



“Interes Koscielny - On the Business of the Church”

By Stanley T. Wlodek

During the 19th century Church correspondence in Prussia, and later Germany, was free of postal charges [1]. This was also true of the two major Polish archdioceses of Gniezno and Poznan that fell under Prussian domination and control during the partition period. Hand-written notations in Polish, usually “Interes Duchowny” (Spiritual Business) for the mail emanating from the Gniezno archdiocese offices and sealed with the archbishop’s paper seal appeared to initially suffice for free franking. Unfortunately the postal cancels applied to these letters was the straight line town mark, Prussia oR-2 type, on the front and the round Ausgabe (received) stamping on the back, both of which gave just the month, day and hour of posting and not the year. Thus, although the exact date of that franking cannot be determined, these types of postal cancellations were most common in Prussia before the middle of the 19th century. An example of such a cover, whose year can be ascertained from internal notations, is shown in **Figure 1, Page 520-12**. This cover was mailed in 1820 in Poznan and bears the Posen K1-0 round cancellation of October 18th. However it also bears the notation 1½ which suggests that a charge of 1.0 silver groshen for the postage and ½ silver groshen for postage due was made. Such erroneous charges for Polish church correspondence were not rare in the Prussian Postal system.

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FROM MY POINT OF VIEW

by: Chris Kulpinski

Wow! Time is flying and Polonus is leaping forward! Hank and I correspond by email quite often and on many occasions he ends his comments with "are we having fun yet?". The answer is a resounding YES! And I think that goes for the rest of us who are now involved with this great organization.

Where's the fun you might ask? That's easy. The fun is in seeing and getting things done, in seeing our club moving forward, in the flow of ideas and suggestions coming from the membership. Since becoming president, and especially in these past 6 months, I have taken the time to check out other well known philatelic organizations and several of them are where we were a few years ago. I do not mean to imply that they are in trouble, but let's say they are stagnant.

We are moving forward with vigor. We already (as of 9/9) have 4 exhibitors who have sent in their applications for Garfield-Perry, we are caught up with the Bulletins, with one more coming before the end of the year, we have a new treasurer in place and all the Board members and several others are working on their own assigned projects for our club.

There is only one thing missing – you. You know who I mean. You with the deep desire to know more, share more, to chat with others who share your passion. You can fulfill that desire several ways. First, make arrangements to come to Cleveland next Match. Yes, I know, who wants to be in Cleveland in March, but that begs the question. The question is why wouldn't you want to be there if that is where you can indulge in you interest and hobby? You can exhibit. If that is your desire, get in touch with me for a prospectus and application. As of now (9/9) it is not on their web-site (though you can try – www.garfieldperry.org)

You can send us articles – your favorite cover, an article on whatever interests you in Polish philately, your specialties, especially if they are off the beaten path. As I mentioned before, don't worry about the details of how and why. Contact me and I will be very happy to guide you through that part of the process – very easy, I assure you. Till next time!

INTERES KOSCIELNY - POLISH POSTAL HISTORY

The use of stamped postal markings in the Polish language on correspondence in the Prussian controlled Polish territories, during the partition period, is a much greater rarity than the handwritten notations. I am aware of only two postal markings of this type. The one that we will consider here consists of a two-line stamped impression, reading INTERES KOSCIELNY in the top line and HERRENSCHAFTL KIRCHEN SACHE immediately below it. Both mean "On the Business of the Church", the upper in Polish, the lower in German. Each is always rendered in black, within a double lined square frame 5.4 cm wide and 1.5 cm high. All are found only on church correspondence, originating from the Archdiocese of Gniezno, during the partition period. All are essentially folded covers sealed, if originating with the Archbishop's offices, with his paper seal.

All but one exhibit on the front the Prussian straight line cancel, type oR-2 that does not give the year of mailing. Similarly, all bear the standard Prussian "Ausgabe" receiving hand stamp on the back, sometimes illegible, that also does not give the year. Thus, unless there is some internal enclosure or notation of the year of mailing, the exact date of some of these covers cannot be determined. However, the exactly identical straight line oR-2 postal markings suggest that all were mailed in roughly the same time period. Two examples of the INTERES KOSCIELNY markings have been previously published [1, 2] but never fully explained. Another three exist in my collection, all but one of the items are unstamped and bear no markings suggesting that no payment of additional postage was ever made. **Figure 2, Page 520-12** illustrates the latest (cover III) **Figure 3, Page 520-13** the stamped (cover V). **Table I, Page 520-5** summarizes the pertinent philatelic information on all five covers.

Table I - Letters with the Gniezno Interes Koscielny St.amp

No.	Mailed from	Received	Type	Mail Rate	Post Mark
I Ref[1]	Gniezno 10/16/59	Wongrowiec ?	stampless Folded	None Noted	straight Line, oR-2 cancel, no year
II Ref[2]	Gniezno 4/20/?	Mroczy 4/21/?	stampless Folded	None Noted	straight Line, oR-2 cancel, no year
III Fig.2	Gniezno 11/7/67	Ostrowite 12/7	stampless Folded	None Noted	Two Ring, oK-2 cancel Year
IV	Gniezno 18/1/?	Gniewkowo 8/2	stampless Folded	None Noted	straight Line oR-2 cancel no year
V Fig.3	Runowo Vandsberg 11/22/65	Gniezno 11/24/65	Franked Scott 18, 20, Folded	5 Silver Groshen. Possible Turned Cover.	straight Line oR-2 cancel no year

The History of Gniezno

Before describing these covers further, it is best to present the historical background of the period during which these covers originated.

Gniezno was the capital of the first Polish ruler, Duke Mieszko I, who accepted Christianity in 966 AD and built the first church in Gniezno to which he brought the remains of St. Adalbert [3]. It is believed that he ransomed St. Adalbert's body from the pagan Prussian tribes that killed him, for its weight in gold. The Gniezno Archdiocese is one of the oldest in Eastern Europe originating in the year 999AD-1000AD, during the reign of King Boleslaw Chrobry. On that date Pope Sylvester II canonized St. Adalbert and simultaneously decreed the founding of the Gniezno archdiocese. In all of Poland it was preceded only by the Posnan (968 AD) archdiocese. The papal decree was actually realized in the year 1000, during the famous pilgrimage of Emperor Otto III to the grave of St. Adalbert. The archdiocese of Gniezno has been ruled to this day by a continuous succession of almost exclusively 84 Polish archbishops [3].

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The first Archbishop of Gniezno was the Blessed Radzym-Gaudenty, who witnessed the martyrdom of St. Adalbert at the hands of the pagan Prussians and was actually his younger brother [3]. The current Archbishop is Henryk Muszynski, who is also the Primate of Poland. Even after Krakow became the capital in 1038, all Polish kings and some Bohemian kings were crowned in the Gniezno cathedral until 1370 [3]. Even later, the archbishop of Gniezno crowned all Polish kings regardless of where the coronation took place. At the Councils of Constance (1414–1418) the Archbishops of Gniezno were given the title *Primas Poloniae et Magni Dukatus Lithuani* and granted ecclesiastical jurisdiction over all of the Bishops of Poland and Lithuania. Their primacy entitled them to rank as princes of the realm. From 1572 they held authority as regents during an interregnum, supervised the election of the king and still crowned the successful candidate [4].

The Gniezno cathedral was partially destroyed many times, but always rebuilt. The construction of the current gothic cathedral, shown in **Figure 4, Page 520-13**, was started in 1342 replacing the original edifice that was destroyed by the Prussian Knights Templers in 1331. The cathedral was looted twice during the Swedish invasions (1665 and 1707) and subjected to damage from the frequent fires that each time almost totally destroyed the town, particularly the great fire of 1819. Its two great possessions are the bronze "Royal Gate" made locally in 1138, portraying the life and martyrdom of St. Adalbert, and the silver sarcophagus built by Peter van der Rennen in 1662 to contain the remaining relics of St. Adalbert. These relics have had a difficult history. In 1036 the Bohemian King Brzetyslaw destroyed Gniezno and Posen, slaughtered the citizens and hanged or stoned to death many of the clergy. He looted the cathedral and stole the remains of St. Adalbert. These relics were partially recovered in the 12th century [3]. During World War II the Germans removed all valuables from the cathedral and churches in the Gniezno Archbishopric. Fortunately, many of the treasures, including the silver sarcophagus containing the residual remains of St. Adalbert were recovered in 1945 by the American army. Then the silver sarcophagus was stolen by thieves in 1986 and restored one year later when the culprits were arrested [5].

With the first partition of Poland in 1773 and the subsequent second (1793) and third partitions (1795) as well as the short-lived (1807-1815) formation of the Duchy of Warsaw (to which Gniezno belonged) the Archbishop of Gniezno lost his pre-eminent role in the hierarchy of the Church. Essentially the rulers of the partitioning kingdoms would not recognize any authority of the church that originated from outside their own boundaries. The Gniezno Archdiocese was thus restricted to the area of the Prussian partition and subjected to the systematic restrictions of the Prussian and later German Governments against Polish traditions and culture. Even at the time of the First Partition all church lands were seized by the Prussian state and in the years 1821 to 1841 all monasteries were closed. The Prussian government used every scheme at its disposal to drive a wedge between the Church and the Polish people. The Archbishop of Poznan, Martin Dunin, was removed from his see for defending the Church's position on mixed marriages, imprisoned in the fortress of Kolberg and finally reinstated in 1840 at the personal interposition of King Fredrick William IV [4].

The situation grew worse when Chancellor Otto von Bismark initiated his Kulturkampf campaign (1872-1887). The Prussian government claimed the right to approve all church nominations, and when the Archbishop of Gniezno, Mieczyslaw Ledochowski ignored this demand, he was imprisoned (1874-1876), and later banished [3]. Even before his arrest the seminaries were closed in both Posnan (1873) and Gniezno (1875), and the Polish priests who attended seminaries in other countries were not allowed to function in Prussia. Such priests administered to their congregations in secret, dressing in civilian clothes and even growing beards to escape detection. Many church activities, particularly pilgrimages, were attended by police, who carefully observed any activities by priests not known to that locality. The clergy were often punished by fines, imprisonment and banishment but continued to maintain a constant activity of teaching the Polish language in religion classes, organizing evenings of singing patriotic and religious songs, and giving leadership to the formation of economic, educational and Polish patriotic organizations. These activities and repressions continued to escalate. By 1883, 165 of the 555 parishes were without a pastor and of these, 131 embracing 165,000 souls, were without any clergyman whatever [4].

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The brief period of freedom during the interwar period did not last long. During World War II the Germans ruthlessly destroyed all church property. All church buildings in Gniezno were leveled or utilized as Nazi state facilities. The cathedral was completely looted and turned into a concert hall. Many of its statutes and plaques were removed or destroyed. In just the Gniezno Archdiocese, 164 priests were sent to concentration camps and 138 lost their lives both from summary execution and imprisonment. Just the use of the Polish language in any religious rite was sufficient for imprisonment in a concentration camp [3].

Discussion

With this background, let us return to the five folded covers presented here, particularly the covers III (Figure 2) and V (Figure 3) that merit additional comment.

Cover III contained the original letter from a Father Chaplewski, the parish priest in Ostrowite to the Gniezno archdioceses written September 10 1867 in Latin but using the old Teutonic alphabet. This renders this communication almost illegible with todays translation skills. The letter asks whether his church is empowered to grant the special plenary indulgences associated with St. Anne's feast day. The answer from the Archbishop's General Consistory, written in classic Polish and dated November 3 1867, is in the affirmative and quotes church documentation dating from March 27th 1662. It is interesting that neither communication is in German and that 200-year-old documents formed the basis of the reply.

Cover V (Figure 3), franked with Prussia Scott 18 and 20, is a bit of a mystery. It could very well be a special type of turned cover. By turned, we mean a cover that re-uses a previously used cover by turning it inside-out. The cover, sent from Runowo (now Runowo Krajenkie) is postmarked Vandsburg (now Wiecborg), on 22nd November at 1 PM, is addressed to the Administrative Consistorian in Gniezno. Above the address is the handwritten notation "Franco Zuruck" meaning return postage guaranteed. The back of the cover has the standard receiving postmark of November 24th. The fact that this cover may have been "turned", that is that it utilized paper previously used to send a letter from the Gniezno Cathedral to Runowo is revealed by the notation in German Teutonic script on

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the inside of this cover wrapper. In addition the cover was not sealed with the Archbishop's paper seal. This notation, except for the signatures, is all in the same handwriting, and reads:

Ad163/4

To the sender Runowo 1

*I hereby attest that I properly received the authorization of the
Administrative Consistorium of Gnesen on the 14th November
1865,*

dj No. 163/4

Runowo November 20 1865

The Region

By (?) Authority

(Signature illegible)

Signed Regional Cashier.

To the most praised region at Runowo

Report

*The accompanying enclosure was properly delivered to the
addressee on the 20th of November 1865 at 11.00 O'clock, around
noon, even as I personally met the addressee and I personally
swear to that under oath.*

*At the cost of the recipient Vandsburg 20 November 1865
(SIGNED)*

John I Regional Mailman

The above internal notation suggests that the cover first originated in Gniezno on November 14th and traveled to Vandsberg (a distance of some 90 miles, or 150 kilometers) arriving on November 20th where it was delivered to Runowo by John I, the Regional Mailman. Although there is no designation of registration, these notations attest that the cover was originally handled like a registered or special delivery mailing identified by No.163/4. There is also an oK-2 Gnesen postmark with the date November 18 1865 that can be only explained that this packet wrapper may have utilized a part of a previous letter from Gniezno, a common practice of that time. Indeed the "Interes Koscielny" markings may have originated in Gniezno with the original letter to Runowo.

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In 1865 there was no post office in Runowo, which really was a small locality, some 2 miles SW of Vandsberg with a population of some 200 that largely represented the peasants employed on a large estate. The parish church had been built in Runowo in 1606 - 1607, funded by Jerzy Orzelski. [7] The Vandsberg cancellations on the front of the folded cover suggest that, on its return journey, the cover was hand delivered from Runowo to Vandsburg. There it entered the Prussian Postal system, was franked by Scott 18 and 20 which are postmarked November 22nd with the straight line oR2 cancel, and traveled back to Gniezno arriving on the 24th of November. That postage was charged may just mean that this cover was sent back to the Gniezno Consistorium by someone not associated with the Church. At that time the cost to mail a letter a distance of 20 Prussian miles (92 English miles or 150 kilometers, the distance from Runowo to Gniezno) was two silver groschen [7]. It is not possible to accurately account for the 5 groschen payment that the letter carried. A registered letter would have required a surcharge of 4 groschen above the basic rate [1] but this wrapper bore no such registration designation. Extra weight or the notation of "return postage prepaid" would have carried extra charges, but not enough information is available to allow their quantification.

Conclusions

The "Interes Koscielny" cancel was used at least during the period 1859 to 1867. It was thus first introduced during the term of Leon Przyłuski who was the Archbishop of both Poznan and Gniezno (1845-1865) and disappeared from usage during the term of Archbishop Mieczysław Ledóchowski (1865 – 1886) who was imprisoned in 1874 to 1876, exiled to Rome and named a cardinal. This Polish-German marking may have been introduced to overcome any German objections to the use of the strictly Polish hand written "Interes Duchowny" notation that was previously used to identify church correspondence (see Figure 1). It is possible that the cancellation disappeared from usage as a result of the vicious campaign against the Polish Archdiocese that escalated in approximately that time.

The stamped cover V (Figure 3) is probably an example of a turned cover originally sent from the Gniezno Bishopric to Runowo, essentially as a registered item, and then incorporated into a second cover

that went back to Gniezno. Although it is not possible to fully account for the postage charged, it is an interesting philatelic document illustrating the postage practices of that time.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Dr. Conrad P. Straub for providing scans of one of the Gniezno covers and for his encouragement to publish these findings. The necessary translation of the German documents was eased by Mr. Hubert Aichinger's deciphering of the old Teutonic handwriting.

References

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5. "GnieznoKatedra"http://republika.pl/miasto_gniezno/pliki1/katedra.htm
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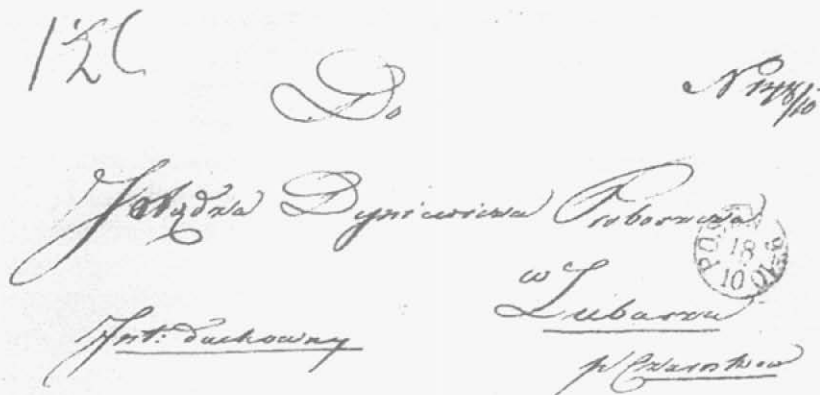


Figure 1. Cover from Poznań to Lubowice dated October 9 1820. Although designated as church correspondence by the handwritten "Int(eres) Duchowy" marking, 1½ silver groshen was still charged. Lubowice was some 12 miles (20 kilometers) due east of Poznań and still exists.

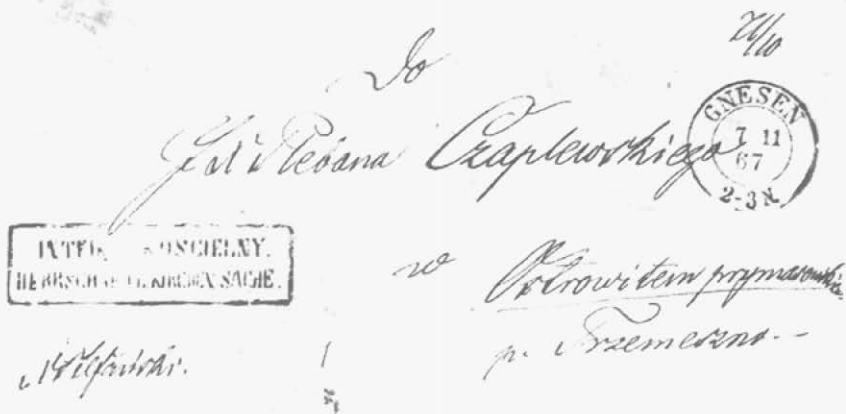


Figure 2. Wrapper postmarked Gniezno November 7 1867, oK-2 cancel, with the earliest use of the INTERES KOSCIELNY stamp sent to Ostrowite in the county of Trzemaszno, some 13 miles (20 kilometers) from Gniezno. Cover III in Table I.

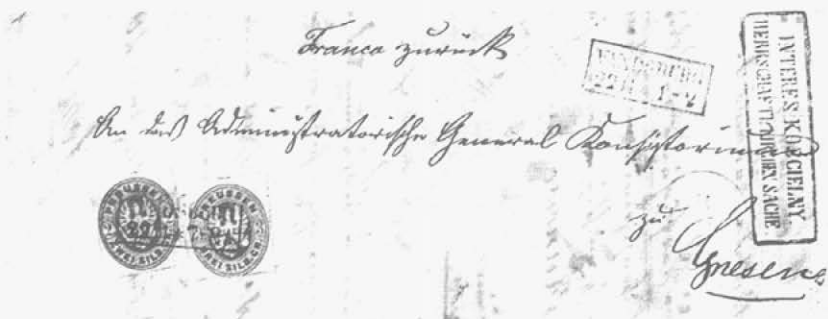


Figure 3. An unusual stamped wrapper sent from Runowo via Vandsberg (now Wiecborg) to Gniezno bearing both the INTERES KOSCIELNY marking and franked with a total of 5 groshen in Prussian stamps, excessive for the 92 mile (150 kilometer) distance traveled, and cancelled with the standard Prussian oR-2 straight line Vandsberg cancel. This may be a “turned” cover. Cover V in Table I.



Figure 4. The Gniezno Cathedral as shown in a French engraving circa 1885.

COLLECTING STAMPS TODAY

by: Dr. James Mazepa

Over the years I have had the opportunity to judge many collections at the local, national, and international level. I have often wondered how these "collections" became "exhibits." I recall a remark made to me many years ago that "we do not see the great collections like we used to." I not sure this is true. I have seen the quality, and, yes, the quantity, of exhibits and, therefore, collections, consistently improve over the years. However, one fact that is true is that the collections of today do not have the breadth that the collections of old had. It is far more common today to focus on particular aspects of a country, rather than on the country as a whole. And the reason for this is very simple. There are more and more collectors making demands on less and less material. For example, there were 1300 of the 90 heller Krakow issue printed. Of these, I think it safe to say that only 800-900 exist today. If everyone who collects Poland wanted an example of this stamp, there would not be enough to go around. The "generalist" in philately is becoming a rarity, and I believe this is sad for the hobby.

So, does this mean that it is impossible to have an excellent "general" collection of Poland today? Do we have to be a specialist? I don't think so and I firmly believe that anyone who collects a country should have a "general" collection of that country. I believe, for starters, that a key factor is that great collections are formed over time with great amounts of searching, patience, and perseverance. Permit me to share some thoughts on how to go about this.

- 1) GET ORGANIZED. Keep your philatelic material in order. There are several preprinted albums which can help here. Blank pages are available for extras or unlisted material or covers. Stamps and covers can be classified on stock pages or stock books. There is nothing more disheartening than a shoe box full of glassines and loose stamps, and nothing

more appealing than leafing through your collection so you can view your "treasures".

- 2) **GET A CATALOG.** This is the road map that tells you where you are going. The Scott catalog is a good, basic, starting point. If you don't want to buy one, go to your local library and borrow one. You can make one copy of the pages you want for personal use and this will not violate copyright laws. If one is more advanced, go to the German Michel catalog and the Polish Fischer catalog. The fact that one does not read German or Polish is not as much a problem as one might think.
- 3) **BE REALISTIC AND COLLECT WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD.** Few can begin to collect numeral cancellations on Poland #1, so set realistic limits. This might mean used pre-World War II and mint post-war, or some other combination.
- 4) **BEGIN A SPECIALTY COLLECTION.** This will be in addition to your general collection and will be in an area of special interest to you. Poland offers many possibilities, but the idea is to find something YOU like and want to know more about. I can guarantee you that Poland offers more opportunities for an area of special interest than almost any other country in the world.
- 5) **TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT MODERN POSTAL HISTORY.** Too often we think of postal history as "that old stuff" and forget recent history. Start after WW II with the "Groszy Overprints," the provisional cancellations, the development of the postal system in Poland after the war, the ever-changing postal rates in post-war Poland, civil censorship up through the Solidarity movement, the development of air service and other special classes of service. I challenge anyone to do a study of newspaper wrappers in post-war Poland!

ABCs

- 6) **DON'T FORGET THEMATICS.** Poland especially lends itself to this arena because of the many such stamps it has issued post war. Don't forget other potential thematics such as Polonica and Pope John Paul II which have a world-wide appeal and source of material.
- 7) **GET TO KNOW A DEALER AND STICK WITH HIM.** Philatelically, he will be the best friend you have once he knows your interests. If he is working to find material for you, don't complain about price. In the long run you will come out ahead.
- 8) **GIVE YOURSELF A STAMP BUDGET.** This will help you stay within your means and help keep your marriage together.
- 9) **BUY THE MOST EXPENSIVE STAMP YOU CAN WITH THE MONEY YOU HAVE.** If you have \$5.00, buy a \$5.00 stamp; if you have \$25.00, buy a \$25.00 stamp. Expensive stamps, like expensive art, only go up in value. Cheap stamps always stay cheap.
- 10) **IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN SOMETHING BEFORE AND IT FITS INTO YOUR COLLECTION, AND YOU CAN AFFORD IT, BUY IT.** And do so even if the price seems high. There is a reason you have not seen it before, and you may never see it again. Pride of ownership will always offset the pain of price- after the first few days!
- 11) **COMPLETE POSTWAR POLAND.** This is especially true of the issues of the 1940s and 1950s. Prices, especially in Poland and the rest of Europe, are climbing rapidly.
- 12) **ATTEND PHILATELIC EXHIBITIONS AND MEETINGS.** You will meet some very nice people and maybe even find someone who collects your interest. Certainly, consider joining not only Poland-oriented societies, but generalist societies such as the American Philatelic Society.

- 13) **SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND INTERESTS.** Always bring a stamp or cover to a meeting to share with others. We all learn from each other.
- 14) **SUBSCRIBE TO A NATIONAL PHILATELIC PUBLICATION.** There is so much contained within the pages of "*Linn's Weekly Stamp News*" or "*The American Philatelist*." Eventually, something of interest will be found and it will be well worth the price of subscription.
- 15) **TRY YOUR HAND AT AN AUCTION.** If you have never done this before, ask a friend who has or use an agent. It is a lot easier than one might think.
- 16) **DO SOMETHING NEW.** You will get more out of your hobby if you try your hand at something new. Perhaps it can be writing an article, exhibiting, or getting on the committee of a stamp exhibition. There are others who will gladly assist you if you are unsure how to go about anything in our philatelic world. You will be surprised at how many really great people are out there, if you take the time to meet them.
- 17) **COLLECT FOR FUN AND ENJOYMENT, NOT FOR PROFIT.** If one buys wisely and carefully, money will not be lost, but nor should profit be your motive for what you buy, unless you are strictly an investor.
- 18) **PHILATELLY SHOULD PREVENT HEART ATTACKS, NOT CAUSE THEM.** It should also enhance our family life, not disrupt it. Show your spouse and children what you are doing with your collection and bring them to an exhibition. The thought of a few nice souvenirs for the kids and a nice dinner for the spouse can work wonders.

These are some ideas I have thought of over the years, if you have some things to add, jot them down and send them in to the editor!

POLAND NEW ISSUES

by: Hank Bieniecki

After a long absence, by popular request, Poland new issues will once again be listed in each Bulletin. We trust you will find this information useful. For those who wish this information earlier, it is also listed at our website: www.polonus.org.

I am seeking a member(s) who would have an interest in researching and writing summaries pertaining to historical figures, events and locations commemorated on Polish stamps. This is your opportunity to learn Polish history and to contribute to your Society. All it requires is an inquisitive nature and the ability to search the internet. If you are interested please write me at biistamp@charter.net. Roman Sobus and I will work with you to get you started by assigning you a few issues each quarter.

I am also looking for someone to share the scanning work associated with the new issues. All you need is a scanner and a couple of hours per quarter. Scanning is not rocket science. If you don't think you know how, contact me and I will work with you until you are proficient.



Date of Issue	Jan. 3, 2005
Sheet Format	100 stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designer	Andrzej Gosik

Poznan - Polish Cities Series

Poznan was depicted in 2003 on both a stamp and souvenir sheet for the 750th anniversary of the founding of the city. This year Poznan is featured again, in the "Polish Cities" series. Depicted on the 1.30 PLN stamp is the statue of Hygieia, the Greek goddess of health, on Freedom Square with the Raczynski Library in the background.

The library, founded by Count Edward Raczyński, was opened on May 5, 1829. Construction lasted seven years. It was one of the first public libraries in Poland, and is the second largest library in Poznań. The Statue is a replica of the monument marking Count Raczyński's grave in the city of Zaniemyśl.



Date of Issue	Jan. 6, 2005
Sheet Format	50 stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designers	Igor Tratkowski, Jerzy Owskiak

Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity

The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity Foundation is Poland's largest non-profit, non-government organization. Its only focus is assisting in specialized health care for children from birth through five years of age, by purchasing modern medical equipment for public hospitals throughout Poland. The organization has assisted emergency rooms and pediatric divisions of cardio-surgery, neonatology, oncology, and nephrology with equipment to treat the tiny patients.

The effort was started in 1992, by Polish radio and television personality Jerzy Owskiak, whose unusual style was directed at his young rock and roll audience. His initial effort was very successful, and the following year GOCC was born. In its twelve years of existence, the charity has supported thirteen major projects, and provided over fifty million dollars (US) in financial assistance to Polish hospitals.

The Polish post honored the group by marking the end of its thirteenth year of fund raising with a 1.30 PLN stamp.



Date of Issue	Jan. 14, 2005
Sheet Format	50 stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designer	Andrzej Gosik

Konstanty I. Gaczyński (1905-1953)

Konstanty I. Gaczyński, one of Poland's most beloved poets, was born in Warsaw on the 23rd of January, 1905. He made his literary debut in 1923 with a verse entitled "Assault" in the news-paper Rzeczpospolita (Republic). His unique use of humor, lyricism, eroticism, and the grotesque quickly earned him a following among readers.

In the years of the Second World War, his writings took on a patriotic theme, with such works as "The Soldiers of Westerplatte", "Song of the Banner", and "The Dream of a Soldier".

After the war, he returned to his avant-garde style, with "The Death of Andersen", "The Easter of John Sebastian Bach", and "Niobi". His stage production of "The Little Theatre of the Green Goose" was never performed during his lifetime, but since his death in 1953 it has drawn audiences the world over. His works have been published in many languages.

The Polish post has issued a 1.30 PLN stamp to mark the 100th Anniversary of his birth.



Date of Issue	Jan. 26, 2005
Sheet Format	50 stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designer	Maciej Buszewicz

Mikolaj Rey – 500th Anniversary

Mikolaj Rey (1505-1569), sometimes called the "Father of Polish Literature," was born in Zurawno in 1505. His literary works include

titles such as "The Apocalypse," "The Life of Joseph," and "A Short Discussion between A Squire, A Village Headman, and A Priest."

Rej was also very active in politics, serving as a deputy to the parliament. An advocate of the Calvinist movement, he founded Protestant communities and schools on his properties.

The image of Rej depicted on the 1.30 PLN stamp is from an engraving.



Date of Issue	Feb. 1, 2005
Sheet Format	50 stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designer	Maciej Buszewicz

Love Stamp – Valentines Day

In many countries, February 14 celebrates the holiday for lovers. While this custom is relatively new in Poland, it has attracted many followers and continues to gain popularity. It is customary to send a card or letter with an expression of love, and the Polish Post has again issued a topical stamp (1.30 PLN) for the occasion.



Date of Issue	March 1, 2005
Sheet Format	50 stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designer	Agnieszka Sobczynska

Easter

Easter is a time when good wishes are extended to friends and family, both near and far away. Even in this day of instant electronic messaging and e-mail, a card or letter is the preferred method for conveying greetings.

NEW ISSUES

Since 1992, the Polish Post has issued stamps with an Easter theme. Past designs have included works of art, traditional rites, and Easter symbols. This year's stamps continue this tradition.

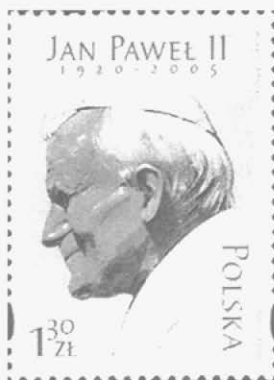
A rabbit (1.30 PLN) and a chick (2.20 PLN) amidst spring flowers are depicted in this year's series of two stamps.



Date of Issue	March 25, 2005
Sheet Format	Sheetlet of 20 stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Agnieszka Sobczynska

Hans Christian Andersen - 200th Anniversary

The 200th anniversary of the birth of Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen is commemorated by the Polish Post. Andersen wrote more than 150 children's' stories, such as "The Ugly Duckling" and "The Emperor's New Clothes," known to young ones the world over. Many of his fables are based on stories his grandmother told when he was a young boy. The two 1.30 PLN stamps issued for the occasion depict scenes from two of these, "The Little Mermaid" and "The Snow Queen".



Date of Issue	April 8, 2005
Sheet Format	Sheetlet of 16 stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designers	Andrzej Pagowski

John Paul II 1920-2005

Over the years the Polish Post has commemorated Pope John Paul II journeys by issuing numerous stamps, cards, and commemorative cancels. They provide a philatelic chronicle of the Pope's travels. They show

the Pope as a persistent pilgrim, carrying the word of God to all, consoling the suffering, and crossing political and religious boundaries, while always appealing for peace.

This 1.30 PLN stamp bears the portrait of The Holy Father by graphic artist Waldemar Swiezy and is a memorium to his life.



sporty ekstremalne

Extreme Sports

Four se-tenant 1.30 PLN stamps depicting extreme sports were issued by the Polish Post in a sheetlet of 8 stamps (2 se-tenant

blocks of 4 stamps). The four sports depicted are based on photographs of Polish sport enthusiasts as they engage in that activity: Parachute Jumping (Leszek Potepe), Bungee jumping (Maciej Patrzalka, jumper and trainer at the Center for Extreme Sports, Gul), Free Style Rock Climbing (Piotr Zyzniowski), and White Water Rafting (Piotr Sikora a trainer at the Mountain Canoe School).

Date of Issue	April 15, 2005
Sheet Format	Block of 2 Se-Tenet Sets of 4
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Magdalena Blazkow

RADIO TAX STAMPS

GERMAN POST EAST (DEUTSCHE POST OSTEN)

by: Zbigniew A. Kaczmarek

Translated from *Filatelista* (2001), No. 6, p.291 by Stanley T. Wlodek

The 15 December 1939 directive (Dz.Rosp.GGP s. 225 [1]) of the German occupying forces in the General Gouvernement zone resulted in the immediate confiscation of all radio apparatus (possessed by Poles). In the townships affected, it was necessary to turn in all systems falling under this directive to the police stations or county offices by January 25 1940. Citizens of the German Reich had only to report the ownership of radio equipment to the same offices, but it was not immediately confiscated.

Special Law Courts were established (under paragraph 5, section 3) to administer any violations of this directive to surrender radio equipment. From my own family's experience, I know that in central Krakow, all residences occupied by Poles were searched for any radio equipment, by civilian agents (Gestapo) accompanied by police, who also performed a complete inspection of the dwelling.

The new radio directive, issued April 1940, that pertained to the use or possession of radio equipment in the General Gouvernement was final and binding up to the end of the German occupation. According to this regulation, anyone who wanted to possess radio equipment had have a so called radio "permit" that was issued temporarily , or conditionally, by the German Post East (Deutsche Post Osten). The refusal to issue such a permit did not need to be based on any facts. In effect permission to possess a radio was issued only to citizens of the German Reich, or Volksdeutsche (residents who were of German extraction and declared themselves to be Nazi supporters).

The duration of the permit was expressed in detail and precisely recorded. In all announcements and notices it was stressed that the radio permit holder was responsible for whoever uses his equipment. This warning was always printed in all announcements in highlighted letters. If the permit holder unknowingly picked up a program (i.e. an "unofficial one") he could not record it, pass the information on to oth-

ers, or inform anyone that such broadcasts existed, or exploit them in any manner.

Regulations also existed for a detailed examination and control of the permit holder's place of domicile or movement. Those who did not turn in their radio equipment, or did not possess the required permit, were subject to imprisonment for no less than 6 months.

On receipt of the radio permit, the permit holder had to immediately pay 4.0 zł, with equal payments falling due at the beginning of each successive month. As shown in **Figure 1, Page 520-26**, two special stamps, printed by the German Post East, were used to monitor and record these payments. The stamps were printed in vertical pairs. The upper stamp of the pair, inscribed "German Post East" and "4 zloty Rundfunk (i.e. Radio)" was glued into a special radio booklet and cancelled by the issuing post office. The bottom part, bearing the letter "A" was retained by the post office as proof of payment.

The radio tax stamps of the DPO were red, 20.5 by 25.5mm, and perforated 12 1/2. They were printed by the Staatdruckerei Wien (State Printers Vienna) in sheets containing 50 pairs. They were introduced to the post offices of the territory of the General Gouvernement on January 7 1940 and used up to the end of the German occupation.

According to the Erler-Norton catalog the value of a pair of these stamps is \$40.00, while a single is \$15.00.[3]

Editors Note: Barefoot's "Poland Revenues" published in 1998 values a MNH pair at \$100 and a used single at \$50.00. Market value for a set of used stamps is \$30 to \$50 depending on condition.

References

1. The Laws of General Gouvernement, Burgverlag, Krakau (1941), Institut für deutsche Ostarbeit.
2. Zaborowski J. "Catalog Znakow Fiskalnych Revenue" Warsaw (1997).
3. "Katalog Erler-Norton", Vol.VIII, page 84.



Figure 1. A cancelled set of the Radio Tax Stamps.



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.

Members receive the Polonus Philatelic Bulletin quarterly, have full access to www.polonus.org and participate in the events and activities of the society. Annual dues are payable in US funds before the end of March of each calendar year. Membership categories are as follows:

Regular Member: \$25.00 payable in US funds

Retired Member: (retirees with restricted incomes) \$15.00

Junior Members: (under age 16) \$10.00

Charge Card Payments: Members that pay their annual dues using a charge card will be assessed an additional \$4 banking fee.

New members will receive all the "Bulletins" for the year in which they join. All memberships are based on the calendar year.

(1) Dues, (2) Article for publication, (3) Changes of address, (4) Inquiries regarding and Applications for memberships, (5) General matters or complaints pertaining to the Society should all be sent to:

Polonus Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 2, Maryville, IL 62062

OFFICER CHANGES & OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

by: Hank Bieniecki

I am very pleased to report that a highly qualified member has agreed to replace me as the Treasurer of Polonus. Jerry Zedlitz, a long term member (#932) from Wallace, CA is in the process of taking over as Treasurer. Jerry currently serves as the Treasurer of several other organizations and brings professional skills to this function. The new address for future dues payments will be posted in Bulletin 521. For 2006, all members will receive a separate dues notice from Jerry rather than having the notice included with a Bulletin. Take a minute and send an email to Jerry at gzedlitz@caltel.com to thank him for taking over as Treasurer.

I will replace Bogdan Charlam on the Board of Directors and will continue to function as the Editor of the Bulletin. Now that I no longer have to function as the Treasurer, I will focus on expanding the functions and features of our website (www.polonus.org). At present all members must still enter as "Guests" as the "Members Only" features have not been activated, due to a lack of time. It will be activated before the end of the year.

Are you interested in working on expanding and improving our website? I am starting a project to put a fantastic Poland reference collection out on the website. I have the scans, but need others to help me organize the files etc. The project gives you and the membership the opportunity to see some of the finest Poland philatelic material available. Is this an opportunity you can afford not to participate in??? Email me at biistamp@charter.net for more information.

Your society continues to seek members who are willing to participate in various functions. I have known Jerry for years, but never asked him to be the Treasurer. That was my fault. What can I ask you to do? As you read this Bulletin I hope you are thinking about how you might spend a couple hours each month contributing to Polonus. Write me at biistamp@charter.net and we can discuss all the various options.

Open Letter to Polonus Philatelic Society Membership

Dear Friends and Fellow Members of Polonus:

In 1999, the core group of Polonus, based in Chicago, was faltering. They asked Hank Bieniecki to take over key functions and to modernize the Society so that it would flourish in a rapidly changing environment. Over the intervening years he converted Polonus to a national organization and recruited members across the US to take on key roles in our Society. Polonus has slowly regained its former vigor by increasing both its membership, and the benefits it offers to members. Chris Kulpinski is proving himself to be an excellent President. Chris and Hank continue to recruit members to take positions as Officers & Directors and assist with other functions. Equally important we are getting feedback from you, the members of our Society. As a Senior Editor, I have the opportunity to read most of that feedback. However I want to comment that I am frustrated by two common elements in much of the feedback.

The feedback letters are written by intelligent and well meaning members that have the welfare of Polonus at heart. They are full of excellent ideas. Some suggestions of merit are, at least currently, difficult to implement. Putting it simply, there are not enough members involved in the actual work to take immediate advantage of all of your wonderful suggestions.

The second common feature of these letters that I find disturbing is that none of them carry an offer to help. Ladies and Gentlemen, there is one important point you all need to understand. Polonus is operated entirely by members who volunteer their services. As with most societies there is no professional staff located at some mythical headquarters that can respond to your suggestions.

We do not publish more translations because **I AM THE ONLY TRANSLATOR**. We do not publish more original articles on Polish Philately because not enough members are writing and submitting them for publication. So far this year I have written five original articles, and translated two more. **HOW MANY HAVE YOU WRITTEN?**

If the tone of this letter offends any one I apologize. I am retired and have the time to devote to Polonus, an activity that I have enjoyed for many years. I am now trying to make restitution for the pleasure it has given me. You may not be so fortunate as to have that much spare time, but surely you some time to contribute to some aspect of your society. Keep writing your excellent letters and submitting suggestions, but always try to add: **Please contact me as I want to volunteer to help implement my ideas to improve Polonus.**

Stanley T. Wlodek,
Member 738.