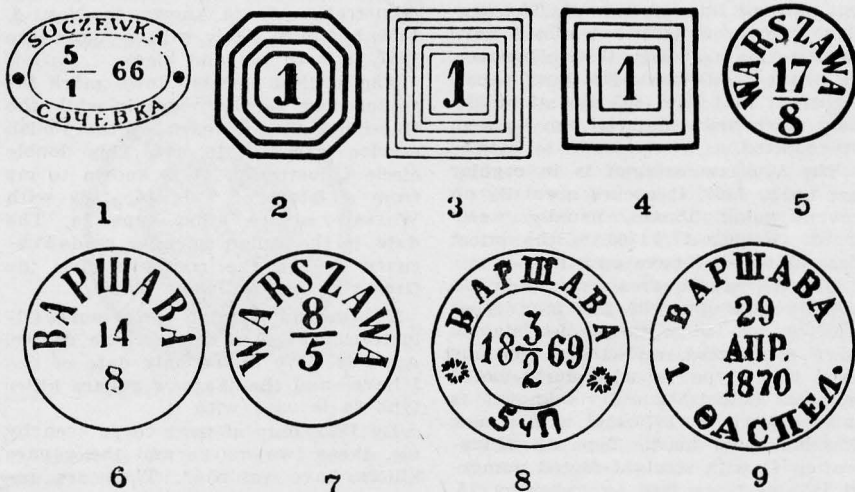




The Vanishing of the Polish Town Marks and Killers After 1865*

By Stephen G. Rich



The separate Polish postal system was abolished in 1865 by the Czarist Russian government. This change took effect April 13, 1865. From that date onward Poland became the "Western District" of the Russian postal service; and the use of the Polish "Lone Adhesive" and stamped envelopes was no longer valid. Regular Russian stamps went into use, both adhesives and envelopes.

The latest date of use of Poland No. 1 (the Lone Adhesive) thus far reported is February 6, 1865 from Turek, with cancellation No. 224.

It is my belief, thus far unsupported by little evidence in the way of covers, that the introduction of Russian

stamps for general use in Poland preceded by at least several months the retirement of Polish postal issues. The one cover thus far seen to substantiate this claim is one from Soczewka, March 29, 1865, franked with the Russian current 10-kopeck stamp, cancelled with Polish double circle killer 295, and bearing the double oval town mark in the usual faintly struck red. (Illustration 1.)

Because the change from unwatermarked wove paper to laid paper with wavy-line watermark took place in Russian stamps in 1866, it is possible to establish the persistence of certain Polish cancellations to at least that year by their presence on stamps of

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the 1866 series. Stampless covers were used for international mail out of Russia to at least as late as 1870, and even inland stampless within Poland are known from the later 1860's. Such covers almost always have the year date in or on them in the contents or the recipient's filing indication on business letters. Thus we can establish at least a partial story of the process of change to ordinary Russian postal markings. This change was substantially completed before 1871.

The evidence at hand shows that there were substantially no changes in 1865.

The year 1865 probably saw the introduction of the Warsaw octagon killer (Illustration 2). Evidently made under the Polish administration before 1865, it is not known on Poland No. 1, but only on Russian stamps. The earliest report of its use which I have came to me as "early 1866." However, as I have it on Russia No. 9, off paper, I suspect that late 1865 use might appear when more material can be seen or reported.

The Warsaw octagon is in regular use up to 1869. It occurs normally on covers going abroad, usually westward. October 17, 1869 is the latest date at which I have seen it.

The Warsaw squares continue in use equally late. Two of the four types were in use when the Polish stamps were suppressed, and these continue very late. Type 1a with curly-footed numeral (Illustration 3) is known as late as April 29, 1870 and with a new Russian town mark. Type 1b (Illustration 4) with straight-footed numeral is known as late as February 15, 1869 and with a different new Russian town mark. It is also known on the Russian 10-kopeck envelopes of 1868.

Warsaw's numeral 1 circle killer, commonest cancellation in the period of the "Lone Adhesive," occurs sparingly on Russian stamps from 1865 on. Information as to how long it continued is lacking thus far; but the scarcity and the pre-1866 stamps on which it is found suggest that it went out of use some time in 1866. Up to now I have seen or had report only of material off cover.

On the town marks:

Warsaw town marks continue unchanged for quite a period. The small circle, dating back to the 1850's is known up to 1870 (Illustration 5). It is on a registered stampless of June

3, 1869 to Schrimm in Poznan. It is on the October 17, 1869 cover which is latest reported with octagon killer; and on a stampless to France, Jan. 17, 1870 in black. The 1870 red use of it to Trieste, reported by me in "The Stamp Specialist," Orange Book, article of 1941, p. 91, is on a cover now owned by me. The date turns out to be 1860, not 1870, as had been reported to me. The Russian-alphabet town mark of Warsaw, made for use on eastbound mail, continues in regular use on such mail (Illustration 6), both stamped and stampless. Like the small Warsaw town mark, it comes in both red and black in this period. The latest date thus far known to me is June 13, 1869, in red, on a stamped cover to Sokolow.

The Warsaw large Latin-alphabet (Illustration 7) is known to Nov. 3, 1866, but most likely will be found into 1867, in both red and black.

The earliest Russian town mark introduced at Warsaw came in while the Russian-language mark of the Polish service was still in use. This double circle (Illustration 8) is known to me from a letter of Feb. 15, 1869 with Warsaw square killer type 1a. The date, in the Julian calendar, reads February 3—but the contents give the Gregorian or "ordinary" date.

The second Russian town mark (Illustration 9) is a single circle device. April 29, 1870 is the only date of use I have—and the Warsaw square killer type 2a is used with it.

By 1873, date of next cover seen by me, these two marks and the square killers have vanished. They are replaced by the typical Russian double circle marks, similar to those used elsewhere throughout the Czar's empire at that period, struck on the stamp without killer.

The old Polish rater mark, boxed FRANCO in arc, continued in use in red at Warsaw on foreign mail, both stamped and prepaid stampless into 1870 (Illustration 10). This mark corresponds to the U. S. postal marking "PAID." In the late use the amount of postage is written in red crayon below the FRANCO handstamp. The year 1870 stampless usage is the latest I have seen—probably the mark vanished in that year.

From elsewhere than Warsaw covers showing the transition between the Polish stamps and marks in 1865, and the strictly Russian material af-



10



11



12



13



14



15



16



17

ter 1870 are very hard to find. We have to rely very largely on loose stamps for our information. Quite a fair number of Polish circle killers of the usual type (Illustration 11) occur on these. The 10-kopeck stamp is the one on which we usually find them—though other values occur very sparsely. The stamps are of the 1866 issue mostly, with a fair proportion of the 1865's and an occasional belated item of the 1858's.

We also have occasional stampless up to 1869, all of them showing Polish town marks. Furthermore, we have occasional examples of the Russian practice of the 1870's in this period, but with the old Polish town marks, in striking the town mark on the stamp as killer. Rachmanov reports Kolo, Lomza, and Warta this way.

The terminal R. P. O. marks survived very late in certain cases. The BW mark of Bydgosc & Vienna station in Warsaw (Illustration 12) occurs, and the D. B. 1 of the Bydgosc station there (Illustration 13) are, in fact, more often seen in this use than under the Polish administration. The D.B.2 of this station is said to be plentiful in the 1865-69 period also—but that appears to be hearsay. I have never yet ever seen it used this late.

Mr. Rachmanov reports that the BW killer was altered by chipping the letters out, and kept in use at the Bydgosc-Vienna station in Warsaw up to 1874. We have only his word for

this. There is no question but that Polish killers without numeral appear on Russian stamps of the 1866 issue; but the illustrations furnished by Count Polanski and Mr. Rachmanov do not give us any sign that the identification as the BW mark chipped is valid. Nor does anything in the text of these two gentlemen's books help us in the least.

A curious double circle marking occurs in the period of transition. It is identified as an R. P. O. mark from Lodz by Mr. Rachmanov, and its reading is not yet surely interpreted. The mark, reported from 1867 only, could stand for either a railroad line or a terminal R. P. O. It is struck on the stamp in black, without other mark, and sometimes has manuscript day and month in the center (Illustration 14). The reading "W.D.Z. LODZ" is interpreted by Rachmanov as "Wiedenska Droga Zelazna" meaning "Vienna Railroad," because the line to Lodz was a branch of the Vienna line. Vincent Domanski and I have preferred to think it "Warszawska Droga Zelazna," meaning "Warsaw Railroad" and so suggested in "The Stamp Specialist," Blue Book 1941 treatment. The line into Lodz, completed in 1867, was a branch from the railroad from Warsaw to Vienna, and would be a natural for a Warsaw-Lodz service only. So I now tentatively attribute the W.D.Z. mark to the Lodz terminal of the Warsaw railroad. The chance

that it is an actual R.P.O. mark is thin, since the normal Russian type of large dated R.P.O. mark would presumably be introduced on a line opened this late.

The Route Mark (Illustration 15) and Bull's Eye killer (Illustration 16) of the Polish R.P.O.'s were continued at least into 1866. H. D. S. Haverbeck has one cover of Route 8 (Warsaw-Vienna line) with Russian stamp, of that date; I have a stampless with Route 7 (Warsaw-Bydgosce) on it, to Paris, dated within Nov. 3, 1866 and year verified by French postmarks.

A number of bilingual double line town marks, with ms. date below them, usually boxed and in black, are known on stampless of Poland in the years 1865-68 (Illustration 17). Such marks are thus far not known on stamped covers of the period. The list of the known stampless uses will be found in "The Stamp Specialist," Orange Book, article by Domanski and myself, 1941, page 94.

All this evidence works up into a coherent and interesting story.

With the impending absorption of the Polish postal system into the Russian, Russian stamps were supplied to Polish offices prior to April 13, 1865—perhaps many weeks ahead of that, and gradually superseded the Polish issue. After the absorption, except for the absence of Polish stamps, the usages were unchanged. The Polish post marks continue in regular use on the Russian stamps, and stampless usage on mail returns to a fair extent.

Worn out devices are retired now and then as in previous years.

A few new marks come into use before 1869.

With 1869 the replacement of the Polish town marks begins. During 1870 it proceeds, and apparently by the end of that year it is complete. Russian usage, with town mark struck on the stamps, replaces the Polish procedure with killer during 1870.

If any Polish marks were in use in 1871, it was strictly accidental and against the official orders.

NEW MEMBERS

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Yonkers 2, New York

FILATELISTA POLSKI

Polonus member Rayall de Ragan, of Poznan, Poland, is credited with sending the first issue (nr. 1-3) of "Filatelistas Polski" (The Polish Philatelist). On the inside cover appears a full page advertisement of the well-known house of John Witkowski, which was established in 1926. His former correspondents will be pleased to know that this establishment is again functioning on a full scale, but his pre-war address is now changed to Sw. Marcin 18/1.

The first page is devoted to a statement by the Publication Committee, in which claim is made that the new "Filatelistas Polski" is the only monthly journal now published in all of Poland. It is the official publication for the Poznan Philatelic Club.

This is followed with an excellent article dealing with "Cash Paid" markings used in Poland for about two weeks after the withdrawal of German occupational forces. It is accompanied by a full page of illustrations.

The leading article covers the Gniezno invert. It is well written, very informative and nicely illustrated.

Some space is devoted to a listing of philatelic publications, among which the POLONUS is mentioned. More than a page of information is supplied about recent issues of stamps and postal cards. This is followed with a listing of names and addresses of officers currently leading the Poznan Philatelic Club. There are two columns of small ads, finally ending with more extensive and elaborate advertising.

A number of copies is on hand and made available only to members of the Polonus by payment of fifteen cents.

—Clement A. Pulaski

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Polonus Philatelic Society is now preparing a list of suggestions and corrections for the POLAND and Associated countries sections for the Editors of Scott's Catalog for 1949. Anyone having any suggestions or corrections to report please do so at once by writing to Myron E. Steczynski, 4154 North Leclair Avenue, Chicago 41, Illinois.

Zarki Municipal Issues*

By Myron E. Steczynski



Genuine

1. Distinct color.
2. Lines of illustration delicate and gradually shaded.
3. Highlight in circular window above door in lower left.
4. Top of tree gradually indistinct.
5. Clouds delicately shaded.
6. Contrast between front and side of main tower.
7. People in courtyard have light and dark clothes.
8. Smooth perforation, 11½.
9. Bluish paper in ultraviolet rays.



Counterfeit

1. Color somewhat off from genuine.
2. Lines of illustration coarser, heavier and somewhat spotty.
3. Highlights directly at left.
4. Top of tree heavy and distinct.
5. Clouds severely shaded.
6. Less contrast between front and side.
7. Most people appear dark.
8. Smooth or rough perfs, or imperf.
9. White paper in ultraviolet rays.

The town of Zarki in the province of Kielce on the railroad between Zawiercie and Częstochowa issued large lithographed postage stamps of a single design showing the local church with the market place in the foreground. The white rectangle at the bottom is inscribed "Pocztą miejską w Żarkach" (Municipal Post in Zarki) and the value appears in both upper corners. The stamps were printed in sheets of 50—10 wide by 5 high—with

sheet margins from 10 to 15 mm. wide. Guide marks appear at the sides of the middle row.

The important point of interest about these stamps is the large number of counterfeits which flood the American and European markets. Genuine copies have always been extremely scarce. The illustration in the Polish Handbook Ikaros (1935) shows a used copy for the genuine stamp, as is the practice throughout the book when,

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apparently, the publisher had difficulty in finding a genuine mint copy. The only dealer in Poland up to 1928 who had original copies was Ewald Eichenwald in Warsaw, but later (about 1936) they were available from the estate of Dr. Anthony Horak in Krakow. Stamps of Zarki appear in auction catalogs from time to time and are listed at prices for genuine copies. The rule, "Let the buyer beware," should be uppermost regarding these issues.

Genuine and counterfeit copies are illustrated with points of interest to guide collectors. It should be noted that all the original stamps are perforated 11½, so that all imperforate copies are consequently counterfeited. The perforated counterfeits can be detected by deviations in color, by inferior (crude) details of design, and in some cases by rough perforations. The key to genuineness is the highlight resembling a new moon on the left edge of the round window just above the doorway. In the originals, this half-moon is toward the lower left; in the counterfeits it is directly to the left. The counterfeits are not as clearly etched as the originals. Under ultraviolet rays the paper of the originals is bluish, while the paper of the counterfeits is quite white.

Prof. Mikstein's detailed analysis of full sheets of these issues reveals two distinct types of each value, depending on whether they come from the odd or even vertical columns in the sheet. These types are distinguished by the details of the numerals which may have certain flaws, or by the position of the shields in the third issue. The discussion of the distinguishing marks is beyond the scope of this article, but the reader is referred to Issues 66-70 of Ikaros Monthly (May-September 1937).

The stamps were issued to help defray the cost of delivery of mail, with rates established in accordance with the following schedule for the various services:

Altogether, there were nine stamps issued in three sets of three stamps as follows:

First Issue, Oct. 10, 1918—

3h blue 5,000 issued
5h red 5,000 issued
12h olive 5,000 issued

Second Issue, Oct. 18 to 28—

6h in red on 3h 5,000 issued
10h in violet on 5h .. 5,000 issued
24h in red on 12h 5,000 issued

Third Issue, Oct. 24, 1918—

6h violet 10,000 issued
10h green 10,000 issued
24h orange 10,000 issued

6 halerzy 6

10 halerzy 10

24 halerzy 24

There were 10,000 each of the first issue printed, but 5,000 of each were later struck with a rectangular handstamp 18½x8½mm with new value to double the original value of each stamp in agreement with increased rates as given in the listing given heretofore. The surcharge was applied once to each horizontal pair of stamps so that only half the impression appears on the edge of a single stamp. Through an error, some of these 3h stamps were struck in red with the 10h handstamp, and in an attempt to correct this error, the stamps were again struck in black with the 6h handstamp, so that in this way a distinct variety was created.

The handbook "Ikaros" lists the double handstamped variety as having the 10h. struck in violet and the 6h in red, but this information is contrary to a copy in the Larking collection, guaranteed by Prof. Mikstein and by Dr. Alicja Horak, whose late father Dr. Anthony Horak, was the medical officer of the local command when the stamps were issued, and who had a substantial quantity of the stamps on hand for Prof. Mikstein's examination.

WITHIN ZARKI	IN NEIGHBORING TOWNS	RATES	
		Oct. 10-17, 1918	Oct. 18-28, 1918
Printed Matter and Post Cards		3 hellers	6 hellers
Letters	Printed Matter and Post Cards	5 hellers	10 hellers
Regist. Letters and Telegrams	Regular and Regist. Letters and Teleg.	12 hellers	24 hellers

Besides the above significant and rare error, other irregularities appear in the handstamped surcharges, such as interchange of colors, two halves of the surcharge on a single stamp, inverts, etc. These errors appear almost exclusively on actually used copies, indicating their unintentional character which was discovered later in contrast to errors appearing on mint copies of other stamps which might have a more speculative character because of intentional variations.

The use of the overprinted stamps began on Oct. 18 and extended into the term of the third issue, which ran from Oct. 24 to 28, 1918.

The stamps of the third issue differ from those of the first issue in the design surrounding the numerals. In the first issue the numerals are in ornamental circles—in the third issue the numerals are in rectangular shields.



Zarki Cancellation

The Zarki cancellation was 36mm. in diameter with a Polish eagle in reverse color within a 22mm. circle and the words ZARKI/KROL POLSKIE in the band. The cancellation did not bear a date.

(Editor's Note:

If any of our readers are still in doubt about the authenticity of their copies after reading the above, Mr. Steczynski will gladly expertise such copies. It is assumed that a stamped addressed envelope will accompany any such requests.)

NEW ISSUES

By J. J. Domar

It is reported unofficially that the following new issues are to appear:

A new commemorative in honor of the "Bicycle Races Around Poland." This is not to be confused with the recently issued "Warsaw-Praha Bicycle" commemorative, and is to be known as the "Tour de Pologne" issue. Value unknown at this date.

Another stamp is to be issued for the "Exhibition of Regained land in Wroclaw." Value unknown.

Additional issues are for the "Sea Holiday" and new values of the "Wisna Ludow" stamp.

In the New Issues column in the BULLETIN of December 1947-January 1948, Issue No. 60, we announced a commemorative sheet to be issued. This sheet was issued on June 10, 1948.

The sheet is rather attractive consisting of one each of the recent second colors of the Famous Poles series. Printed on the top of the sheet are the words "Poczta Polska," on the bottom "Kultura Polska," and all is enclosed within a border of oak leaves. It was printed by Courvoisier, Inc., in Switzerland. The colors are brighter and clearer than on the original stamps. It is reported that only 30,000 sheets were issued.

The face value of each sheet is 62 zlotys and added is an overcharge of 438 zlotys, making a total face value of 500 zlotys.

The following has been reported as the inside story of the distribution of these sheets: Members of recognized philatelic organizations were permitted to subscribe for two sheets, and on June 14, 1948, none of these sheets could be purchased in the regular postal channels. It is further reported that the only way to obtain a sheet is on the black market at 1200 zlotys!

If this is true (Polonus will attempt to verify) then the issue should not be recognized.

RESIGNATIONS

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APPLICATION PENDING

Robert A. Wilson
American Embassy
Warsaw, Poland

TID BITS

We are very happy to learn that our member Vincent Domanski, who is also President of the Society of Philatelic Americans, has recovered from a most serious illness. He is still under doctor's care and on a very strict diet.

* * *

We report that our president, Chester Mikucki, is on the mend. He is still at Hines Hospital, however. We hope to see Chester at home very, very soon.

* * *

According to the report given to the Society at its last meeting, Dr. M. E. Uznanski, Director of POLPEX 1949 (our 10th anniversary exhibit) has been as busy as the proverbial beaver. Great things are being planned to properly commemorate this, so very important event in our history. We regret we cannot give you more of the details but we hope to have the complete list, and an imposing one it is, of the committees, which are to assist the Director.

* * *

Col. Schrader reports he judged the Kentuckiana Stamp Exhibit sponsored by the Louisville Stamp Society and New Albany Stamp Club, and also gave his talk on Tibet at the Dinner in conjunction therewith, all of which was held in Jeffersonville, Indiana, on May 22, 1948.

* * *

On March 30, a new stamp club was organized in Detroit's northeast section — the LASKY STAMP CLUB, which will meet regularly on the second and fourth Tuesday evening of each month at the Lasky Community Center at 7:30 p.m. and all collectors are welcome. Officers are: Mrs. C.

Lewandowski, President; Edmund Jonczewski, recording secretary; Frank Staszczyn, financial secretary and Walter Kolankowski #229, sergeant-at-arms.

HANS FRANK "STAMP" OFFERED IN LONDON

While Hans Frank was governor of Poland he ordered the Austrian Printing Works to prepare a stamp issue depicting himself. This was done, reports S. Bayer, contrary to Nazi orders that all such issues should first be approved by Hitler. The stamps were sent for approval only after they had been printed, but before issued. Naturally, the issue was promptly ordered destroyed and those responsible for the manufacture punished. Since Frank remained governor, it is not known whether he was rebuked. When Vienna was liberated by the Russians an envelope marked "top secret" and containing a few of these stamps was looted and sold. They have now reached philatelic channels and are being sold by a London company at £11 each! — Edith M. Fisher, in Newark Sunday News.

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