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POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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The First Issue of Stamps for Greater Poland

Poznan Issue of August 1919

Prof. Stan. Mikstein, Krakow



In present Polish philatelic literature there was missing a detailed study of the stamps of this issue. The first account is found in "Filateliscie Polskiem" No. 2 of November 20, 1919, "Present day stamps for the Poznan territory." In order to establish an official total of the quantities printed, we sent a request for the figures to the Main Directory of Posts at Poznan. We received a reply to our letter of October 6 on November 10, 1919 which listed surcharging as follows: 5/2 fen. gray—84,000 copies, 5/7 1/2 fen. orange—400,000, 5/20 fen. blue—500,000, 10/25 fen. orange and black—150,000, 10/40 fen. red and black—370,-

000. No other stamps were surcharged. The reason for the surcharging was the lack of stamps of corresponding values. Their franking power was good until the end of September 1919. The total supply printed was completely exhausted.

Other Polish information is limited to the account found on pages 101 and 102 of "Podrecznik Polskich Znaczkow Pocztowych."

From German studies of this issue, we name articles by G. Becker in "Briefmarken-Rundschau" No. 12 December 1926, and Nos. 1 and 2 of January and February 1927, under the title "Die Fehldrucke der provisoris-

chen Ausgabe der Posener Oberpostdirektion im August 1919 mit Aufdruck kleine Aiffern und Poczta Polska auf den marken des Deutschen Reiches." In these articles is included a reproduction which deserves notice, of a double overprint of the 5/7-1/2 fen. on an arranged strip of four stamps with the cancellation "Posen 6 24. 9. 19. 11-12V."

Further writings on this issue are found in Gibbons Stamp Monthly, Vol. III, No. 9, June 1930, page 173. "Poland—The Postal Issues during and after the Great War" by Col. Larking.

Because a new handbook on the Stamps was being prepared and this article of mine was being submitted for their approval, I had to make a detailed study in which information on the type of forms used to overprint and several original sheets helped me a great deal. Both original forms used to overprint this issue are at the Museum of Posts and Telecommunications at Warsaw, noted in their inventory under L: 420 and 421. A detailed study of these plates was completed by Prof. Dr. A. Laszkiewicz and he sent me the results. Upon the completion of the study of the forms used for the overprints, I carried on a detailed study of the sheets loaned to me by Mieczysław M. Niklewski, President of the Alliance of Philatelists at Toruń. In this way it was possible to make a thorough descriptive study on the foundation of the original plates and sheets. A summary of the most important results will be listed in *Ikaros*, the handbook of Polish stamps; but this is a wider and more detailed study.

The stamps selected for this overprinting were German Empire issue 1905-11 then currently used:

2 fen. gray, cat. Michel No. 83

7½ fen. orange, cat. Michel 99, issue of 1916

20 fen. violet blue, cat. Michel 87b

25 fen. orange and black, cat. Mich. 88

40 fen. carmine and black cat. Mich. 90

Stamps of 2, 20, 25 and 40 fen. values, in spite of the fact that they are of the 1905-11 type, are of printings during the years of the war (1914-18) and they differ from the pre-war issue by color and paper; particularly both sheets of the stamps 5/2 fen. which I used for my study were from the issue of German stamps H 4676 of 1915. My study of the sheets indicated that the values 5/2 and 5-7½ fen. were flat plate printed, and val-

ues 5/20, 10/25, and 10/40 fen. were rotary printed. P. G. Becker claims that the 7½ fen. was also overprinted from booklet panes. Stamps of booklet panes, according to Becker, can be identified by missing perforation at the top, at the right, or at the bottom of the stamp, and with a Polish overprint are very scarce. On both sheets of the 5/2 fen. which I have (in spite of the fact that they come from the issue H 4676) 15 of these figures on one sheet are on the left margin or the sheet and on the right on the other, which indicates that two different plates were used.

The Polish overprints were of two printing forms: the first, served to surcharge stamps of 2, 7½, and 20 fen. to the new value of 5 fen, and the second to surcharge the 25 and 40 fen. values to the new value of 10 fen.

Both of these printing forms were of 100 overprints for each sheet of 100 stamps consisting of 50 small plates mounted on a wooden block.

Form I. Used to overprint the values 2/7½ and 20 fen.

Form I was made from 50 small zinc plates, each plate containing two overprints in one horizontal row. All of these small plates were fastened to a wooden block which was the base of the form. As a result of this construction, the distances between overprints in each horizontal row between stamps 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6, 7 and 8, as well as 9 and 10, are similar and measure 10 mm.; however, between 2 and 3, 4 and 5, 6 and 7, as well as 9 and 10 they yield to very small variations and measure 10-10¼ mm. These distances were measured between the letters "a" and "p" of the words "Poczta." A further result because of this construction of the printing form is the uneven and unlike intensiveness of the printing ink on various stamps of the same sheet, caused by some of the small plates minutely standing higher, a result of a non-uniform fastening to the block, or because of their thickness which resulted in the printing ink being transferred far more intensively on some stamps than on others. On the sheets studied, overprints on stamps 5-8, 35-36, 91-22 are usually stronger; however, on 9-10, 19 and 20, 23 and 24, 27-30, 33 and 34, 55-58, 63-66, 69 and 70, 75 and 76, 79 and 80, 81 and 82, 87 and 88, 95-98, they are weaker and delicate.

Overprints from Form I consist of two numerals "5 5" at the top, un-

derneath the words "Poczta Polska" in two verses and at the bottom a horizontal line obliterating "Deutsches Reich." The edges of the numerals, letters and lines are uneven by a changing outline that strongly flows in on their form and produces an illusion that they are lithographed. The height of the overprint measures 20 mm., the length of "Poczta" and "Polska" 11 mm., distance between "5 5" $11\frac{1}{4}$ mm., distance between the bottom of "5 5" and the top edge of the horizontal line $5\frac{1}{4}$ mm., distance between the top numerals "5 5" and the bottom of the word "Polska" 14 mm. The height of the letters P, l, k is 3 mm., t 2 mm., a, c, o, c, z 2 mm. Length of the horizontal line varies at the borders from 16 to $17\frac{1}{7}$ mm. On both sheets of stamps of the $5\frac{1}{2}$ fen. and on one of the $5\frac{7}{12}$ fen. values which I used for the study, measurements of the length of the horizontal line disclosed the following facts: $17\frac{1}{4}$ mm. on stamps 1, 3, 11, 21, 23, 28, 31, 38, 41, 48, 51, 53, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60, 64, 65, 71, 72, 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 82, 85, 86, 87, 89, 91; 17 mm. on stamps 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 35, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 47, 49, 50, 52, 56, 57, 61, 62, 63, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 73, 74, 78, 80, 84, 88, 92, 95, 98, 99; $16\frac{1}{4}$ mm. on stamps 5, 9, 17, 45, 46, 90, 94, 96 and 100; $16\frac{1}{2}$ mm. on stamps 8, 13, 18, 34, 36, 93, 97; $16\frac{3}{4}$ mm. on stamp 83, and 16 mm. on stamps 2 and 23. Only on the 71st stamp a discord occurred because the sheets with the $5\frac{1}{2}$ fen. stamps show the length of the horizontal line at $17\frac{1}{4}$ mm., and the sheets with $5\frac{7}{12}$ fen. stamps $16\frac{1}{4}$ mm. Consequently, we noted that a shortening of the line is brought about with the continued use of the form, and most of these shortened lines show characteristic endings resulting from breaking off, to which we will return later.

Plate varieties resulting from the differences of printings of the separate small plates (Plattenfehler) or their injuries are small in quantity and they are so minute that they cannot be classified as "errors." They are as follows:

On a row of stamps the little vertical connecting link of the numeral "5" is connected to the bottom curve so that the numeral appears to be a "6". The majority of the below listed stamps have the little connecting link appearing narrower of the line of print of the numeral "5". This variety

occurs on the left side of stamps 5, 6, 8, 17, 36, 67, 78, 86, 92 and 99, and on the right side on stamps 60, 82, 83, 89, and on both sides on stamps 15, 16, 17, 35 and 91.

Stamp No.

- 6: "oc" of Poczta joined together.
- 8: different ending of the top of the letter "a" in Poczta and Polska.
- 12: part of the bottom of the letter "o" in Poczta cut away.
- 14: letter "l" in Polska thickened at the bottom part.
- 16: letter "a" in Poczta like #8, different top ending.
- 25: center part at the left of the letter "o" in Polska cut away.
- 28: top of the letter "o" in Poczta cut away; missing bottom curve of the right numeral "5."
- 33: torn ending of the bottom curve of the left numeral "5"; the letter "z" has the upper left ending somewhat narrower.
- 34: letter "z" in Poczta resembles a French "r"; right end of the horizontal line torn and formed to a sharp beak.
- 43: letter "c" in Poczta.
- 45: letter "z" in Poczta like stamp #33, left end of horizontal line torn, making a small dot.
- 49: small cutting away at the bottom of the letter "c" in Poczta.
- 51: letter "l" thin at the top, pointed, with a dot at the right.
- 78: a cutting away at the top of the letter "P" in Poczta.
- 88: top dash of the letter "a" in Polska bent, sloping from the top.
- 93: left end of the horizontal line jagged from the bottom.
- 97: left end of line broken off and formed into a sharp beak.
- 99: left end of line thickened at the bottom.
- 100: right end of line torn and formed into a sharp beak.

Besides the above varieties, other stamps also have some minute variation, so that nearly each stamp has certain characteristic and individual marks.

Of printing errors (Druckfehler) the following are known: (A) double overprint on the $5\frac{7}{12}$ fen. stamp; (B) thick shifted overprints on $5\frac{7}{12}$ fen.; (C) Printed on the reverse side (Abklatsch) on the gum of the $5\frac{1}{20}$ fen. stamp.

TYPOGRAPH FORM II USED TO SURCHARGE THE 25 AND 40 FEN VALUES.

Form II, used to overprint whole

sheets of 100 stamps of the 25 and 40 fen. values, consisted identically as Form I of 50 small plates, laid out on a wooden block. These separate small plates, of two overprints in a horizontal row, however, were molded from a printer's alloy, softer than zinc, and not from zinc as in the first form.

In all horizontal rows the distance between the overprints of stamps 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6, 7 and 8, and 9 and 10 measure steadily $8\frac{3}{4}$ mm.; however, the distance between the overprints of stamps 2 and 3, 4 and 5, 6 and 7, 8 and 9 varies from 8 to $9\frac{1}{2}$ mm., between stamps 46 and 47, and 68 and 69 the distance is 8 mm., and between 78 and 79 it is $9\frac{1}{2}$ mm. The distance measured was that between the letters "a" ending the word "Poczta" and "P", beginning the next "Poczta."

Overprints of Form II consist of: at the top the numerals "10 10" (which were to cover the figures "25" and "40") represent the nominal value, below the words "Poczta" and "Polska" in two verses, and at the bottom a horizontal line, obliterating the German words "Deutsches Reich." The letters of the word "Poczta" are placed horizontally and evenly, unlike Form I where they stand arched above the word "Polska." Measurements of the overprints are: height of the whole overprint $20\frac{1}{4}$ mm., vertical distance between the bottom of the numerals "10 10" and the top edge of the horizontal line $16\frac{1}{2}$ mm., distance between the bottom of the word "Polska" and the top edge of the horizontal line $4\frac{1}{2}$ mm., height of the letter "P" 3.7 mm., "t" 2.8 mm., "K" and "L" 3.3 mm., letters "a, c, s, z" 2mm. Fundamentally, the length of the horizontal line is 18 mm.; however, on some overprints it is shorter, namely, on stamp #8 it measures 14 mm., on #62 and 90 15 mm., #68 16 mm., #70, 89, 94 and 99 $16\frac{1}{2}$ mm.; these shortenings occur from damaged plates, resulting from breaking down, and even on different sheets of the same values they occur differently, as for example on #88 and 99 are the overprints with the length of the line being 18 and $15\frac{1}{2}$ mm.

The most important varieties occurring from breaking down of the form are:

Stamp No.

8: line 14 mm. in length instead of 18 mm.

48: damaged letters "sk" of the word

"Polska," result of the nail being driven, fastening the small plate to the wooden base.

61: both numerals "10 10" cut at the top.

62: both numerals "10 10" cut at the top.

87: both numerals "10 10" cut at the top.

88: both numerals "10 10" cut at the top, and the horizontal line arched toward the top.

89: horizontal line broken at the left side (on 10/40 fen. sheets).

90: horizontal line broken at the right side.

99: both numerals "10 10" cut at the top, smear above "o" in Poczta, on 10/40 fen. stamps broken left end of the horizontal line and a damaged (deformed) numeral "1" in the "10" at the top.

100: cut at the top both numerals "10 10".

This form before or during the time of the overprinting of the 10/40 fen. stamps, yielded to some sort of a mechanical damaging, which caused the deforming of the numeral "1" in the left "10" and torn left ending of the horizontal line on #89 and 99; on sheets of the 10/25 fen. stamps there is no damaging, and known to me are only those of the 10/40 fen.

Besides the above, characteristic to some stamps are smears occurring at different parts of the stamps, appearing steadily and similarly. Of these we mention:

Stamp No.

3: series of minute spots at the left and right sides of the word "Poczta"

4: above the right side of the horizontal line two small spots, the outside one in the form of a comma, the other smaller and oval.

10: above the right end of the horizontal line a half round smear: curve part facing upward.

13: above "o — c" in Poczta a large, almost round smear; over it toward the right a smaller three cornered one.

19: above "c" in Poczta a small group of small smears.

20: after the word Polska at the bottom, a group of four small smears.

21: above "o" in Poczta a large smear.

24: above the right end of the horizontal line a small dot.

26: under "a" in Polska a smear in the form of a bow curved upward.

29: above "oc" two smears, the top

- one curved and the bottom like a dot.
- 30: above the right end of the horizontal line two small smears, the upper curved, the lower smaller.
 - 31: above "oc" a round smear.
 - 38: over the right half of the horizontal line a series of small smears.
 - 41: between the numerals "10 10" a series of small smears.
 - 42: above the right end of the line two larger and a few minute smears.
 - 46: after the word Polska a dot.
 - 47: above "o" in Pocztą small smears.
 - 98: above the right end of the horizontal line a dot.

Varieties of smaller letters are rather hard to notice because of the dark background.

Thus we have exhausted all information from present time bibliography as well as all technical overprinting data concerned.

—Translated by Chester A. Schaefer
from *Ilustrowane Wiadomości
Filatelistyczne* (May 1934)

SEEN AND HEARD by Victor Bukinik

This is a story of two covers, each bearing seven copies of Poland 1K24 and flown to Chicago on the 1933 Zeppelin flight. We once owned one of the pair until our collection changed hands and the cover is now highly prized by its new owner, Jack Lobsenz. The companion cover has been acquired recently by Jack Domar; therefore, both of these rarities are in the hands of Polonus members.

Our cover was acquired by a New York dealer some seven or eight years ago. He was traveling through the New England states and stopped at a gas station where the conversation somehow veered to stamps and the attendant produced the cover, which the dealer promptly bought for \$2.00. Upon returning to New York, he sold it to a Danzig specialist for \$10.00. The Danzig specialist was boasting of this cover to another dealer we were visiting, and we showed such an interest that the prospect of a lucrative sale tempted the owner and after two weeks of coaxing and persuasion, he parted with it for \$25.

Upon becoming the owner of the cover we promptly sent a letter to Steven L. Milis, to whom the cover was addressed, and in a few days received a reply from him in which he advised that he collected first flight

covers and that his correspondent in Poland had sent him two of these covers, one of which he kept and returned the other to the Polish correspondent. Our cover apparently belonged formerly to the Polish sender. Mr. Milis told us that under no circumstances would he part with his cover. It now appears that Mr. Milis has passed away and Jack Domar has acquired his cover through a friend who appraised Mr. Milis' estate.

As Polish specialists know, Port Gdansk stamps of 1933 could be used only on mail sent to Poland. Therefore, it remains a mystery how these two got into the pouch sent from Danzig on the Zeppelin flight. They are both registered and properly back-stamped in Chicago. Our only guess is that the Polish gentleman had some connection in Port Gdansk and persuaded the postal authorities to send these two covers along with the regular mail going by the Zeppelin from Danzig.

The two items are extremely rare and we believe are the only ones in existence. We have spoken to the foremost Zeppelin flight authorities and were assured that such items were unheard of in the annals of Zeppelin flights. We hope to secure more information from a former member of the Zeppelin crew who now resides in New York and is a philatelist himself.

AN IMPORTANT ACQUISITION

We were informed recently that an important change of property took place when Vic Bukinik sold his entire collection of Poland to another Polonus member, Jack Lobsenz of New York. Vic has been specializing in Poland since 1933, and has accumulated a tremendous volume of Polish stamps and covers. His original plan was to gather as much material as possible and then mount it. After twelve years, however, he became convinced that there was no immediate prospect of mounting it because of the pressure of other work, and he decided to dispose of the collection to Jack who now undoubtedly owns one of the finest collections of Poland in existence. Vic's collection consisted of thousands of singles, well over 1,000 blocks, and some 500 covers. These combined with his own previous collection, will definitely place Jack among the foremost Polish specialists.

Incidentally, Jack tells us that he now has numerous duplicates of the more scarce items and would be glad to dispose of them to the members of Polonus.

Vic Bukinik is continuing his collection of Soviet Russian covers to 1934, part of which was exhibited at the Polpex 1945. He finds it much easier to classify and mount covers rather than worry about mounting individual stamps and blocks.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Felix A. Walat #176
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Stanislaw Michalak #200
985 Post Street
Teledo 10, Ohio

Mrs. Regina Bain #74
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Chicago 22, Illinois

Norbert J. Zielinski, S 1/c
U. S. S. Romulus, A. R. L. 22
c/o F. P. O. San Francisco, Calif.

NEW MEMBERS

#258 George J. Kunzmann,
4218 So. California Ave.
Chicago, Ill.
(E. P. P., U. S., Lux, Czech.,
Hun. and Ger.)

HONORABLY DISCHARGED

FOR HONORABLE MILITARY SERVICE



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J. A. Kupiec.
Chester A. Schafer.
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C. R. Patterson.
Felix Walat.

DROPPED for NON-PAYMENT of DUES

Rev. I. J. Bialdyga #177
John S. Dziok #173
Henri Hayza #206
Matthew J. Ossolinski #212
Rev. Walter B. Polaczyk #172
John W. Rymnsza # 97

Miss Regina B. Sierowiecki #183
Joseph C. Strnad #174
Walter J. Tokarski #219
William Steege Wykes #224
Dr. Stanley F. Przygocki # 57

POLONUS WINS AT C. P. S.

The POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY was awarded the Severn Memorial Trophy for its' entry in the Chicago Intra-Club division of the Chicago Philatelic Society's exhibit held at the Hotel La Salle, Nov. 2, 3 and 4th.

Material exhibited was a frame of Bert Powell's Poland #1s, a frame of Jack Domars' "POLONUS First Day Covers," a frame of Frank Wolosowick's "Krakows" a frame of Chester Schafer's "Central Lithuania and a frame of John Jaworskis' W. P. (Wojskie Polska) issues of Poland.

Other Polonus winners were, Vincent Domanski, who was awarded the Col. Hans Lagerlof award for his early Russia and Steve Rich who was awarded a third for his Union of So. Africa Airmails.

Our congratulations also to member Rev. Paul W. Piechocki, who was awarded the Hoover Brothers Pre-cancel Award (dates, Binghamton, N. Y.) at the recent Stampex, and to Dr. M. E. Usznanski for winning a first with his Allenstein at the Mound City Stamp Club exhibit.

POLISH SOUVENIR SHEETS

We certainly had a very nice turnout for the Oct. 26th meeting. Approximately 50 members and visitors were present to hear Mrs. Marian Zinsmeister speak on "Polish Souvenir Sheets."

Her talk was given in a smooth easy fashion, no frills, but facts. Although some were missing the discussion after Marians talk may have filled some spaces.

What we are trying to say....IT WAS GOOD..THANKS MARIAN.

Two of our members recently discharged from Service were in attendance at this meeting. Mr. Stanley Madro, Civilian, and his charming wife and Mr. Felix Walat, Civilian—Needless to say Boys, it is swell having you home again—And I'm sure that you will join with us in hoping that the others too will be home soon.

POLPEX '46 — Feb. 9-10, 11 & 12.



LIDMAN RECEIVES NEWBERRY AWARD

The Saul Newberry medal which will be given annually to the person who has done outstanding work for philately in the Chicago area was presented for the first time to our good friend, Dave Lidman, Stamp Editor of the Chicago Sun.

To the hundreds of others Polonus wishes to add its congratulations. Gosh! This is a time when everyone seems to be agreeing with the judges.

THIS n' THAT

We still hope to get snapshots of the following members for our SERVICE MEN'S ALBUM. How about it, men:

Lt. J. P. Burthardt, Gus Cihanowyz, Stanley Falcon, Capt. S. F. Galiskiewicz, Chester Koruchowski, Capt. Ed. Lewandowski, Johnny Sopczak, Eddie Stepnowski and Norbert Zielinski.

Have a heart and loosen up, you guys!

BOGUS STAMPS

Recently a number of sheets of Poland #213 and #214 appeared in New York and Chicago—and immediately the catalogue value of both took a tumble. As Vic. Bukinik remarked, "Why should a few hundred stamps have such an effect on the catalogue price?".....I don't know—it doesn't make sense. However, that isn't the point to my story. My question is, where have these stamps been all of these years? I wonder....Did you ever read Harry Weiss? "Philatelic Gossip" In the October 13th issue, he says: "If readers will take the trouble to go through their files of Weekly Philatelic Gossip, starting about two years back, they will see that from time to time we made reference to the fact that the Nazi Party had confiscated plates of stamps from some of the over-run countries, that some pretty clever imitations were gotten together....."

"Stamps of Poland, the rarer issues, were also reprinted because when the Nazi got through with bombarding Warsaw there was not enough left of any dealers' stock to supply any mild demand. The Germans saw to that in their usual thorough way."

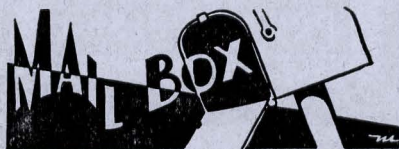
"What has become of these issues is anyone's guess—Great quantities were stored in Berlin for the day of German victory....the day when they

would sell this stuff to unsuspecting stamp dealers all over the world. That day never arrived."

"Smart dealers know their stamps and smart collectors will stick to the dealer who has stuck to them."

"We have no intention to scare collectors, nor is it our intention to cry 'Wolf, Wolf.' We are merely calling to your attention a situation which is supposed to exist. The sheets of #213 and #214 which appeared in Chicago looked genuine in every respect. Our sole purpose is to caution all of you when buying a "bargain" to be very sure that you know what you are doing—

J. J. D.



Hello Jack:

I have been stationed in Germany and recently moved here. It seems I'm back tracking and that suits me fine, if I could get back as far as the States. The "Bulletin" comes in as regularly as can be expected, considering the either we or the A. P. O. seems to be constantly on the move.

Unfortunately, I haven't been able to get back to Paris and the places where I have been stationed had nothing of philatelic interest. Expect a 3 day pass to Paris or 7 day leave to England or French Riviera, maybe will find something in stamps. Strangely, Jack, you and my wife are of the same opinion, that I should be on my way home—If I could only convince the C. O. as well as the War Dept. I'd be all set. My health is holding out very good. In closing, my very best to all of the members at home and abroad, and enclosed is the snapshot of me as requested.

M/Sgt. W. J. Lewinski (France)

Dear Jack:

Thanks for your letter. It was nice hearing from you and I'm glad to hear that you liked the snapshot I sent.

I have been in the service since March 13, 1941 (seems longer) and with the recent point reduction I should be eligible for discharge during November. Expect to be home for 13 days beginning Oct. 17th.

S/Sgt. Wm. A. Wojcik