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SAMORZĄD-WARWISZKI

By THOMAS J. GOBBY

"Caveat Emptor!" or Buyer Beware! A pithy cliché that applies to every step and phase of our lives. Whether its the purchase of a car or a stamp, the buyer should know what it is before putting his money down. We are all familiar with stories of what can happen if one, if not familiar with all there is to know about what one is buying, especially what is wrong.

In this case there are two covers. If the stamps with their overprints and the cancellations were all genuine then these two covers would be of the "Samorząd Warwiski" issue, items of rarity. First a little



Figure 1. — Cover originally posted in Bydgoszcz on March 25, 1923. Franking is 500 MKs, strip of 4x100 MKs on obverse, and a single 100 MK on reverse. Forged overprint added at a later date. Mikstein and Richter signatures are also forgeries.



Figure 2. — Close-up of strip of four stamps on cover in Figure 1. All the overprints are forgeries as well as the Mikstein signatures at left and right.

background. Warwiszki was a district which attempted to maintain a position of neutrality between Polish occupied Central Lithuania and the Lithuania under the Kaunas rule. After the League of Nations ruled that it should go under Lithuanian rule, an uprising took place on March 23, 1923.

During the uprising, three different stamps of Polish release were overprinted "Samorząd Warwiszki" and issued. The stamps were all of the large eagle inflation issue as follows:

Poland Sc.#	Value	Number Overprinted
163	25 Mk	1000
165	100 Mk	500
166	200 Mk	200

Known used examples were cancelled with a Sopockinie (Polish) date stamp or a provisional 35 mm. circular stamp.

The provisional stamp has the wording: "Samorząd Warwiszki Komenda Siły Zbrojnej and an eagle."

Now what about these two covers? One is a registered cover cancelled Białystok, *9*, November 26, 1921 (1½ years before the stamps were issued). It was sent to the U.S.A. and has a Pittsburgh receiving

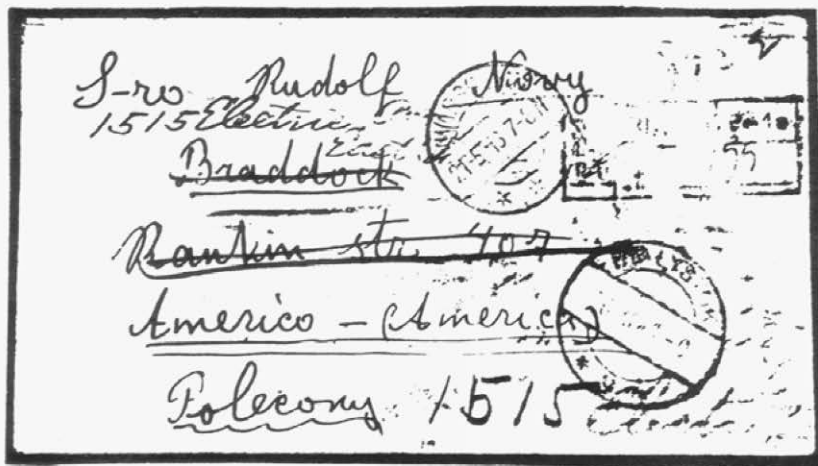


Figure 3. — A cover with a pair of forged "Samorząd Warwiszki" overprints on the reverse. Cancelled on November 21, 1921 (1½ years before the stamps were issued). Adding to the confusion is a World War I period "Warschau" cancel dated May 21, 1916.

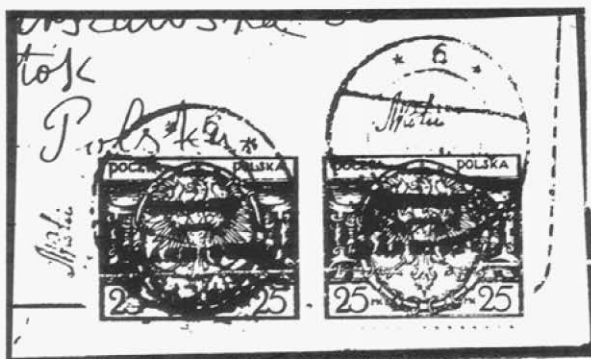


Figure 4 - Close-up of the forged pair on the reverse of the cover illustrated in Figure 3. Again, note the forged Mikstein signatures.

cancel of December 19, 1921. It has a pair of the 25Mk values. But wait, a bonus? A World War I period Warschau cancel of May 21, 1916 is also on the cover.

The second cover is even better, it has five (5) copies of the 100 Mk value. Four on the front, and one on the back. It was sent from Bydgoszcz, *2 c on March 25, 1923. The date falls right into the period.

So what of it? Both covers bear Mikstein's stamp. Richter's stamp is also on the Bydgoszcz cover. Either cover could easily fool a lot of collectors.

Under magnification the overprint can plainly be seen to have been applied after the fact, i.e., right over the original cancellation. The signatures (or stamps) of both Mikstein and Richter are also forgeries. This issue is not known to have been cancelled, commercially, philatelically, or otherwise in either Białystok or Bydgoszcz. The "Warschau" cancel? Who knows?

The moral: "Caveat Emptor."

Special thanks to Theo Skotnicki of Grand Island, New York who furnished the covers for this article.

Occupational Stamps During the Russo-Polish War of 1919-1920

By STANLEY KRONENBERG

On November 11, 1918, Poland became an independent country. At that time large German armies were still occupying the eastern part of Poland and the western part of the former Russian Empire. While the German soldiers were being returned to Germany via Eastern Prussia, the Red Army was occupying the vacated areas. Their aim was to overrun Poland and then bring the Bolshevik revolution to Germany and then to other parts of Europe. "Over Poland's corpse" as the Red Army commander Tukhachevsky expressed it.

In February, 1919, the Red Army reached the line: Grodno-Brest-Kowel. The Polish counteroffensive in the spring of 1920 resulted in the capture of Kiev but in the summer of 1920, the Russians advanced toward Warsaw. The Poles, under Piłsudski fought back, defeated the



Red Army in August, 1920, and recaptured most of their territory. A peace treaty was signed in Riga on October 12, 1920, the eastern boundary of Poland was established and lasted until the start of World War II.

During this war the conditions in Russia were deplorable and the government institutions including the postal service in the war zone worked poorly. Regular letters were transported free of postage, but registered letters to Russia required a 10 ruble postage. This postage could be paid with a 10 ruble Russian postage stamp or with any other Russian stamp because all postage stamps were considered to be 10 ruble stamps regardless of their nominal value. These stamps were either postmarked or cancelled by pen strokes. Often registered letters had only the annotation "uploczeno 10 R." (paid 10 rubles).

In July, 1920, a clerk of the Bolshevik fieldpost in some town in Bielarus overprinted captured Polish stamps into 19 ruble Soviet stamps by means of a rubber stamp with the cyrillic letters: "R.S.F.S.R./10 R." (Rosijskaja Sovjetskaja Federalivnaja Socialisticeskaja Respublika/ 10 rubles). Supposedly two sheets of 100 stamps of 5 fenigi denomination and five sheets each of 25 and 50 fenigi denomination were overprinted. About half of these stamps were supposedly sold and used on registered letters. This is confirmed by the fact that numerous letters with these overprinted stamps were found in a Russian postal railroad wagon captured by the Third Polish Army.

These overprinted stamps are not listed in catalogs. The information given here is based on two brief notes in "Filatelista Polski" of November 30, 1920. The note which describes the origin and usage of these stamps contradicts itself by stating in its last sentence: "these stamps are without forgeries". The book, "Polskie Znaki Pocztowe", Ikaros 1935, edited by A. Laszkiewicz lists and describes these overprinted stamps on page 265. Volume IV of "Polskie Znaki Pocztowe" of 1966, edited by A. Laszkiewicz and Z. Mikulski describes these stamps under "Varia" on page 1520. It also quotes the journal "L'Echo de la Timbrologie" of September 29, 1924, No. 676, which reports that the number of overprinted stamps was: 5 fen.-208; 25 fen.-400; 50 fen.-300. It also reports 106 overprinted 15 fen. stamps and a very small number of overprinted 10 fen. and 20 fen. postage stamps as well as 10 fen., 40 fen., and 1

(Continued on page 373-9)

POSTAL HISTORY OF KRAKÓW 1846-1918

(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS ISSUE)

NEWLY CREATED POST OFFICES IN KRAKOW 1882 - 1918

The stormy events of the first years of the 19th century (occupation of Kraków by Austria, incorporation of Kraków into the Duchy of Warsaw) initiated the formation of territorial borders of the city. This process took shape particularly after the collapse of the Free City of Kraków in 1846 when Austrian authorities undertook to put the territorial administration in order. In 1858, the territorial subdivision of Kraków was started and it was finished in 1866. At that time, Kraków was an integral area together with its surrounding suburbs. The town was subdivided into eight parts which were defined as follows:

I—Kraków City; II—The Hill of Wawel; III—Nowy Świat (the New World); IV—Piasek; V—Kleparz; VI—Wesoła; VII—Stradom; and VIII—Kazimierz.

The above numbering of city parts corresponds with the numbering of some post offices which is significant if one considers the territorial and administrative changes which took place. The incorporation of the suburbs of Kraków resulted in the growth of Kraków both in population and in area. This state of affairs produced difficulties in handling mail by the main post office and by the railroad station post office and it was decided to open new post offices. In the next chapter will be shown chronologically how these openings were accomplished and how this depended on the time of the incorporation into Kraków of the territory where they functioned.

KRAKOW — BRANCH POST OFFICES

May 1, 1882, the Branch Office of the Main Post Office in Kraków was opened in the newly restored "Sukiennice" (Drapers Hall). This post office had the status of an area post office and thus was manned with appointed officials. Its first chief was the official Jan Hanka. In 1885, the functioning of this post office was extended to include telegraph service and it became a post and telegraph office. One year later, in 1886, the leadership was changed and as a result, Karol Słabkowski became the new contractual chief. In 1889 the post and telegraph office in Sukiennice was closed. During its short existence this office used the following markings known so far:

REGISTRATION MARKINGS



RECOM: R^{Nr}

REGISTRATION LABELS



"a" in "Krakau" is inverted

KRAKOW STRADOM – KRAKOW 3 – KRAKOW 7

The settlement of Stradom was located between the Hill of Wawel and the Town Kazimierz. In 1386, King Władysław Jagiello established the municipality of Stradom. Stradom represented an important factor in the medieval trade due to the numerous stops and warehouses on the River Wisła which were on its territory

In 1889, a branch post office was opened at Bernard Place 1. This took place the same year the branch post office in Kraków-Sukiennice was closed. The exact date is not known, but on the basis of Postmarks used on mail, it can be determined that its activity began between March and May, 1889.

The first chief of the area post office in Stradom was the senior administrator Władysław Treter. In accordance with the requirement of numbering post offices in one and the same town which applied since 1896, Stradom received the number 3, being the third post office. The order to number post offices could have come to some degree as a surprise and perhaps, one cannot exclude the possibility that it was implemented sluggishly (no new postal paraphenelia with the new name of the post office were prepared on time), because still in 1897 the postmark "Stradom" was used. One year later, in 1898, the correct postmark "Kraków 3" occurs on registered mail but due to the lack of correct registration labels, labels with "Kraków-Stradom" were still in use.

In 1909, the post office on Bernardine Plaza in Stradom was assigned the number 7. The change in the numbering coincided with the opening of the new post office on Bracka Street which "inherited" from the Stradom post office the number 3. It is most probable that the assignment of the number 7 to Stradom was dictated by the desire to match the number of the post office with the number of the part of Kraków where the post office was located. Together with the change of its number occurred also the change in the rank of the postmaster. The new postmaster became the senior postmaster, Marcin Pele. The status of the post office was also changed. The post office No. 7 became a non-areal post office which means that it was managed by contractual postmasters and postal personnel. The reproductions of postal markings known so far are shown below and permit the study of the complicated history of this post office.

DOUBLE CIRCULAR POSTMARKS

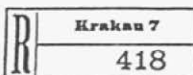
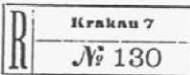
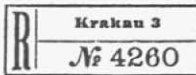
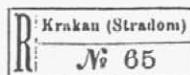


The identifying letter appears two times.

Postmarks of this type had the identifiers: b, 2b

Postmarks of this type had the identifiers: a, b, c, d, f, g.

REGISTRATION LABELS



Label with "No." removed.
Number is on the right side.

KRAKOW PIASEK – KRAKOW 4

The suburb "Na Piasku" (on the Sand) known earlier also as Garbary, was one of the oldest settlements near Kraków. It was identified as such in 1363 by Casimir the Great. Toward the end of the 19th century numerous shops (tanneries and mills) existed there which provided services for Kraków.

The connection of the city with the suburb underwent a continuous tightening and as a result, the settlement "Piasek" became the fourth part of Kraków in 1866.

During 1889, the Kraków Main Post Office opened a branch post office in Piasek, because after being annexed to Kraków, this part of town already represented a significant economic potential to Kraków (the exact date of the opening of the post office is not known). The branch post office Kraków Piasek was an area post office and was located on the Street Podwale, No. 3.

The first contractual chief of that post office was Karol Słabkowski (1890) who held the office until the branch office was closed. According to the policy of 1896 of assigning post offices within one city, serial numbers, Kraków Piasek received the number 4, which one should stress, corresponded with the number of that part of town.

In 1990 the change in the grade of the postmaster became effective with the result that the new chief became Stanisław Skąpski. During the following years, starting with 1907, there were frequent changes in the position of the chief of the office and thus the sequential chiefs were: Jan Krechowiecki, 1907; Rudolf Rudolf, 1911, and Michał Krzycz, 1914. During its existence, the post office Kraków-Piasek—Kraków 4, used the following postal markings known so far:

DOUBLE CIRCLE DATE POSTMARKS



The postmarks of this type had the identifiers: 2a, 2b, 2c, 4a



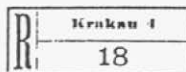
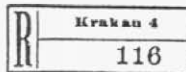
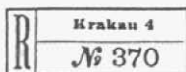
Postmark for money orders. IX indicates Galicia, the arabic numeral, the post office number.



The hour of mailing is shown in a roman numeral.

The postmarks of this type had the identifiers: a, c, d.

REGISTRATION LABELS



Label with removed "No." The number is on the right side.

Label with removed "No." The number is in the center.

KRAKOW 5 (RAKOWICE)

The name "Racovice" appears in the 15th century in a document which describes the endowment of the parish of St. Nicolaus. Rakowice was located in the southern part of Prądnik Czerwony which bordered on Kleparz.

In this region which was sparsely populated but was not too far from the city, where a cemetery was started in 1802, became the largest necropolis of Kraków during the following century.

In Rakowice, which was strongly connected with, but still outside of the administrative borders of Kraków, a post office was opened on May 16, 1896. Its opening occurred three months after the regulation which required the numbering of post offices within the border of a town.

Apparently, this regulation was observed in Kraków from the time of its issuance because the post office in Rakowice, which was non-areal received the number 5, thus the actual serial number of the post offices which existed then in Kraków.

The fact that the post office in Rakowice had an assigned number from its very beginning, ahead of post offices in Kraków which had existed already for a long time is confirmed by "Schematics of the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria with the Grand Duchy of Kraków" which was issued by the Imperial and Royal Deputyship in Lwów in 1897 (page 215).

The assignment of a number to a post office obligated it to use it on all postal items. Thus the Rakowice Post Office was obligated to use its name: Kraków 5 and had to have such a date postmark.

Wilhelm Klein has a different opinion concerning the postmark of Rakowice. In his work "Die Postalischen Abstempelungen und andere Entwertungsarten auf den Oesterreichischen Postwertzeichen — Ausgaben 1867, 1883 und 1890", he mentions this postmark as having spelled out "Rakowice" instead of the number "5".

Deciding whether the date postmark spelled out its official name "Kraków 5" or if it used instead the name of the place where it functioned, "Rakowice" can only be made when a piece of mail becomes identified as having been expedited by the post office Kraków 5 in Rakowice. Before this occurs, it is worthwhile to mention here that in Kraków after 1905, a postmark was used which differs from all others used there, namely, it has a Roman V. The indication of the post office number in such a manner could have been caused by insufficient instructions in the regulation.



The postmark described here is known on mail from a period after the post office in Rakowice was closed and in its place, almost at the same time, the post office Kraków 5 in Kleparz started its service. This does not exclude the possibility that the post office Kraków 5 in Kleparz took over the postal paraphernalia of Kraków 5 in Rakowice.

The difficulty in finding a piece of mail from the activities of the post office in Rakowice is caused by its rare use and therefore a small volume of correspondence because not very many people lived there at that time. The opposite applies to the post office Kraków 5 in Kleparz. It was located close to the center of town, was used frequently and numerous pieces of mail remain, which were mailed there, among them mail postmarked with the date postmark with the Roman numeral V.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

marka denomination Polish revenue stamps. Such stamps were not seen in Poland.

The overprints are made by means of a rubber stamp. They are carelessly imprinted with a water sensitive, magenta red ink. The dimensions of the overprints vary slightly due to the thin, watery ink which tends to run and to produce blots.

OUR DILEMMA

With the Bulletin crisis of 1995, we here in Chicago were scrambling around to get Polonus work done. What we need mostly is new blood, younger members.

I ran into this poem that pertains to many of us . . .

— R. H. S.

OLD AGE IS HELL

The body is stiff
You get cramps in you legs
Corns on you feet
As big as hen eggs.

Gas in you stomach
Elimination is poor
Take Ex Lax at night
And then you're not sure.

You soak in a tub
Or your body will smell
It's like I said folks
Old age is hell.

Your teeth start decaying
Your eyesight is poor
Hair falling out
All over the floor.

Sex life is short
It's a thing of the past.
Don't kid yourself friend
Even that doesn't last.

Can't go to parties
Don't dance anymore
Just to put things mildly
You are a hell of a bore.

Liquor is out
Can't take a chance
Your bladder is weak
Might pee in your pants.

Nothing to plan for
Nothing to expect
Just the mailman comes
With your security check.

Be sure your affairs are in order
And your will is made out right
Or on the way to the graveyard
There will be a hell of a fight.

You feel pretty good
You look fairly well
Thank God you're alive
BUT OLD AGE IS HELL!

COLLAPSING REICH CREATED UNISSUED RARITY

By DONNA O'KEEFE

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. On Sept. 3rd, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. On Sept. 17th, Russia invaded Poland. The Poles were defeated. Russia and Germany partitioned Poland, but in 1941, Germany attacked Russia and seized all of Poland. In the midst of these events, the Polish postal and telecommunication services collapsed.



This 12-groszy stamp was never issued by the German General Government in occupied Poland. Copies of the stamp are scarce.

Adolph Hitler declared the establishment of the German General Government in Poland, and the Polish Post was annexed by the Deutsche Post Osten. In December, 1939, German stamps were surcharged in black with new values, and the inscription "Deutsche Post OSTEN."

In 1940, the General Government began surcharging the stamps of Poland with new values, the inscription "General Gouvernement" and the German swastika and eagle.

Later that year, the General Government began issuing its own stamps. It continued to do so until 1944, when the Russian army invaded Poland and drove out the German army.

At the time of the Russian invasion, the General Government was preparing a new set of stamps for occupied Poland. The set comprised a 6-groszy value showing a derrick, a 12-gr depicting a horse-drawn carriage, a 24groszy featuring a peasant farmer and his wife, and a 40gr showing an Ukrainian wooden church.

The State Printing Works in Vienna printed these stamps, as it had done with all the General Government issues. However, the Russian army took over the General Government and the city of Vienna before this set could be issued.

A few sheets of the 6gr, 24gr and 40gr survived the war. However, only a few 12gr stamps showing the horse drawn carriage are known to exist. This set is unlisted by the Scott catalog. The Michel catalog, produced in Germany, lists the 12gr at 25,000 deutschemark (about \$16,000).

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RETURNED COVER TRACKED POLISH ADDRESSEE

By JOHN M. HOTCHNER

Stories are legend of how the United States Postal Service has delivered letters addressed only to a name and city. To some extent, directory service of this sort has become a casualty of large cities, higher populations and the Postal Service's need to reduce individual handling of letters.

Still, if someone is known to the staff at a local post office, the letter may still arrive. All this is by way of introduction to the cover shown front and back in Figure 1. Sent from Portland, Oregon to Warsaw, Poland, on December 11, 1939, the only address is the photo, the name Marshal Edward Śmigły-Rydz and "the boss of Poland."

The letter got to Warsaw and received a local marking, reading "return-left" in French. The cover returned to New York on April 22, 1940, according to a machine cancel on the back of the envelope. The back also shows a Nazi censor tape.

Śmigły-Rydz had indeed left Warsaw on September 18, 1939, but that was late in his story. As marshal of Poland, commander of the Polish armed forces and a principal in Polish leadership, Śmigły-Rydz was heavily involved in the events leading up to the German invasion of Poland on September 1st, 1939.

Caught between Germany and Russia, the Polish leadership approached the situation feeling that it could maintain Poland's integrity with guarantees from Britain and France.

Those countries with a more realistic understanding of the German



Figure 1. Sent too late to reach the addressee, this unusual cover (front and back) got to Warsaw, Poland, after the Germans and Russians divided the country between them.

threat tried to convince the Polish government that it should open its territory to Russian troops as a means of protecting Poland from the Germans.

Śmigły-Rydz was one who rejected that alternative on August 15, 1939, saying, "With the Germans we risk losing our freedom. With the Russians we shall lose our soul."

When all talks broke down, and the Germans invaded, the Polish military did a valiant job of holding on — expecting help from the West that never came.

On September 17, Russia invaded Poland from the East and sealed its fate. The Russians and the Germans met September 18th to agree on dividing Poland. The same day, Śmigły-Rydz fled to Romania.

He later returned to join the Polish underground and is believed to have been killed by the Germans in 1943.

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