

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Meets every 4th Friday at the Polish Youth Association Building,
(Dom Harcerski) 6434 West Belmont Avenue, Chicago, IL

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JULY-AUGUST, 1994

Polonus' 3rd Polish American Heritage Exhibition

The Polish American Heritage Exhibition is scheduled for October 7th thru the 20th at the Polish Museum of America. It is being held in conjunction with the national celebration of October as "Polish American Heritage Month" in co-operation with the Polish American Congress and Polonia across the U.S.A. Featured will be philatelic and numismatic displays honoring the 50th Anniversaries of the Warsaw Uprising and the Battle for Monte Cassino, and the 200th Anniversary of the Kosciuszko Insurrection.

An opening ceremony is planned for Friday, October 7, at 7:30 p.m. Our honored guest will be Edward Moskal, Nat'l President of the P.A.C. This will take place in the Great Hall of the Museum, 984 N. Milwaukee Ave., at Kennedy Expressway in Chicago. A reception will follow with hors d'oeuvres and wine. The Museum is open to the public seven days a week from 11 am to 4 pm. Admission is free. Parking available in the lot near the PRCUA Building.

The special cancellation designed by Leon Kawecki will be used on cacheted covers. Covers will be available at the museum for \$1.00. Out of town members may obtain them by sending \$1.50 to Polonus, P.O. Box 458, Berwyn, Illinois 60402.

POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS



1944 - OCTOBER - 1994

POLONUS' CACHET

80 ROCZNICA WYMARSZU KU WOLNOŚCI



DYREKCJA OKRĘGU POCZTY W KRAKOWIE
DOWÓDZTWO KRAKOWSKIEGO OKRĘGU WOJSKOWEGO
MUZEUM HISTORYCZNE MIASTA KRAKOWA
KLUB CRACOVIANA POLSKIEGO ZWIĄZKU FILATELISTÓW

przynaję
Polonus Philatelic Society
Chicago USA

DYPLOM UZNANIA

za

ufundowanie nagrody honorowej dla wystawców eksponujących zbiory
na wystawie filatelistycznej poświęconej 80 rocznicy wymarszu z Krakowa
I Kompanii Kadrowej Strzelców

PRZEWODNICZĄCY KOMITETU
ORGANIZACYJNEGO WYSTAWY

KRAKÓW, 6 SIERPNIA 1994

JANUSZ ADAMCZYK

Certificate of Appreciation presented to Polonus by the Krakow Chapter of the Polish Philatelic Federation for participating in their August exhibition. The Award was accepted by Fred Szebel during his recent visit to Poland.

The seven months of Marienwerder stamps

By FRED W. BAUMANN

Marienwerder consists of a town and its environs in what was central Prussia, bordered to the north by Marienburg and what was the free city of Danzig, and touching at its southeastern extremity the westernmost point of another post-World War I plebiscite territory, Allenstein.

In the breakup of the German Empire following WWI, the Treaty of Versailles placed Marienwerder and Allenstein under the authority of an Inter-Allied Commission. Its purpose was to conduct plebiscites that would decide whether the people of these regions favored uniting with nearby Poland, or a return to Germany.

Evidently concerned that the use of German stamps there might somehow influence the outcome of the vote, the IAC ordered that sales of German stamps in Marienwerder end March 12, 1920.

Figure 1 shows on the left the 60-pfennig stamp from the set (Scott 1-14) that replaced them, issued beginning March 13th. It is inscribed "Commission Interalliee/Marienwerder."

The design, an allegorical female figure with flags of the Allies at its sides, is very reminiscent of the U.S. Victory issue: 1919 (Scott 537). Supported in her left

hand, its base resting at her foot, are the fasces that symbolized the authority of law (before Mussolini gave the ancient Roman symbol a new and sinister meaning). At the base of the design is a ballot box inscribed "Populi Voluntas" (the Will of the People) upon which Marienwerder's fate would depend.

The lithographed stamps, with their French and Latin text, were printing format was unusual, in that stamps were printed and perforated in 11 rows of 14. The four unoccupied spaces in each sheet were filled with an inscription identifying the IAC and showing the cost of the sheet. Multiples containing these inscriptions, and others showing one of two sheet watermarks, are prized by specialists.

With little or no background in stamp printing, Coen & Co. produced the first Marienwerder stamps on thin and thick papers, with both ordinary and pin perforations. All values are known imperforate, and well-centered complete sets are not easy to assemble.

Unfortunately, either too few stamps were ordered or inadequate quantities and denominations were delivered. One report suggests that



Figure 1. The 60-pfennig stamps from the first (left) and last (right) issues of Marienwerder show a benevolent allegorical female figure symbolizing the Allied supervision of the former Prussian territory after World War I.

significant quantities of the stamps were stolen during transport from Italy, but it may simply be that the bureaucrats in charge of postal matters failed to anticipate the philatelic demand that probably accounted for a fair part of the initial stock. Whatever the reason, no sooner were the first Marienwerder stamps issued than shortages developed.

To meet postal needs, Groll Printers in Marienwerder added a three-line "Commission Interalliee Marienwerder" overprint to standard



Figure 2. Germania stamps were overprinted (left) and surcharged in March-April 1920 to supply needed values. stamps were overprinted.

German 5 pf, 20 pf, 50 pf, 75 pf, 80pf and 1-mark definitives (24-31). The overprinted 5pf Germania is shown on the left in figure 2.

All were printed in fairly modest quantities, the scarcest being the 50pf Germania (28), of which but 2,600

A flurry of essays, trials and various color and typeface combinations, and double and inverted overprints accompanied this issue. Some of these were produced, as the Scott catalog footnote states, "apparently with speculative intent."

In April and May, presumably to help meet the needs of Marienwerder's one and only rate change on May 10, four low-value Germanias were surcharged to yield 1-m, 2-m, 3-m and 5m stamps (32-35). The 1-m on 2pf gray surcharge is illustrated on the right in figure 2.

The basic stamps are quite affordable and even inverted and double surcharges are fairly inexpensive (though such errors on the 1-m on 2-m surcharge are invariably forgeries). In addition, the German Michel catalog lists a wide array of minor surcharge varieties, based on the appearance of the letters.

On July 9-16, German 1-m, 1.25-m, 1.50-m and 2.50-m definitives were released with a three-line Marienwerder commission overprint, as shown on the 1-m stamp in figure 3. The figure 3 stamp, the fourth 1-m value issued for Marienwerder in five months, suggests to me that someone had awakened fully to the philatelic possibilities of cranking out stamps for this short-lived territory.

How else might one explain the issue of high-value stamps (36-39) in quantities of 111,000 to 116,000 — far beyond any conceivable postal need — with the plebiscite just two months away?

The 1-m to 5-m values of Marienwerder's final issue were released in early July as well, with matching 5pf to 75pf denominations appearing as late as August 3.

Figure 1 on the right shows the 60pf stamp from this set (40-53),

printed in the same colors by the same Italian printer as the first issue, but without the blizzard of paper and perf varieties. The stamps use the same central design as the first issue, but are inscribed "Plebiscite" at the top and "Marienwerder/Kwidzyn" below — the name of the enclave in German and Polish.

On August 16th, 1920, the long-awaited plebiscite finally took place. Those who opted to remain part of Germany made up 92.8 percent of the vote, a one-sided outcome that in part reflected the fact that Poland was still mired in a long and indecisive war with the Soviet Union.

Immediately following the plebiscite, German stamps were introduced. Mixed frankings were possible from that date to Sept. 14, when Marienwerder stamps became officially invalid, and could be exchanged for German postage. Even so, what seem to be non-philatelic covers with Marienwerder stamps are known from as late as the end of October, 1920.

The entire point of issuing postage stamps for Marienwerder — to prevent the use of German stamps there — was an administrative fiasco to say the least.

The unoverprinted stamps appear to have been less than a hit as well. More than 8 million of them, returned to Berlin in November 1920, are said to still reside in some dusty vault of the German postal ministry.

Despite these failures, Marienwerder's seven-month stamp-issuing career makes it an interesting footnote to the philately and history of 20th century Europe.

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MORE ON MARIENWERDER

By JOHN G. ROSS

I would like to add a footnote to Fred W. Baumann's Germany and Area column about Marienwerder stamps in the April 4th, Linn's page 36. When the first set of Marienwerder was released in March, 1920, inflation was rampant and money lost its value practically by the hour. Thus, many people were anxious to invest their money into anything that might retain its value.

I was born in that district, and my father had dabbled in stamps all his life. He began to supply the rest of the country with these new Marienwerder stamps. He received orders for up to 10,000 sets and soon was unable to fill them as supplies ran out.

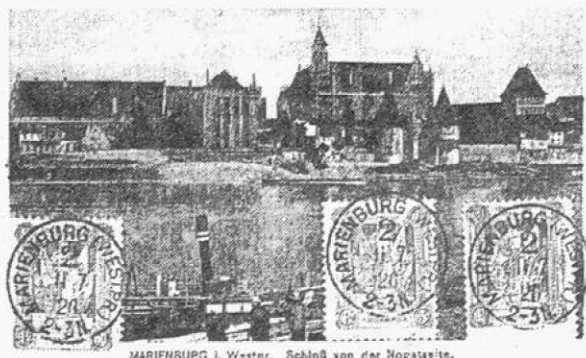
However the main reason why a new set was ordered was that the Poles objected to the first issue as it was ins-

The stamp on left has the name Marienwerder in German. The name also is in Polish on the stamp on the right.



Figure 3. High-value post-war German stamps, like this 1-mark value, received this three-line Marienwerder overprint in July, 1920.





MARIENBURG I. Westpr. Schloß von der Nogatseite.

Figure 1. A first-day use of the 30-pfennig value from Marienwerder's final issue (bottom-left corner), along with two earlier stamps, on a picture postcard of Marienburg.

stamps, which appears on page 4 in Reader's Opinions.

I also heard from Joe McDonough of Fairidge Stamps in Westwood, NJ, who sent the picture postcard shown in Figure 1.

The card shows a view of the medieval Teutonic fortress on the Nogat River in Marienwerder. Today the town is known as Malbork, and is located in Poland, but in 1920 it was a part of Western Prussia, located in the northern portion of the plebiscite territory of Marienwerder.

A 5-pfennig and a 20pf stamp from Marienwerder's first issue frank the card at the middle and right, respectively. Both are tied

with a sharply struck Marienburg datestamp, as is the 30pf stamp from the last Marienwerder issue, in the bottom-left corner of the card. (The stamps differ in the inscriptions at the top and bottom of the design.

As McDonough notes, the July 11 date makes this a first-day use of the 30pf Marienwerder stamp on the left.

I also heard from Robert M. Spaulding, the editor of "Japanese Philately," the always informative journal of the International Society for Japanese Philately. Spaulding opened my eyes to an aspect of Marienwerder's stamps of which I was utterly unaware: They are the first non-Japanese stamps to depict the flag of Japan.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



Figure 2. The 1920 stamps of Marienwerder including this 60 pf value, were the first non-Japanese stamps in the world to depict a Japanese flag, here enlarged in an inset.

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(TO BE CONTINUED)

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Chicago, IL 60641

CHICAGOPEX 94

Chicagopex 94 will be held the weekend of October 28-30 at the Rosemont Expo Center. The show hotel is the Radisson Suite Hotel O'Hare Airport, 5500 No. River Rd., Rosemont, located across the street from the Expo Center and connected by a covered walkway. A reduced show rate is available to those attending the show with a special reservation card.

Chicagopex will salute the 1200 anniversary of Kyoto, Japan, with its show theme of fine arts in Japan. Special cachets and a postal cancellation featuring this theme will be prepared.

In addition, the International Society for Japanese Philately will hold its annual national convention at Chicagopex. The show will also have more than 300 16-page frames of exhibits on display, part of which will be from the International Society for Japan's philately.

For more information regarding Chicagopex and a reduced rate hotel reservation card, write to Chicagopex 94, Box A-3953, Chicago, IL 60690-3953.

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LITHPEX XXV

Polonus will take part in LITHPEX XXV, to be held October 21-23, at the Lithuanian Youth Center, 5620 So. Claremont Ave. in Chicago. The theme of the exhibit is the 200th anniversary of Thaddeus Kosciuszko's Uprising in Lithuania and Poland. Shown will be a topical collection of Kosciuszko. Hours: Friday 10 am to 9 pm; Saturday: 1 to 6 pm; Sunday: 10 am to 4 pm. A special Kosciuszko cancellation will be issued for Lithpex covers.

POLPEX 95

March 17th - 18th - 19th
White Eagle - Niles, IL

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Annual Dues which include a subscription to the Bulletin are \$16.00 (U.S. currency only) and should be sent to Polonus Treasurer, Stefan Czarniecki, 1511 South 59th Ave., Cicero, IL 60650. Membership Dues are payable by December 31st, for the next calendar year. New members will receive all the 'Bulletins' for the year in which they join. Changes of address, problems with receiving the Bulletin, should be addressed to: Polonus Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 458, Berwyn, IL 60402. General matters pertaining to the Society, contribution of articles for the Bulletin, complaints or other matters should be directed to the President.

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