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POLISH-NAZI PHILATELIC WAR OF 1938

By THOMAS J. GOBBY

For most people a postage stamp is an innocuous and utilitarian thing and rarely is given a second glance. For some people a postage stamp is a miniature piece of art. For others it can be a political statement or cause for political friction.

On November 11, 1938 Poland issued a set of stamps (Scott #320-332) to commemorate the 20th anniversary of its regained independence. This set, engraved and issued in various individual colors, depicts significant events in Polish history. The date of issue also was the 20th anniversary of the German defeat in World War I. This rubbed raw the sensitivities of Germans.

Within the set of stamps was one in particular which rankled the Germans. It was the 15 gr. value (Scott #322) which depicted Wladyslaw Jagiello and Jadwiga, the King and Queen of Poland and Lithuania. The German ambassador in Warsaw immediately entered a very strong protest to the Polish government against the issuance of the stamps and demanded an immediate withdrawal of the entire series.

What was the source of irritation



that led to this strong protest? It was the 15 gr. value. Besides depicting Jagiello and Jadwiga, it also showed an emissary from the Master of the Teutonic Order with his head bared and bowed. At their feet are two battle swords and a Prussian helmet.

The time depicted on the stamp is the eve of the Battle of Grunwald (Tannenberg) in 1410. The Prussians were defeated in a crushing victory by the Poles and the Teutonic Order was physically and politically shaken to its very core.

In the fall of 1938 the Nazis were riding a peak of political vic-

tories. Austria had been swallowed up. The Sudetenland occupied, and then all of Czechoslovakia. The Nazis and the Germans wanted no opposition and no reminders of any past losses or defeats. Hence the violent reaction to the Polish stamp issue.

The German Minister of State called in the Polish ambassador in Berlin. Goebbels increased his tirades and invectives against the Poles. Diplomatic pressure from other nations, in turn goaded by the Nazis was brought to bear on the Poles. Finally, with pressure from all sides, Poland withdrew the issue.

On February 6, 1939, Poland reissued the series with one revision. The 15 gr. stamp was re-engraved and reissued as Scott #339. In place of the helmet and swords was a decorative ornament that formed a pedestal for the standing figures.



Despite this concession, the Nazis were not satisfied and persisted in their attacks and demands.

That's the story of that 15 gr. stamp. Or is it?

Little known is the fact that there was another design which might have been the 15 gr. value. Attesting to the closeness of issue was the fact that a design had been approved by the Ministry of Posts and an engraving in actual size com-

missioned and executed. Essays were made for review and approval.



Illustrated is one of these very rare essays. It was designed by W. Boratynski and engraved by M. R. Polak. The design, patterned after a detail in Jan Matejko's "Grunwald" painting, shows a Polish lancer felling a Teutonic Knight in combat. Excised from this essay is the word "Grunwald" in the blackened section above Boratynski's name and the initials PWPW.

For those familiar with Polish history, they can well imagine what the reaction would have been if this stamp, instead of the Jagiello and Jadwiga stamp, had been issued. It would have been an even more graphic barb into the Nazi skin.

A final word. In 1939, after the German invasion and occupation of Poland, this series of stamps underwent a further revision. Available stocks were seized & an overprint, which all but obliterated the design, was applied (Scott #N30-55). Such was the hatred that the Nazis had for this set.

SEE YOU AT POLPEX 1987

PADEREWSKI PROGRAM MEETING



At one of our recent program meetings, Historian Dr. Edward C. Rozanski gave a talk on Paderewski. Dr. Rozanski was on the committee for the Enshrinement of Paderewski's Heart at Czestochowa in Doylestown, Penna. He gave us a biographical sketch and described the ceremonies at Doylestown. Stanley Dobrzycki brought pages of his Paderewski collection and displayed them that evening. (Photos: W. Poniecki)



Polonus Christmas Party held December 26, 1986 at the Polish American Congress Hall. Left to right, left row: Mr. and Mrs. Chester Schafer, Mr. and Mrs. Walenty Poniecki. Right row: Mr. and Mrs. T. Wojnar, Mr. and Mrs. F. Drewienkowski, Mrs. and Dr. Edward C. Rozanski.

POLONUS CHRISTMAS PARTY

Mr. and Mrs. Walenty Poniecki prepared the food for the Polonus Christmas Party held on December 26th at the Polish American Congress Hall, Chicago. Polonus hosted the Germany Philatelic Society at this event. Christmas carols were sung in Polish, German and English. Food was donated by Polonus members, much of which was home made. This annual event has been held for several years now and has been very successful.



G.P.S. members joined the Polonus crowd in singing Christmas Carols.



The wives of Stanley Rusin, Gus Kokocinski, Roman Strzelecki & Romuald Odrowski sat at the same table.



Left to right: Fred Blau, Mr. and Mrs. Art Walinski, Ed Link, and Fred Szebel.



The founder of Polonus, Chester Mikucki, was asked to say a few words. Left to right: Joe Kupiec, Ann and Chester Mikucki, and Al Rybarski.

Stamps help finance Solidarity

Reprinted from LINN'S Stamp News

By Anatol Kobylinski

After the imposition of martial law in Poland, in December 1981, Solidarity was transformed into an underground movement that quickly developed various forms of independent publishing.

Since mid-1983, Solidarity has issued a series of postage stamps, including several intricately designed sets, whose sales help to finance underground activities and which display various symbols of resistance to the regime.

These stamps cannot, of course, be used in the postal system but nevertheless enjoy a wide popularity.

The inspiration for Solidarity's stamps may have come from the underground postal service that functioned during World War II.

An internal postal service was developed by Polish soldiers in German prisoner-of-war camps. They included artistically produced stamps and franking marks that were collected and carefully cataloged after the war.

During the August 1980 strikes, envelopes were issued in the Gdansk shipyards that bore postmarks symbolizing the strike and the ideals that lay behind it.

After the imposition of martial law in December 1981, various postmarks and stamps were produced in several of the internment camps (initially in Bialoleka) that depicted national symbols and expressed the unbroken resistance of prisoners.

These stamps were sent out of the camps in various notes and letters written by the internees.

Several stamps, graphically simple and printed in black and white, were issued by the Independent Postal Service of the Coast. The largest is dedicated to the 63rd anniversary of Poland's victory over the Bolsheviks.



An elongated stamp shows a cross together with an outstretched hand and carries the words "God and Country."

On one of two square stamps is a handshake with the words "Give Each Other the Sign of Peace," an anchor, and a leaf.



Another shows a horseshoe and a cross on which is written, "Truth Will Liberate You."



One more, printed in brown, shows the number 11 (symbolizing the 11 imprisoned Solidarity leaders who recently were released under the am-



nesty) with two fists emerging from the digits. Underneath is written, "Demand the Release of Political Prisoners."

There is a series of triangular stamps in five different colors and carrying four different symbols within a map of Poland — a cross, the Gdansk memorial to workers shot dead by the police in 1970, a victory sign, and the words "We will Win."



A stamp with a very powerful image was issued on the third anniversary of martial law. It has a brownish-purple drawing of a tortured figure who is screaming and stretching out his hand in a victory sign.



A motif suggesting martyrdom also is evident on three other stamps (identical except that one is red, one green, and one brown), in which the Solidarity emblem is nailed to a cross.



Poczta SOLIDARNOSC 50

The tragic death of Grzegorz Przymyk also is commemorated by two stamps, one in blue and one in dark brown, bearing his portrait.



George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* has been honored by the Solidarity Postal Service in Malopolska with a stamp showing a caricature of Orwell printed in four colors (pink, green, brown, and blue).

"There are only 11 of them, but behind them stand millions of Solidarity members. Their only weapon is the free word, and they are driven by a deep feeling of responsibility for the fate of their fatherland.

"Their imprisonment without trial is proof that the authorities, despite having their own army and a foreign one, a secret and a uniformed police, propaganda and censorship, are afraid of these 11 defenseless but tough and unsubmitive people."



Several different stamp sets were dedicated to the 11 imprisoned Solidarity leaders and advisers. One sheet, printed in steel blue, shows their portraits with the words "Prisoners of Conscience" printed alongside.

The Solidarity Postal Service printed two sheets, one in brown and one in red, with the pictures of the 11 prisoners. A similar but larger sheet with the same portraits and again entitled "Prisoners of Conscience" was followed by the text:

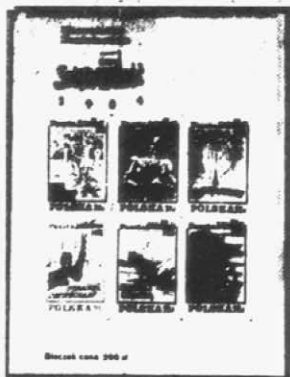


Underneath the stamp is the message, "Will you vote with a clear conscience for the puppets of those who imprisoned them?"

On the same sheet are four further stamps with the portraits of Polish resistance leaders during World War II: Generals Michal Tokarzewski-Karaszewicz, Stefan Grot-Rowecki, Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski, and Leopold Okulicki.



Underground Solidarity in Malopolska also issued four stamps in two colors, brown and blue, with the portraits of the four recently released "KOR" leaders.



A sheet of stamps was issued by the Underground Postal Service of the Mazowsze Solidarity Confederation. It contains six stamps with different motifs.

The first, in blue, shows hands growing out of the earth with fingers displaying the victory sign. The black lettering

underneath declares: "Do Not Lose Hope."

The second stamp is black and shows a man trying to tear prison bars out of his own chest. Underneath is written: "Save Your Souls."

The third stamp bears the words "We Remember" and includes a blue drawing of a figure covering its head in a gesture of despair.

The fourth stamp is blue and bears the silhouette of a person raising a victory sign with prison bars in the background and a dove in the foreground. Underneath is written "Release Immediately."

The fifth stamp shows a person plowing a field and is entitled "They Feed and Defend."

The sixth stamp is printed in red and pictures a bloodstained wall and has the words "For Freedom."



An interesting sheet entitled "The Underground Press 1984" comprises five long stamps and a postmark of a tree made from printers' typefaces.

Each stamp represents the title of an underground publication. They are Tygodnik Mazowsze, Kos, Gazeta Niecodzienna, Wola, and Tu Teraz.

At the bottom of the sheet is printed "Independent Social Publishers." The price of the sheet is 250 zloty — 50zl of which is destined for the Committee for Independent Culture.



Four important events in recent Polish history are the subject of another set: the Polish Bolshevik war in 1920; the outbreak of World War II in 1939; the Warsaw Uprising in 1944; and August 1980.



Another set containing ten stamps is dedicated to ten leaders of the Polish armed forces before and during the last war: Jozef Pilsudski; Edward Rydz-Smigly; Wladyslaw Sikorski;

Kazimierz Sosnkowski; Wladyslaw Anders; Stanislaw Maczek; Michal Tokarzewski-Karaszewicz; Stefan Grot-Rowecki; Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski; and Leopold Okulicki.

W 4 rocznica Porozumien
Gdańsk





A separate stamp has been issued to honor Marshal Józef Piłsudski; it depicts his profile.



At the bottom of each sheet of 20 stamps is a reminder about the Peoples' Council elections in the form of a Trojan horse with an open hatch and a ladder and the words "Polling Station."

A special series of three stamps, printed in blue, pink, and gray, is devoted to the recent local elections.

"Choose, Citizen!" is printed across each stamp, the choices pictured being a militia truncheon; a bayonet, or a knout; a hammer, a sickle, or a star; and a pair of dark glasses (symbolizing General Wojciech Jaruzelski) or a bottle of vodka.

Each sheet contains 12 sets of these stamps, making a total of 36.

Fitting in nicely with the sense of community and communication that these stamps help to promote is a special envelope recently printed to mark the second anniversary of the founding of Radio Solidarity.



darity.

It contains a drawing of a radio mast and radio waves emanating from it.



POLSKA 75 zł
POCZTA SOLIDARNOŚĆ

Nadziejo
Więzionego
Narodu
MÓDL SIĘ ZA NAMI

Finally, one series of stamps, printed in black on a gold background, introduces a sense of communion to the emblems chosen for these stamps by depicting six Polish Madonnas, including the Madonnas of Czestochowa, Lithuania, Lwow, and Katyn.

The last stamp in the set bears the inscription "The Hope of Our Imprisoned Nation, Pray for Us."

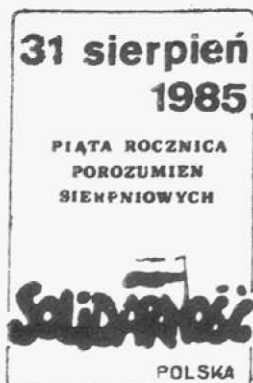


On the basis of this survey, which is by no means complete, one can see the good artistic and technical quality of postage stamps issued by the Solidarity underground.

Despite the intense efforts of the security forces, underground publishing seems to be well-organized and is constantly improving its products, not the least its stamps.

Though the print run of each stamp or set of stamps does not normally exceed 3,000, their sales bring in substantial proceeds for underground Solidarity cells and are of incalculable propaganda value.





65 ROCZNICA SOJUSZU
POLSKI I UKRAINY
W WOJNIE O NIEPODLEGŁOŚĆ 1920



SOLIDARNOSC MAŁOPOLSKA



PRZEWODNICZĄC TEK
SOLIDARNOSC
Zbigniew Gajek



POLSKA 1500



Polska 17 zł

Region MAŁOPOLE 54



Wałęsa and the Solidarność
trademark make the major
themes of most of the stamps
issued.



WORLD WAR II POLISH FORCES IN CANADA

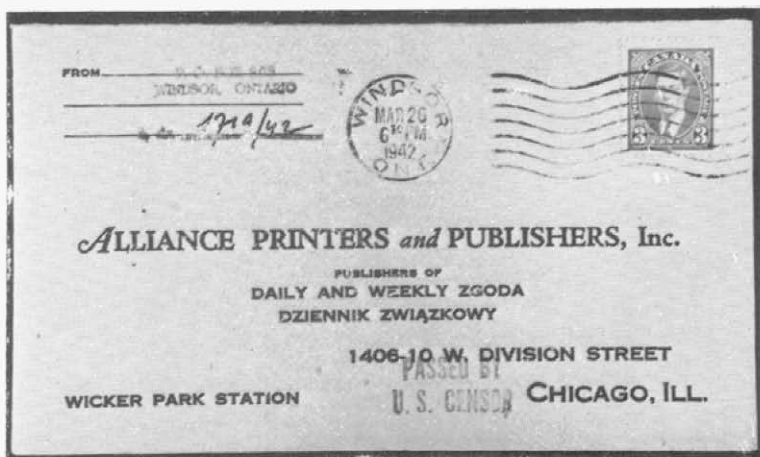
By THOMAS J. GOBBY

There is considerable information and literature about Polish Forces in France, Great Britain, the Middle East and Italy. Over the years articles have appeared in the *Polonus Bulletin*, and collectors can readily locate these with the help of the "Index of the Bulletin of the Polonus Philatelic Society, 1940-1983." This exceptional and valuable reference tool is still available to members at \$8.00 plus \$1.50 postage or to non-members at \$12.50 plus \$1.50 postage.

With the exception of Jerzy Kucharski of New York City, whose well researched articles and handbook deal with the Polish II-nd Corps, little else has appeared on Polish Forces elsewhere. One of the lesser known Polish military operations was the one which operated in Canada between 1940 and 1942.

In 1940 the clouds of war hung dark and heavy over Europe. Poland, France and other countries had been invaded and occupied. Britain was fighting for its life and Polish military personnel were either prisoners of war, interred, or reforming in a number of locations, including Britain.

In 1940 in an agreement between the British and Canadian governments, a special military mission was sent to Canada. Its objective was to recruit and train men from the permanent U.S. and Canadian Polish communities and then transport them to Britain to join with Polish Forces there. This is somewhat reminiscent of a W.W. I period effort with the forces of Gen. Haller who recruited 12,000 Poles from the U.S.A. and trained them in France.



Letter from Polish Forces in Canada to Chicago, U.S.A. Machine cancelled: March 26, 1942, Windsor Ontario. Return address is three line rubber handstamp (red ink): "P.O. Box 363/Windsor, Ontario/L. dz." with 1719/42 written in pen. Two line handstamp at lower edge, center reads: "Passed By/U.S. Censor" (applied in Chicago).

In the second half of 1941 a special camp was established near Windsor, Ontario across the river from Detroit, Mich. U.S.A. Volunteers came, though not in any great numbers. Attracted were those, who because of the United States neutrality policy, could not find an otherwise legitimate means of getting into uniform and battle.

After the December 7, 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, things changed for both the U.S.A. and the Americans in the camp. The American volunteers became U.S. conscripts and were recalled to the U.S.A. Its manpower drastically reduced, the camp wound down its operation and ceased formal existence sometime in the 3rd quarter of 1942.

While it operated the Polish assembly Camp and the Polish Training Camp used the mailing address: P.O. Box 363, Windsor, Ontario, Canada. Troops who had completed training were transferred to O-

wen Sound, Ontario for further transfer to Britain. That mailing address was: P.O. Box 106, Owen Sound, Ontario, Canada.

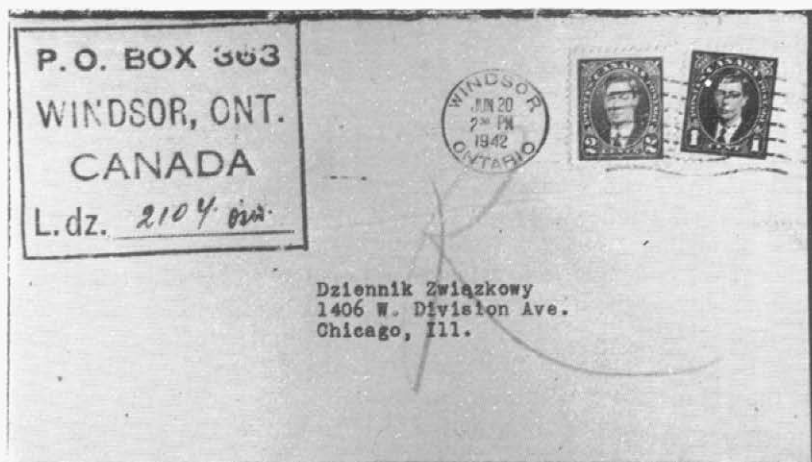
There was never any great volume of correspondence. Most mail was between Canada and the U.S., with some going to Britain. The number of people involved was never very great and coupled with the short time of operation, any covers are definitely scarce and worth the search.

IN MEMORIAM
JOSEPH KUPIEC
Chicago, Illinois

PHILATELIC BRIEFS

The first stamp exhibition was held in 1852 in Brussels, Belgium, according to some philatelic sources. This one man show was arranged by Phillippe Vandermaalen, a Belgian geographer.

Stamp collecting is considered to be the world's most popular hobby.



Letter from Polish Forces in Canada to Chicago, U.S.A. Machine cancelled: June 20, 1942, Windsor, Ontario. Large (58 mm x 47 mm) rectangular box, 4 line cachet (black ink): P.O. Box 363/Windsor, Ont./Canada/L. dz. with 2104 and initials o.i.w. written in pen.

POLPEX 87

In the past POLONUS has held POLPEX shows at local Chicago settings like Falcons hall, St. James Church hall, Veterans hall, Highlanders hall, and in some elegant downtown locations like the LaSalle Hotel and Palmer House. This year a new site was selected, House of the White Eagle, 6845 N. Milwaukee Ave. in nearby Niles, Illinois. The committee felt that we should have an appropriate location with plenty of parking, pleasant atmosphere, good Polish food, and other conveniences.

Chicago has been enjoying a mild winter this year and if it holds up, we expect a good turnout for our biggest event of the year. The exhibition will be open Saturday, March 14th, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free.

As the exhibition commemorates the 600th anniversary of the coronation of Wladyslaw Jagiello, King of Poland and Lithuania, Polonus has invited the Lithuanian Philatelic Society to attend. The Polish American Numismatic Association is participating with exhibits of commemorative medals issued by PANA since Poland's Millennium, and another will show medals pertaining to King Jagiello. Entered for competition is a historical philatelic exhibit on the Battle of Grunwald.

A U.S. Post Office will operate on the premises and will offer current U.S. commemoratives and a special show cancellation. Two cacheted covers will be used for each day of the show priced at 75¢ each or \$1.50 for the set. A souvenir card will be sold for \$1.50 mint,

\$2.00 cancelled. The traditional pair of souvenir sheets and descriptive folder will cost \$1.00. Souvenir program catalogs will sell for \$1.00. Mail orders for these items may be sent to Walenty Poniecki, 6020 N. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60646. Enclose an extra \$1.00 for postage and handling.

The highlight of POLPEX 87 will be Polonus' own "Beeba Banquet", a family style dinner at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday evening. Awards presentations to exhibitors will be made at this time. Tickets are \$15 per person and may be purchased at the door.

POLONUS is looking forward to its 50th anniversary in 1989. It is the largest such group in the free world dedicated to Polish stamp collecting. Since it began publishing a bulletin, it has done so continually, uninterrupted by the war years.

New Members

Paul Palen, 1335
1444 Bay Ridge Pkwy.
Brooklyn, NY 11228
Frank L. Skibbic, Jr., 1334
W-1736 CTH "M"
Rib Lake, WI 54470

NOTICE

We received inquiries as to whether senior citizens pay dues at POLONUS. At a recent board meeting our policy was defined as follows:

If you have paid your dues for 25 years and are 65 or older, you must write a letter to the membership chairman informing him of this information. Only then will you become a life member exempt from paying dues. Membership chrm. is Fred Szebel, 9041 Emerson, Des Plaines, IL 60016.