

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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September 1952

Was There A Second Issue of the Krakow "Poczta Polska" Overprints on Austrian Stamps?

By V. Rachmanov

Because of the appearance on the philatelic market of Krakow overprints with the guaranty of Berest and Muller supposedly of a second official printing sometimes referred to as "reprints", I wish to share some information with collectors about this second printing sometimes sold as reprints.

There never was an official second overprinting of the Krakow stamps, nor was there ever any official re-printing. The stamps sold as such are common forgeries, as has been often written in the Polish philatelic press by Prof. Mikstein, as well as by others who know the history of this issue. To warn collectors against these forgeries, I take the liberty of referring to the history of the origin of the Krakow stamps and to the history of the so-called reprints.

On January 2nd, 1919, the custodian of the postal warehouse at Krakow gathered all Austrian stamps in his possession for overprinting "POCZTA POLSKA". This overprinting was done partly in the print shop of Kozianski and partly in the lithograph shop of Zielinski in Krakow between January 2nd and 20th, 1919.

The supply on hand of some values was very small (from upwards of 10

or 20 to several hundred stamps) and this resulted in an immediate sellout. After January 15th there was a flow of Austrian stamps to the warehouse by the various outlying post offices. The custodian of the warehouse, a Mr. Berest, took advantage of this situation and instead of sending all of the turned in stamps to the Ministry of Post and Telegraphs, retained some of these stamps and gave them privately to Kozianski for printing and to Zielinski for lithographing with "POCZTA POLSKA". In the meantime the printer's forms were taken apart and the lithographic stone was polished, so that in the print shop a new form was locked and a new lithographic stone was made. However, the printer's form as well as the lithographic stone differed from the original; mainly in the overall height of the overprint in the new form which measured 8.5 to 8.75 mm. instead of 9 to 9.25 mm., while the lithograph had different letters L, S and K in the word "POLSKA".

The chief recipient of the forgeries of Berest was the retired postal controller, Joseph Muller of Bielsk in Silesia, who probably even in good faith took these products of Berest, being convinced that they were genuine official stamps issued by and coming from actual postal stock. Because Muller at first acquired and sold larger quantities of genuine stamps, which he obtained from Berest, the forgeries

Editor's note: Member Rachmanov wrote this article in answer to Polonus requests. He wrote it in the Polish language. Translating was by Myron Steczynski and Chester Makowski.

likewise went into collections as genuine stamps, until the collectors in Warsaw noticed the difference.

After the discovery of the forgeries, a campaign was started against these stamps, but in spite of all the warnings in the philatelic press and facts presented by Prof. Mikstein, the outstanding expert on the Krakow issue, Muller defended himself stubbornly not sparing insults and brutal attacks against those men who tried to spare collectors by this or that method from Muller's exploitation. Alas, one could definitely conclude that Muller now knew that his stamps were not authentic, but still tried by all means to realize his money on them.

During the Philatelic Exhibition at Katowice in 1934 a special committee was formed consisting of four members of the Alliance of Philatelic Societies in Poland, which after studying the matter and making a detailed comparison of these products of Berest with the authentic stamps from the Postal Museum at Warsaw, decided conclusively that the products of Berest-Muller are common forgeries made to private order after the official overprinting of the stamps.

Muller later issued two brochures in which he brutally defamed all those who in one way or another tried to warn collectors of his worthless forgeries. As a result of these attacks there was a court case in Krakow which resulted in the conviction of Muller to two or three months in jail.

From the above, one can see exactly that there were no official reprints nor a second overprinting. On the contrary, stamps sold as the second printing or reprints are and will remain forgeries, not having any philatelic value. These forgeries usually have the rubber stamp of guaranty with the name "Berest" or that of Muller in the form of an eagle's head, sometimes with his signature under it. What value is represented by the above guaranty is shown by the fact that not long ago in one auction in New York on my suggestion a 10 K overprinted Krakow stamp with the guaranty of Berest and Muller on

granite paper was eliminated from the auction, as the facts show that there never were such stamps in the postal warehouse.

NEW ISSUES

by J. J. Domar

Under date of May 23 an official notice was received from the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs in regard to the following:

That the 4 value airmail set both perf. and imperf. was officially released on April 10. The 3 stamps issued to commemorate President Bie-rut's birthday were released April 18. The stamp issued for the Warsaw-Berlin-Prague cycle tour was issued April 23 and the 2 stamps issued for May Day were released May 1, 1952.

The 30 zl construction workers stamp reported issued on December 15 has been reissued in a new color, brownish-red in a value of 30+15 gr. In addition, the 45 gr. electrification stamp was reissued in brown in value of 45+15 gr.

Recently we received an issue of two stamps which was released to commemorate the launching of a floating dry dock. The first is a 30+15 gr. green stamp engraved by M. R. Polak and designed by G. Brandt—it illustrates three sailing yachts following each other, across the top are the words—"Dzien Stazniowca" which means "the day of the launching of the floating dry dock." The other is engraved by Lukasewski and designed by Slania. It is of 45+15 gr. value and illustrated on it is an old time "windjammer".

In addition two others were received of the same design which illustrate a "Cement Works", the values are of 3 zloty gray and 10 zloty brownish-red. Both were designed by Slania and engraved by Brandt.

—Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs, Poland

—J. Bieniecki

The following information has been received which outlines the proposed third quarter 1952 anticipated issues.

The first to be issued is a set of three stamps, 30+15 gr., 45+15 gr.,

and 90 groszy values, size 21x37 mm., perforated and steel engraved. These are to be issued to commemorate the Festival of Young Champions of Labor and Education. The date of release was July 17th.

On July 22nd a set of two stamps of identical design in values of 45 gr. +15 gr. and 3 zloty are to be released to proclaim the Constitution of the Peoples Republic of Poland. They were perforated and rotogravured.

To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the first workers party by Ludwik Warynski, a set of two stamps, 30+15 gr. and 45+15 gr. are to be released on July 31st, perforated and steel engraved.

On August 7th, a set of three stamps, 45+15 gr., 1.50 zloty and 1.00 zloty were to be released. The size was to be 21x27 mm., they were to be perforated and engraved. The design illustrated fragments of a Power Station.

A set illustrating the beauty of architectural monuments amidst the Polish Pieniny mountains was to be issued about August 15th. It is a set of three stamps, 45+15 gr., 60 gr. and 1.00 zloty. Size 21x27 mm., perforated and rotogravured.

In commemoration of Aviation Day in Poland, a set of three stamps illustrating a Sport plane, Jet Plane and Parachuter, in values of 30+15 gr., 45+15 gr. and 90 groszy. Size 21x27 mm., perforated and steel engraved. To be issued about Aug. 23rd.

Two more stamps are to be issued on Sept. 1st, size 21x27 mm., perforated and steel engraved to commemorate the 1000th Birth anniversary of Avicenna and 150th Birth Anniversary of Victor Hugo.

A set of two stamps illustrating ships being built in the Gdansk shipyards is scheduled for release on Sept. 10th. Size is 21x27 mm., perforated and engraved.

On Sept. 20th another stamp is to be added to the series commemorating "Prominent Poles"—it is to be of 45 gr.+15 gr. value, size 21x27 mm., perforated, steel engraved and will bear the portrait of Henry Sienkiewicz.

—VARIMEX

AUDIT

February 28, 1951 - February 29, 1952

Balance on hand last audit
2-28-51 \$ 347.45

Receipts

Dues	494.01
Misc.	.10
Sale of Polpex items	23.35
Polpex (profits)	133.42
Donation Auctions	31.71
Donations by Members	56.85
Total	\$1086.89

Debits

Printing of Bulletin	\$ 304.50
Cuts for Bulletin	52.95
Mailing the Bulletin	45.43
Envelopes for Bulletin	18.50
Total—Bulletin	\$ 421.38
Misc. Postage	11.21
Misc. Printing	41.15
Rent	152.00
Misc. (entertainment, addressograph ribbon, etc., subs.)	28.34
Meeting announcements	3.84
Adjustment last audit to agree with ledger	10.65
Total	\$ 668.57

Balance ----- \$ 418.32

AUDITING COMMITTEE

Stanley Kucharz
Chester Makowski

TID BITS

At the August 22nd meeting in the absence of J. Waksanski who was to lecture, Jack Domar got up and gave an impromptu lecture on the Krakow stamps and his new system of measuring the "Poczta Polska" overprints. He explained that in this system he makes use of the grill gauge which gives measurement readings of 0.2 mm. This gauge is the invention of member Myron Steczynski.

After the meeting free beer was handed out to members.

Two members who were not mentioned last time and who donated frequently to the Beeba Fund are Frank Wolosewick and Chester Mikucki.

Our heartiest "get well quick" wishes to Roman Reinowski and Adam Kloskowski who were hospital patients.

Barney Fialkowski and Ben Reeves won second awards at the S. P. A. show in New York with their Albania and Heligoland exhibits.

Steve Rich received the Polonus Award in 32 pieces. The Polonus trophy was broken in transit and actually arrived in 32 pieces.

Ben Reeves was chosen S. P. A. Vice President.

The September 26 Program Meeting will feature Chester Mikucki and Montenegro.

COMMITTEES FOR 1952

Following is a list of the various Polonus committees which we could not publish previously because of lack of space:

PUBLICATIONS: Chester Makowski, Chairman; Chester Schafer, Editor; Lester Jankowski; Myron Steczynski; Jack Domar; Dr. M. E. Uzanski.

PUBLICITY: John Bobo.

CENTRAL FEDERATION: Walter Gajewski, Delegate; Roman Reinowski, Alternate.

LIBRARIAN: Adam Kloskowski.

EXPERTIZING: Frank Wolosewick, Ben Reeves, Myron Steczynski, John Gapsinski, H. Block, V. Rachmanov, J.

POLONUS SPECIAL

New Scott's 1953 Catalogs
shipped as received

Edition	Reg.	Special
Part 1	\$4.00	\$3.25
Part 2	\$4.00	\$3.25
Combined	\$7.00	\$6.00
U. S. Spec.	\$3.50	\$3.00

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1961 N. Wilmot Ave.
Chicago 47, Illinois

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Ed Hopps, Secretary

2246 Medill Ave.

Chicago 47, Ill.

J. J. Domar, Treasurer

3715 S. Clinton Ave.

Berwyn, Ill.

Publications Committee

Chester W. Makowski, Chmn.

2215 W. Cortez St.

Chicago 22, Ill.

Chester A. Schafer, Editor

2144 W. Potomac Ave.

Chicago 22, Ill.

Associate Editors this issue

Jack Domar

Myron Steczynski

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SEALS: Adam Kloskowski.

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121 Preston St.

Hartford, Conn.

Casimir C. Klujnsza Jr.

569 Morgan Ave.

Brooklyn 22, N. Y.

S. L. Bayer

116 Nassau St.

New York 38, N. Y.

APPLICATION PENDING

Edward Zawisza

183 Crown St.

Meriden, Conn.