors, some 1/3 of the territory of Upper Silesia, essentially 29% of the area, containing 46% of the population. The remainder of the territory was incorporated into the German Reich.

On May 29, 1922, for the Polish part of Upper Silesia the Polish Post issued 16 stamps with nominal values of 5 pfennigs to 50 marks (Scott 170-185, Fischer 144-159). Due to the high inflation and the resultant changes in postal rates, four additional stamps were added to this series with values of 80, 100, 200 and 300 marks (Scott 187-190, Fischer 160 -163). On April 30, 1923, the Polish Postal authorities withdrew the whole series and replaced it with the standard Polish issues.

The number of stamps issued in this series for Upper Silesia varies, which results in differences in their value. The number issued is given in Table I on page 512-4.

The 336 day period of usage of the stamps valued from 5 pfennigs to 50 marks, and the even shorter period of 17 days that the highest denomination stamps were valid, results in the much higher rarity of used, rather than mint, examples. Once the stamps were withdrawn, the mint values remained in appreciable quantities with the postal customers.

Stamps on cover, are of course much rarer than the used examples. Covers franked with this issue are avidly sought and bring high prices at auctions. The rarest stamps on covers are the 1.25, 80, 100, 200, and 300 mark values (Fischer 151 and 160-163), and letters franked with over 25 copies of the same stamp.



Table I
Quantities Issued For
The Upper Silesia Issue

Fischer	Scott	Nominal Value	No. Issued 1000's	Date Issued
144	170	5 pf.	1,970	May 5 '22
145	171	10 pf.	2,045	May 5 '22
146	172	20 pf.	2,040	May 5 '22
147	173	40 pf.	9,380	May 5 '22
148	174	50 pf.	3,365	May 5 '22
149	175	75 pf.	2,770	May 5 '22
150	176	1.0 mk.	6,245	May 5 '22
151	177	1.25 mk.	3,070	May 5 '22
152	178	2.0 mk.	4,300	May 5 '22
153	179	3.0 mk.	5,238	May 5 '22
154	180	4.0 mk.	2,480	May 5 '22
155	181	5.0 mk.	3,175	May 5 '22
156	182	6.0 mk.	1,635	May 5 '22
157	183	10.0 mk.	4,119	May 5 '22
158	184	20.0 mk.	4,418	May 5 '22
159	185	50.0 mk.	3,840	May 5 '22
160	187	80.0 mk.	2,000	April 13 '23
161	188	100.0 mk.	3,000	April 13 '23
162	189	200.0 mk.	2,000	April 13 '23
163	190	300.0 mk.	1,000	April 13 '23

Table 2A
Upper Silesia Postal
Domestic Tariffs, In Marks

TARIFF No.	I	II	III
DATE TARIFF BECAME VALID	1/1/22	7/1/22	10/1/22
LOCAL LETTER RATE UP TO 20 g	1.25	1.00	2.00
LOCAL LETTER RATE 20 TO 100 g	2.00	2.00	4.00
LOCAL LETTER RATE 100 TO 200 g	2.00	3.00	6.00
INTER-CITY LETTER UP TO 20 g	2.00	3.00	6.00
INTER-CITY LETTER 20 TO 100 g	3.00	4.00	8.00
INTER-CITY LETTER 100 TO 250 g	4.00	5.00	10.00
LOCAL POST CARD	0.75	0.75	1.50
INTER-CITY POST CARD	1.25	1.50	3.00
PRINTED MATTER, POST CARDS	0.40	0.50	1.00
PRINTED MATTER UP TO 20 g	0.50	0.50	1.50
PRINTED MATTER 20 TO 25 g	0.50	0.75	1.50
PRINTED MATTER 25 TO 50 g	0.50	0.75	1.50
PRINTED MATTER 50 TO 100 g	1.00	1.50	3.00
REGISTERD MAIL	2.00	2.00	4.00
EXPRESS DELIVERY	3.00	3.00	6.00
RECEIPT OF DELIVERY	1.50	1.50	3.00

TARIFF No.	IV	V	VI	VII
DATE TARIFF BECAME VALID	11/15/22	12/15/22	1/15/23	3/1/23
LOCAL LETTER RATE UP TO 20 g	4.00	10.00	20.00	100.00
LOCAL LETTER RATE 20 TO 100 g	8.00	15.00	30.00	150.00
LOCAL LETTER RATE 100 TO 200 g	12.00	25.00	50.00	150.00
INTER-CITY LETTER UP TO 20 g	12.00	25.00	50.00	100.00
INTER-CITY LETTER 20 TO 100 g	16.00	35.00	70.00	120.00
INTER-CITY LETTER 100 TO 250 g	20.00	45.00	90.00	150.00
LOCAL POST CARD	3.00	5.00	10.00	20.00
INTER-CITY POST CARD	6.00	15.00	25.00	40.00
PRINTED MATTER, POST CARDS	2.00	5.00	10.00	20.00
PRINTED MATTER UP TO 20 g	3.00	5.00	20.00	40.00
PRINTED MATTER 20 TO 25 g	3.00	5.00	20.00	40.00
PRINTED MATTER 25 TO 50 g	3.00	10.00	20.00	40.00
PRINTED MATTER 50 TO 100 g	6.00	15.00	30.00	60.00
REGISTERD MAIL	8.00	20.00	40.00	80.00
EXPRESS DELIVERY	15.00	30.00	60.00	120.00
RECEIPT OF DELIVERY	6.00	20.00	40.00	80.00

Table2B
Upper Silesia Postal
International Tariffs, In Marks

TARIFF NUMBER	I	II	III
DATE TARIFF BECAME VALID	1/1/22	7/1/22	10/1/22
LETTER UP TO 20 g	4.00	6.00	20.00
LETTER, FOR EACH ADDITIONAL 20 g	2.00	3.00	10.00
POST CARDS	2.40	3.50	12.00
PRINTED MATTER FOR EACH 50 g	0.80	1.25	4.00
EXPRESS DELIVERY	3.00	12.00	40.00

TARIFF NUMBER	IV	V	VI	VII
DATE TARIFF BECAME VALID	11/15/22	12/15/22	1/15/23	3/1/23
LETTER UP TO 20 g	40.00	80.00	150.0 0	300.00
LETTER, FOR EACH ADDITIONAL 20 g	20.00	40.00	75.00	150.00
POST CARDS	24.00	50.00	90.00	180.00
PRINTED MATTER FOR EACH 50 g	8.00	15.00	30.00	60.00
EXPRESS DELIVERY	80.00	160.00	300.0 0	600.00

Note: Tariffs I to VII were applicable to all stamps issued. Fischer 160 to 163 were only governed by Tariff VII

Extremely rare are franking involving numerous issues of the 200 mk. (Fischer 162) and the 300 mk. (Fischer 163), when involved in paying postal rates totaling 600 mk, or more. Obviously these must be letters that are properly franked. During the validity of the lower values, (Fischer 144 -159) seven different changes in postal rates occurred, while during the short period of validity of the highest value stamps (Fischer 160-163) only one postal rate governed their use.

Covers addressed to countries to which mail was rarely sent, such as India, are also sought after. At auction, such letters sell for 20 to 300% more than those addressed within the country or to Germany.

An additional and interesting way of collecting these stamps is in terms of their cancels. In many towns such as: Katowice, Krolewska Huta (Chorzow), both Polish and German cancels were used. German town cancels tended to be used largely at the beginning of the validity of

these stamps, and are thus rarer than those in Polish. German town cancels are thus extremely rare on the latter issues, Fischer 160 to 163.

Only German registration stickers were used with this issue. At this time, the Polish Post never issued "R" labels for the towns in Upper Silesia. Once the German registration labels were exhausted, Polish stampings of the letter "R" were used. In some offices the "R" designation (often in a "frame") as well as the serial number of the registration, were hand written.

With the introduction of a Polish administration, and the issue of these Polish stamps for Upper Silesia, all stamps printed by the Plebiscite Commission, lost their validity. Thus, covers franked with both types of stamps do not exist.

This issue is thus very interesting to collectors of Polish stamps and those that specialize in the issues of Upper Silesia. Because of the variations in tariffs, cancels, various registration designations, and the rarity of some destinations, and their short period of postal validity, this issue lends itself to specialization from many points of view.

A detailed study of this issue, as well as a listing of German-Polish towns and their cancels can be found in Vol. II of the Fischer 2001 catalog.

Interesting covers, involving stamps that preceded this issue are presented in Figures 1 to 4. Figures 5 to 9 illustrate the use of just this Polish issue for Upper Silesia.

Author, (born 1929) has been a professional philatelist for over 40 years. He has worked for such well known auction houses as: H. Salomon in Berlin (1963-69), H. Schwenn in Frankfurt on Main (1969-71), and Rudolph Seltzer (1986-94). In the period of 1971-81 he also worked for Stanley Gibbons Ltd. while simultaneously sitting on the Merkur Expert Committee. In the years 1981-86 he operated his own auction firm "Mercurphila", and since 1995 he has been employed by the firm of Heinrich Kohler. He is a prominent authority on the stamps of Austria, Bavaria, Germany, Poland and other countries. During the years of 1971-1982 he was involved in replenishing and completing the Royal Collection in Great Britain.



FIGURE 1. Pair of imperforated, 10/20 overprinted stamps, issued by the Plebiscite Commission, Fischer 11.

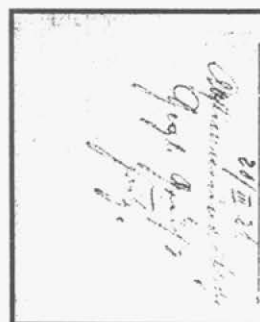


FIGURE 3. Mailed the envelope, Upper Silesia, 3/20/21. I. The value of two different issues which was a rate only.

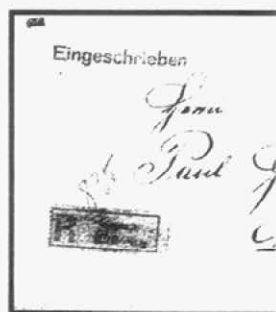


FIGURE 4. Mailed Plebiscite. The overprinted stamps is shifted on the 40 pfennigs.



FIGURE 2. Block of four of Fischer 11, separated by central margins.

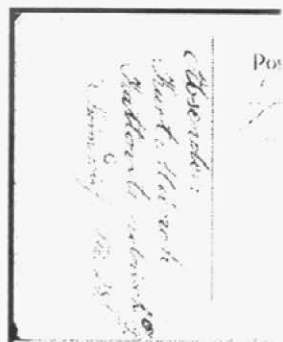


FIGURE 5. Post Card international address from Hofstadt, 11/11/21. The stamp is thus overpaid.



lay of the Plebiscite in
Franked with the same
es, (Fischer 17 and 31),
valid on that single day.



3/20/21 day of the
print on the pair of 10
d, one of the overprints
is largely missing.



mailed 10/5/22 to an
franked with a 5 and 10
ing the rate stipulated by
y 3 marks.

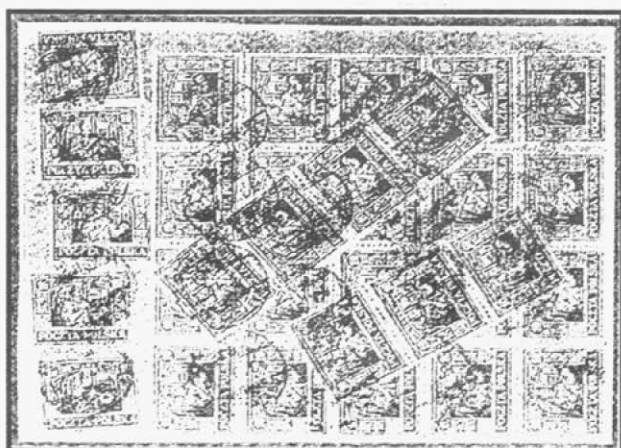


FIGURE 6. Reverse of letter from Katowice to Germany, sent 3/5/23. With a weight of 40 g, the rate was 450 marks paid with 45 10 mark stamps and cancelled with a German language cancel.



FIGURE 7. Loslau (Wodzislaw Slaski) registered letter with receipt of delivery, 9/30/22, weighing 40 g and franked in accordance with the tariff II of 7/1/22. Rare usage of six 1.25 mk. stamps.

Woldenberg Caduceus Labels Still A Mystery

By: *Ervin Mrotek*

Most collectors of Polish POW Camp postal material are well acquainted with stamps and postal paper printed and issued by the Woldenberg Postal Committee. All Woldenberg official issues were diligently recorded in the Camp's Postal Protocols.¹

However, one particular set of labels has confounded Camp Post enthusiasts for over a half century, so much so that they have come to be known as the Caduceus or "Mystery" Labels. The label was designed and carved in pear-wood by 2nd Lt Eugeniusz Pichell, who also designed a number of Woldenberg camp stamps. His initials "EP" are at the bottom of the design. They were printed on heavy mesh paper donated by the Swedish YMCA. They are ungummed and imperforate.¹

The central design shows a "Caduceus", the rod of Hermes (Mercury), messenger of the Gods and a symbol of commerce and medicine. There are no values on the labels. They were purposely omitted in order to hide from the Germans any revenue that might have been derived from their use. It is said that the face values were based on the different colors: purple, black, yellow (orange) and green. These were valued in units of one, two, five and ten cigarettes, but not necessarily in that order. When the camps organized, German lagermarks were the unit of exchange, but it later became necessary to adopt a more stable value such as cigarettes. Camp script was issued based on the amount of cigarettes on deposit.¹



Purple



Black



Orange



Green

The earliest reference, in H.M. Smith's "Polish Post 7 Years War" published in December 1945, describes the labels as Camp Duty stamps without further explanation. Josef Machowski, in "Poczta Polska Obuzu II

C Woldenberg" in 1961, lists the labels as propaganda items. Heber's "Lagerpost" describes them as Exchange stamps (Tauschmarken) known in black, orange, lilac and green. The suggestion is that they were either tokens used for barter in camp shops or receipts.² Marian Kalawski, Postal Manager of the Camp Philatelic Exchange, reports they were used as revenue stamps.⁴ This seems to be a prevalent view.

However, if these stamps were used as revenue or barter stamps, then they would have been canceled when they were used. Each bill of the Barter Shop had a revenue stamp affixed, which was duly canceled by pen or with a rubber stamp inscribed "Komis Obozowy", Camp Commission.⁴ Because of this, these labels supposedly were not to be sold to the public uncanceled. Nevertheless, they can be found in mint condition, which supports the argument that they were other than revenue or barter stamps. In fact, this author knows of no example of a bill of sale with one of these labels in canceled condition.

There seems to be some doubt as to whether the pear wood die used to print these labels was invalidated (it was the practice at Woldenberg to invalidate stamp dies by cutting a narrow groove across the face of each design).¹ It is possible that the wooden die was carried away when the camp was evacuated and later used to make reprints of these labels. However, it would have been hard to duplicate the unique heavy mesh paper, donated to the camp by the Swedish YMCA, which was used to print these labels.⁴

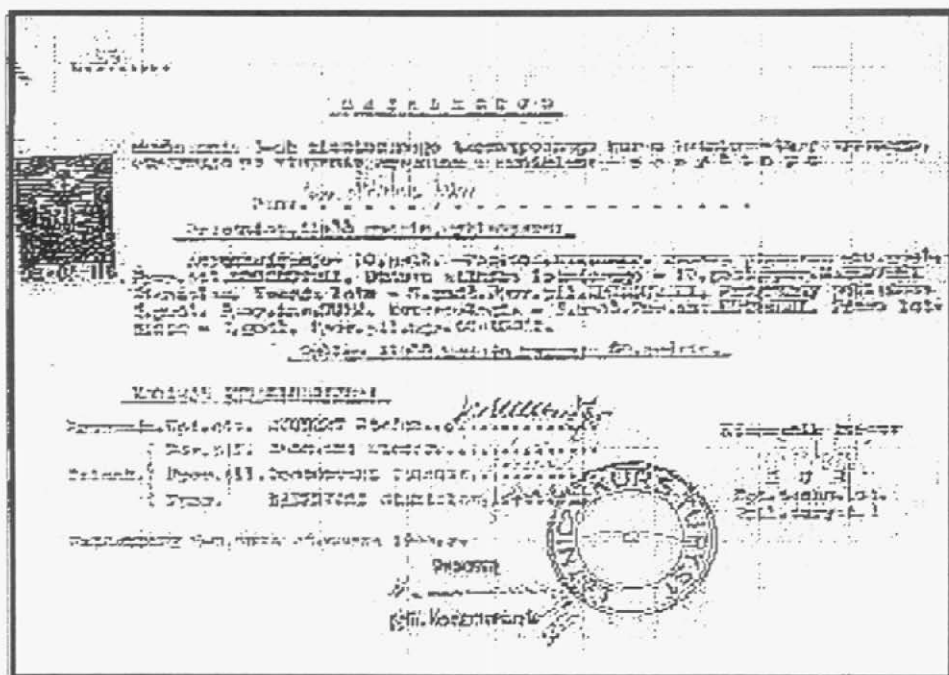
Zebrowski states that 100 were printed in each color and that each color represents a different value.² The small number printed is confirmed by their present day scarcity, but it also suggests that if their intent was to be used as tokens or receipts, the experiment was soon abandoned.

Zaszarek, in Sammler Dienst in 1973, gives information that they were printed on March 18, 1942, thus predating the camp's first postal service. However, the superior printing of the label compared with the early camp stamps brings this claim into question.² This account would also contradict the claim that the Swedish YMCA donated the paper, which wasn't done until some time later.⁴

One interesting item, which supports the theory that these labels were



used as revenue stamps, is this scan provided by a collector from the United Kingdom. It is a copy of a document purported to be exhibiting actual usage of a label as a revenue stamp.³ A partial translation of this (poor quality) scan indicates that it is some kind of flight certificate. Although at first it would seem that this would have nothing to do with Woldenberg, there were many *ad hoc* classes given at the camp. If there was a pilot in the camp and someone wanted instruction about flying, a "ground school" course could easily be arranged and a certificate issued. Of course, it is also possible that this is a forged document or that the label was affixed at a much later date for unknown reasons, possibly to increase the value of the label by having it affixed to a document. It is, nonetheless, interesting.



Since these labels were not official camp issues, they were not recorded in the Camp Protocol concerning postal issues.¹ Thus, there are many contradictory views about when and how these labels were produced and what they were used for. The author can draw no firm conclusion. However, rather than allowing these labels to remain a mystery, the author asks readers to please email or send any comments,

ideas, articles, scans or stories relating to the Caduceus "Mystery" Labels to Hank Bieniecki at the addresses shown on 512-2

1 "The Polish POW and DP Camps Philatelic Study Group

Newsletter Vol. 3 No. 18" from Sep./Oct. 1977

2 "The Polish Prisoner of War Camp Posts" by "Autolycus" copyright 1994

3 The Roman Sobus "Internal Camp Posts At Offizierlager IIC" exhibit as displayed at Chicagopex 2002

4 "A Woldenberg Mystery Solved?" by William Ittel as published in The American Revenuer 1972 26:121-3



The Polonus Philatelic Society is a Not-for-Profit Organization which was incorporated in 1939 in the State of Illinois. Its objective is to promote Polish philately via the dissemination of Polish philatelic information in English. The opinions expressed by authors of articles appearing in the Polonus Bulletin do not necessarily reflect the views of the Polonus Philatelic Society.

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Polonus Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 100 (PS), Granite, IL. 62040

Introduction

This is the first re-appearance of what I hope will once again become a regular feature of our Bulletin. Any member who has rare Polish philatelic material may submit it for display in "Gems Of Polish Philately" and thereby share it with all the members of our society. This is a great way to start contributing to the Bulletin. No need for intensive research and attribution with footnotes. Simply submit a high quality scan and some basic information on the item to biistamp@charter.net. If you do not have the facilities to scan the item, you can send the item and I will do the scan for you. Your only investment is a little time to draft the text plus the cost of postage and handling. So don't wait. Start sharing your Gem's with your members.

FIRST GEM

In 1926, Captain Boleslaw Orlinski, famous Polish aviator planned to fly from Paris to Tokio via Warsaw, a distance of 11,300 km. The Polish Philatelic Society requested that mail be carried on this flight. On 22 May 1926, for a period of 1 hour, the main post office in Warsaw accepted and applied special oval cancellations and LOPP labels to



airmail letters addressed to Tokio. Total number of LOPP labels printed was 1000. The 1926 LOPP cost 5 zloty, and was required on letters to be sent on the 1926 Orlinski Flight, in addition to normal franking. Flight covers bearing the normal perforated copies of this LOPP are scarce. A few of these 1926 flight covers bear imperforate LOPP labels. Tete-beche pairs of this 1926 LOPP are rare off of cover. The flight cover

LOPP are rare off of cover. The flight cover illustrated on page 512-15 bears a Tete-Beche pair of the 1926 LOPP labels tied to the cover by the Tokio receiving cds and is a true gem of Polish philately. 

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