

## BULLETIN OF THE

# POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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April 1956

### THE KRAKÓW ISSUES

Scott's Nos. 41 to 60, J1 to J12 and P1 to P5

by J. J. DOMAR

Reprinted from WEEKLY PHILATELIC GOSSIP of 3/10/56

With the number of articles which are appearing in the non-philatelic press with regard to the "achievements" of certain counterfeiters who have produced counterfeits which supposedly fooled experts, coupled with a footnote in Scott's which reads—"Excellent counterfeits of 41 to 60 exist"—a collector is hard-put to decide if he should purchase this issue or leave it alone.

I have been often asked this question: "Can the Krakows be purchased with any degree of safety?" The answer is "Yes." Even though many forgeries are found with approvals or signatures attesting to their genuineness. The next question is usually, "Well, then, if stamps are approved and found to be forgeries how can I be sure that they are genuine?"

The odds are that you will not know: therefore it is well to always consult someone who does know for an opinion. If it is genuine and positioned it takes but a moment to determine its authenticity. If it is a forgery it may take a little longer unless it is crude—I have seen some very excellent forgeries.

Who are the experts whose opinion can be accepted?

First—Prof. Stanislaus Mikstein of Kraków, Poland. He is the author of the handbook *DIE POSTMARKE NR. 9, Provisional Stamps of Poland and Austrian Stamps published in Vienna*

1933, which is practically indispensable to anyone working with the Krakows.

Second—Mr. Herbert Block of H. R. Harmer of New York, a member of the Friedl Committee and without question the outstanding man available to us. Those members of the Polonus Philatelic Society's Experts Committee who specialize in the Krakows, namely, Mr. J. Gapinski, Mr. F. Wolosewick, and the writer. There are others abroad such as Mr. Koopman of Amsterdam, Mr. Derek Palmer of Chile.

I have known of persons professing to have knowledge of the Krakows who take a stamp, look at it with a magnifying glass, and after a couple of "Hrmps and Ahs" say that this stamp is phony or this one is good. That can be done with some positions. But it is my opinion no one can do this with every stamp of every setting. True, a certain sense is developed which tells us this stamp looks good or it looks bad, but this is only a preliminary opinion.

The fact that this is only a preliminary opinion, what is done to come to a final conclusion?

Not knowing how the others arrive at their opinions or facts I can only relate how it is done at the Polonus Philatelic Society.

Assume we have a stamp which does not have an outstanding characteristic such as—The broken "A," the

double dot, the thin "Z's," etc., of setting I. (Caution—the thin "Z" and double dot have also been forged.) The stamps are measured.

The method used to measure is as follows:

A cross grid gauge is employed which is a transparent film divided into 2/10's of a millimeter, both horizontally and vertically and protected by glass on the emulsified side.

Also employed is a box 14"x14"x14" with a frosted window 4" x 5" inserted in the top. A 25 watt bulb is mounted in the base of the box to furnish a light from underneath. A high powered glass is used for magnification.

Two methods are used for measuring and the newest or third method is in the experimental stage.

The methods are:

The Mikstein method

The Polonus method

The Steczynski method

The Mikstein method is that illustrated by Prof. Mikstein in his book.

The method is to take a horizontal line on the cross grid gauge, lay it across the top of the word "Poczta" and a vertical line even with the top "P"—The reading is obtained by getting a measurement from the vertical line to the left tip of the rhombus (diamond) and determining whether the bottom "P" is to the left or to the right of the vertical line. The reading will be something like this—5.4mm. by (plus or minus) 3mm. See sketch No. 1.

The Polonus method was suggested by Mr. Gapinski and Mr. Wolosewick and developed by the writer. The cross grid gauge is laid across the bottom of the word POLSKA, then a vertical line is placed so that it goes through the center of the rhombus. The reading is obtained by measuring the distance from the vertical line to the "T" of POCZTA and the "K" of POLSKA, which may be something like 3.1 x 2.6mm. See sketch No. 2.

The Steczynski method was conceived by M. E. Steczynski and although still in the experimental stage it has considerable merit.

Actually; in this method there are no measurements as such but a chart is prepared upon which in an enlarged

form is a replica of the everprint "Poczta Polska." Lines are drawn through the everprint vertically and are spaced 1/4 mm. apart. Each line at the top is numbered, and each line at the bottom has a letter such as A, B, C, etc. A gauge with one horizontal line and one vertical line is placed upon the stamp to be measured having the horizontal line flush with the bottom of "polska" and the vertical line through the center of the rhombus. A reading is obtained by comparing where the vertical line goes through the top and bottom with the chart. See sketches No. 3 and 4.

After measurements are obtained they are compared to a cross reference chart which may indicate 2 to 5 positions with the same measurements. How then is it determined what is the position of the stamp being examined?

A Linotype setting machine was used to make the slugs. There were five positions on each slug—in other words twenty slugs of the word POCZTA and twenty with the word POLSKA. When a slug is cast some of them have imperfections and in others imperfections develop after use. Therefore most have one or more characteristics which may be used to arrive at a conclusion.

I have never seen a counterfeit which can pass all of the measurements and characteristics.

Theoretical knowledge helps to determine many positions, but there are many which are practically impossible to place without comparative material which most of the experts have access to or own.

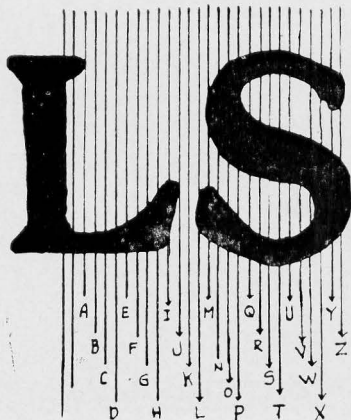
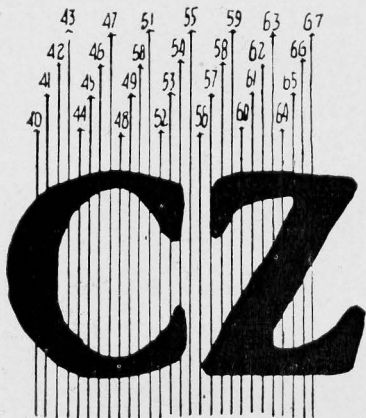
The lithograph overprints on the 2, 3, 4 and 10 kr. and the 25/80 are not measured, but they do have characteristics which are used for the expert's opinion.

I hope the above will help prove that there is no necessity for guess work. Expensive stamps are naturally given more attention than cheaper ones and the plate position is usually always determined. It is obvious why. Speaking for myself, if I am in doubt, I always suggest that the stamp be referred to Mr. H. Block whose opinion, as far as I am concerned, is final.

So in conclusion, make certain of your stamps or their source. Some dealers will not sell unless the stamps are first expertized. Have them checked by an expert first. Under no circumstances ever buy them when they are listed "As is." That means they are not subject to return and it is my personal opinion the person who offers these stamps so marked has an opinion that they are not genuine otherwise they would not offer them that way—and I'm sorry to say they were in a mail sale recently. There is no

legitimate reason to sell the Krakows in that manner.

Now some words of advice—Do not send a large amount of stamps and expect to get them back within a few days. The expert may have obligations which may keep him busy for a few days—or he may have a number of prior lots. If they were purchased at auction where an immediate decision is imperative, mention it and above all always include return postage and do not expect an expert's opinion for a "thank you."



Polonus Bulletin, April 1956

MIKSTEIN METHOD

**POCZTA**

**POLSKA**

MINUS  
PLUS  
Sketch one

**POCZTA**

**POLSKA**

POLONUS METHOD  
SKETCH TWO

**POCZTA**

**POLSKA**

Steczynski Method  
SKETCH THREE

Master Chart to be used with M. E. STECZYNSKI'S  
method of measuring the KRAKOW ISSUES

**PRZE**  
**KOD**

NR 545

18 WRZESNIA 1955

CENA 1,10 ZŁ





# New Discovery in Stamp Honoring U.S. Constitution

by EDWARD NOWAK

In order to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Constitution of the United States—much like that of Poland, adopted May 3, 1791—a special, one stamp issue was placed on sale at Warsaw, Poland, March 17, 1938.

The stamp is picturing Kosciuszko, Washington and Paine; New York harbor in background. Today the stamp is known generally as Scott No. 319.

Because the adhesive found great popularity, the original issue was sold out so rapidly that a second printing (April 3, 1938) was ordered by Poland's Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs.

Little known is the fact, brought to light through philatelic research, that a third printing was made (May 6, 1938) to satisfy demands of the philatelic world. All stamps of the 3rd printing were sold exclusively for stamp markets and none are known to exist on franked mail.

Early in 1947 a discovery was made that unclassified misprints in the 3rd printing were made from damaged plates. In conjunction with Stanislaus Miklusz of Krakow, Poland—the Ministry of Posts in Warsaw and the writer, a philatelic research was instituted which produced the following facts beyond dispute:

Because of shortage in the original ink—after two printings — additions were made to increase the stock of ink to execute the order for 3rd printing. The new mixture did not completely match the original ink—the ultramarine overcoming the gray.

The feverish philatelic research and comparison of notes on the discovery—between the writer and Miklusz—leave no doubt, now, that the plates for the 3rd printing were damaged, causing the top two stamps on the right side of the sheet to have the letter "R"—after 1937—to resemble the letter "P".

The second stamp from the top, on the same half of sheet, and under adhesive with squashed letter "R" has "ieicles" like imeprfection on "POCZ-TA" at bottom of stamp, and a "tear" on Kosciuszko's collar.



Easy to detect are also pen-like markings resembling guides for the perforating machine.

According to information from philatelic sources in Poland and elsewhere, the adhesives of the third printing, described above, are fast becoming sought for rarities, due to limited amount of sheets printed—and because of ignorance as to their existence—not many copies are to be found. Especially rare are block large enough to contain all the varieties together. All the described varied stamps can be encompassed only in blocks of six adhesives, or larger.

This is the first report in the English language on this continent, or elsewhere in the world. The writer urges collectors to share this report with other philatelists—especially with collectors specializing in the stamps of Poland.

A block of 12 stamps containing all described varieties — the only one known such block in United States—can be found, and examined, in the vast collection of Polish stamps at Regis College in Weston, Mass. Possibly, after this report is digested, other blocks of this rarity will be discovered. To this day only one such block of said stamps is at Regis College . . . four in Poland in the collection of S. Miklusz.

## IN MEMORIAM

Josepha Weron, beloved mother of Rev. Marion J. Weron, O.F.M. died on Holy Thursday, March 29 and was buried Easter Monday. She was 89 years old.

POLONUS extends its heartfelt sympathy to Rev. Marion and the family.

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## **TID BITS**

Our apologies to Bernard Sobczak for not including his name with the Patrons list in our 1956 Polpex catalogue.

Doc Kozy donated a beautiful trophy to the S.P.A.—Grand Rapids, Mich. show to be held in August, 1956. He presented the trophy in the name of POLONUS and it is to be awarded for the best Slavic exhibit.

Barney Fialkowski, who is President of the Central Federation of Stamp Clubs, also has taken upon his shoulder the job of regional director for Stamps for the Wounded. His many trips to the Veterans Hospital at Hines have caused him to devote himself religiously to this cause. Please donate something, duplicate stamps, old albums, catalogs, literature, etc., and bring it down to the next meeting, or mail it to Barney at the address given below.

The new POLONUS administration which consists of members elected and serving for the first time, has adapted itself very well. They're turning out to be fine officers.

Edward Nowak of Winthrop, Mass. served as a judge in the Jordan Marsh—Boston Herald Stamp Contest held recently. Mr. Nowak's collection donated to Regis College at Weston, Mass. together with the Cardinal Spellman stamp collection have attracted philatelist from far and near to the stamp museum at Regis.

The Smithsonian Institute Division of Philately received a 3 volume collection of Poland from Ernst Lowenstein of N. Y.

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## A GREAT RARITY . . .

by Walter Szymlek

Two members of the Wrocław Conservatorium, Engineers Malachowicz and Malinowski—workers for the preservation of historical monuments, discovered in the very center of the town of Zgorzelec, Nisa region (of the regained territories) a roadmark dated 1725.

This stone post served as an orientation mark for the royal Polish-Saxon mail couriers (Pocztylion pocztowy) erected during the reign of King August II, the Strong.

The post bears the following engravings: The Polish Eagle, the insignia of "Pogoń" (Pursuit), the initials "A. R." (Augustus Rex) the Post Horn and the distances to various places, and the year 1725.

Hm . . . For a stampless collection, perhaps? Better yet—draft those engineers into Polonus.

## VII POLANDS UNIVERSAL STAMP EXHIBITION AT WARSAW — 1957

The chairman of the VII Universal Stamp Exhibition, Warsaw, 1957, informs us that the exhibit is scheduled for May. He extends an invitation to POLONUS members to take part in the show.

Starting with the April issue "FILATELISTA" will print all information pertaining to the exhibition and the progress in preparation for this event.

He also expresses the hope that POLPEX 1957 will have representation of collections from Poland.

The April FILATELISTA also has a feature story on the POLONUS Society and the May issue will have one on POLPEX 1956.

— Walter Szymlek

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