

BULLETIN of the

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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FROM THE PRESIDENT — TO ALL POLONUS MEMBERS:

It is difficult to write a new appeal to Polonus members, so soon after an appeal was made by the past president. But the problems are still here, and some more. I must however let you know that the response from out of town members was rather disappointing.

In the past few years the Society became rather slow, dwindling contacts with members, slowed down in most activities. Yet we must be in contact and we must share with each other.

In the 1960's I served as President, later as secretary and director. We had a lot of "Old timers", experienced in philately, who were always willing to share their experience and knowledge with a lot of the newcomers to the Society. Over the years, the Society was strong, dynamic and very active.

In this high spirit, having still the "Good Old Days" in my memories, I was elected President of the Society. I realize, times have changed — we all became a bit older, a lot of our members left our ranks. But we got a lot of new members who should get into the mainstream of the Society. And with all of those, we, the now "Old timers" would like to SHARE our experiences. You might ask, how?

It's through: The Bulletin,
Participating in all our activities,
Handbooks or study groups,
Your suggestions and ideas,
Exchange of your thoughts,
Increase of membership
Helping and/or participating in the Polpex Shows.

And all of this means — SHARE — with all other members.

Some years ago I read a little poem by one of our members and here is part of it: "Ease not on your present efforts,
Cherish all the friendships gained,
Keep Polonus at its zenith,
In the stardom it attained."

Particularly now in this most crucial time as we approach the biggest event in the history of the Society. The 50th Anniversary — with highlights of Polpex 89 Exhibition, which will be the largest ever. The Exhibition will display the finest material of Poland from all over the world.

And this is where a lot of you can participate and help. Be a living part of the Society, be a proud member and above all — together we can: "Keep the Society at its zenith".

As your newly elected president, I appeal to all of you for help, in every possible way. To SHARE your thoughts, ideas, suggestions in order to pave the way for the Polonus Philatelic Society once again to be a strong, active and dynamic Society.

I know that I do not have all the answers — but with your help, together, we will be able to find them.

We also know that some of you have written to the Society in the past, with suggestions and/or questions but unfortunately did not receive any answers. For this we can only apologize.

I, in the future might not have the right answers but an answer and/or acknowledgement you will get.

May God bless you all,

—Roman Strzelecki

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So far the above members responded to our appeal for financial sponsorship of the Golden Jubilee Polpex 89. We hope that this is only the beginning of our members' support to assure success of our most important undertaking — the 50th ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION POLPEX 89!

Do your share and send \$100.00 or more (make check payable to: POLONUS - POLPEX 89) to the new address after July 29th:
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WARSAW POSTMARKS

in the 18th, 19th and in the beginning of the 20th Century

By JERZY DOBRZENIECKI

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The author of the following article was an outstanding philatelist with a particular passion for postal history. His collection of Warsaw Postmarks earned him wide recognition, several gold medals and the Kozakiewicz Research Award at POLPEX 76. He was also a prolific philatelic writer.

Polonus intended to reprint his 1980 article on Warsaw Postmarks soon after it appeared in "Filatelista". In 1981, Mr. Frank Wolosewick prepared the first draft of the translation, but the work on it was delayed until 1988 when I was asked to prepare it for publication.

In order to preserve the contents as well as the original language of the article, all my comments and clarifications are shown in brackets. Their intent is to inform the reader of later finds, some conflicting opinions and to make understanding of the Polish terminology a little easier.

Jerzy Dobrzeniecki died in 1987. Perhaps the best epitaph for him would be the fragment of the poem he has written six years ago:

Co teraz będzie? czy ciemności nocy
po której już się nigdy nie obudzę?
Czy tylko sen, co przymknie moje oczy
bym spoczął po znojach i trudzie?
Nie nie wiem i wiedzy o tym ja nie szukam.
Będzie, jak zawsze na tym bożym świecie,
na którym życie, jak na scenie sztuka
z komedii w dramat czasem się przeplecie!

/—J. Dobrzeniecki/

12/IV. 1982 r.

RYSZARD Z. PODDUBIUK

The first post office in Warsaw came into being in 1647, as a result of the postal ordinance promulgated by King Władysław IV, establishing a Central Post Office in Warsaw. The King nominated Maria Carlo de Montelupi the Director General of Posts, who in turn established the post office on his property at 10/186 Krzywe Koło Street, with adjacent postal stables and carriage houses, and the Directorate of Crown Posts in his own house at 42 Old City Market.

At that time mail did not have any postal markings, except for the private seals of the senders. The first postal seal was introduced only in 1762, during the reign of King August III, (elector of Saxony). It was used to secure the mail.

During the reign of the Saxon kings, as the basis for the modernization of posts were formed and the General Prefecture of Post in the Kingdom of Poland was established, an oval wax seal was introduced for the purpose of accreditation of documents. This seal had, inside the border of the intertwined laurel leaves, in the center, at the top, a royal crown, and under it a round shield subdivided into five fields. On four of the fields, alternating, Polish Eagle and Lithuanian "Vytis". On the central, fifth field divided vertically into two halves, coats-of-arms of Saxony and Wettins. Around this, but on the inside of the border, an inscription: GENERALIS PRAEFECTURA POSTARUM REGNI POLONIAE.

Another wax seal known to have been used on postal documents in 1765, is an oval 31 x 34 mm. seal of the General Directorate of Posts in Warsaw (Fig. 1).

In the same year, as a consequence of instructions which were annexed to the proclamation on the subject of organization of the Post, issued in 1764 by King Stanisław August Poniatowski, we come across other wax seals that were applied to letters in Warsaw. They are circular, having letters P.G.R.P. in the upper arc, which can be an abbreviation for: POSTA REGALIS REGNI POLONIAE (—Royal Post of the Kingdom of Poland. It should be noted that prof. S. Mikstein, who carried out extensive studies of 18th Century Polish Postmarks and "POLSKIE ZNAKI POCZTOWE", a five volume monograph on the subject of Polish postmarks, both tentatively suggest that this abbreviation could be interpreted as POSTA GENERALIS REGIS POLONIAE — General Post of the Kingdom of Poland). In the center of the seal, there is a royal crown, and under it a horizontal inscription in capital letters: VARSAVIA, below which a postal horn with mouthpiece turned to the right.

The first known, die impressed, inked postmark of Warsaw dates back to 1778. It has a royal crown and under it a capital "W", within the 17 mm. diameter circular border. During the period from 1783 to 1787, we come across the same kind of postmark, only larger, 19 mm. in diameter. Between 1787 and 1793, the postmark used changed in appearance. It was now without circular border (Mr. Dobrzeniecki was informed by myself of the earlier, 1779 usage of the 19 mm. diameter postmark, and later, 1795 usage of the postmark without circular border and reported it on page 17/401 of "Filatelista" for 1982). These postmarks provided proof that the letters were sent out by post in Warsaw and at the same time con-

firmed pre-payment of postage (this is only partially correct as the pre-payment was usually noted in manuscript in addition to postmark described above, on the front of the envelope or folded letter). As such, these postmarks were the prototypes of today's stamps (Figure 2 to 4).

During the same period, on the letters sent by the Royal Chancellery through the Court Post Office, there appears a circular postmark, 31 mm in diameter, with a crowned eagle and under it a postal horn with mouthpiece turned right. (Fig. 5). It seems that it was not a postmark of origin but a postmark used to indicate an exemption from postage. It had therefore the characteristics of the present "On Government Service" stamps.

Military correspondence from Warsaw was also exempted from postage when stamped MILI/TARIA. Different army units, stationed throughout the country used a variety of Militaria postmarks (Fig. 6).

Postmarks were not used during the Kosciuszko Insurrection in 1794. However, all letters that were censored, were marked with a special wax seal, 20 mm. in diameter, having the Warsaw Mermaid (Warsaw coat-of-arms) facing left, and under it, two line inscription BESPIECZEN/STWO—Security. (This may not be entirely true. A well known collector, Mr. Zbigniew Mikulski, has a 1794 letter with Warsaw crowned "W" postmark, type 3, and BESPIECZEN/STWO censorship seal on the back. There may be others).

After the loss of independence and the last partition in 1795, postmarks were not used in the territories of Poland under the three occupations, except for manuscript annotations on the envelopes. In Warsaw, which was in Prussian hands from 1796 to November, 1805, letters from this period do not have any postmarks.

In December, 1806, the French army entered Warsaw. To meet the needs of the army (military) postal services were established. The mail was stamped exclusively with French military postmarks. Independent of this (military) post, Polish "civilian" post was organized and the first mail boxes appeared on Długa, Senatorska and Nowy Świat streets. The mail was not stamped but the government letters were sealed with wax seals.

Three different such seals are known. First has a shield with two fielded coat-of-arms of the Duchy (of Warsaw) on the background of the coronation robe which is topped with a royal crown. At the bottom, there is a postal horn with a mouthpiece on the right and all around a circular inscription: KRÓLEWSKO XIAŻĘCA DYREKCJA GEN: POCZT (—Royal/Ducal Directorate of General Posts) (Figure 7). The second seal has the same coat of arms, but the inscription around the coat of arms is KRÓLEWSKO XIAŻĘCEY MCI DYREKCJA GLNA POCZT I (—Main Post Office I, The Directorate of Posts of His Royal & Ducal Highness), where-



Fig. 7

as the third (seal) has the White Eagle on a shield, also topped with a royal crown, and around the same, from left (to right) an inscription: RADA NAJWYŻSZA RZĄDZĄCA X. WAR. (—The Supreme Council Governing the Duchy of Warsaw), and under the coat of arms: DYREKCJA GLNA POCZT (—Main Directorate of Posts), and postal horn with the mouthpiece turned to the left.

Another wax seal, known to have been used during the Duchy of Warsaw period, had, in its upper part, under the circular border, an inscription: POCZTAMT NADWORY (—Court Post Office), under it, a royal crown on the two (crossed) laurel leaf branches, extending to the sides, and under these an inscription: WARSZAWIE (—in Warsaw). Below the last inscription, a postal horn with the mouthpiece turned to the right.

All correspondence coming from abroad, was marked in Warsaw, which at that time was designated as a border post office, with handstruck postage stamps which indicated the amount of postage that had to be collected from the addressee. It consisted of three rectangles, one over the other, and subdivided with vertical lines. In the uppermost, shorter (rectangle), the name of the (expediting) post office was indicated. In the middle (rectangle), there were the letters P.Z.G.Sr., which were an abbreviation for: PORTO ZAGRANICZNE, GROSZY SREBREM (—Foreign Postage in Silver Groszy). In the bottom (rectangle) —P.K:Zł:Gr., an abbreviation for PORTO KRAJOWE, ZŁOTYCH, GROSZY (—Inland Postage in Złoty and Groszy). (Figure 8).

The Duchy of Warsaw existed formally up to 1815, although already in 1813 the Russian armies occupied Warsaw. However, only in May of 1815, on the strength of the treaty concluded at the Congress of Vienna, between Russia, Prussia and Austria, the Kingdom of Poland was (re-) established, in part of the (former) territories of the Duchy of Warsaw, under the sovereignty of the Russian Tsar, as the King of Poland.

Warsaw, the capital of the Kingdom, (commonly) called the Congress (Kingdom), became the seat of the Kingdom's postal authorities. On July 8th, 1817, the Administrative Council of the Kingdom of Poland confirmed new postal regulations and issued instructions to postal officials. From that time (onward) all correspondence both incoming and outgoing had to be marked with a postmark indicating the name of the location of the expediting, as well as of the receiving post office.

In 1817, the Polish Post came under the authority of the General Directorate of Posts of the Kingdom of Poland and enjoyed complete autonomy. After the failure of the November Uprising, the Tsar began to circumscribe freedoms of the Kingdom (of Poland) more and more. As a result of this, in 1843, the Post lost some of its independence and the name of its principal authorities was cut down to the Directorate of Posts of the Kingdom of Poland. The seal of the Directorate comprised of the coat of arms given to the Kingdom, in the form of a two-headed tsarist eagle with a White Eagle on a shield, on its breast, and bilingual inscription, in Russian: POCZTOWOJE UPRAWLENIE and CARSTWA POLSKAWO

and in Polish: DYREKCJA POCZT (—Postal Directorate), and below: KRÓLESTWA POLSKIEGO (—of the Kingdom of Poland).

In 1851, a decree of the Russian authorities abolished the Directorate of Posts, incorporating it into the Department of Posts in St. Petersburg as the 13th Postal District. A unilingual, Russian stamp with the inscription UPRAWLENIA (—the Directorate) at the top, and below, XIII POCZTOWAGO OKRUGA (—the 13th Postal District) as well as the coat of arms of the Kingdom was introduced at that time.

As a consequence of the persistent efforts by the Governor General and the Administrative Council of the Kingdom, in 1855, Administration of the Kingdom of Poland Postal District came into being, which in 1858 came under the exclusive authority of the Council of State and the Governor General. (It may be interesting as well as puzzling to note that the Governor General of the Kingdom of Poland between 1832 and 1856 was Ivan Fedorovitch Paskiewicz, Russian Fieldmarshal, suppressor of the November Uprising, close confidant of the Tsar Nicholas I and bitter enemy of democratization or liberalization in any shape or form).

This time in charge of the Administration of the District was the Head of District's Posts, who simultaneously was the Director of Warsaw Posts. A new stamp appeared, slightly different in shape, featuring the coat of arms of the Kingdom and a bilingual inscription CARSTWO POLSKOJE and below: KRÓLESTWO POLSKIE (—the Kingdom of Poland), in the upper part, and in the lower part: UPRAWLENIE POCZTOWAGO OKRUGA, and below: ZARZĄD OKRĘGU POCZTOWEGO (—Administration of the Postal District).

This situation continued until 1866. In December of that year, Administration of the Postal District was subordinated again to the Russian Department of Posts in St. Petersburg, as the Western Postal District, losing its autonomy (in the process). In 1871, the Western Postal District was abolished, the autonomy of the Polish Posts came to an end. (From that time onward) postmarks and postal seals were solely in Russian, and the White Eagle was transferred from the breast of the two-headed eagle onto its wing, as one of the coats of arms of the subjugated nations.

During the first years of the existence of the ("Congress") Kingdom of Poland, the Post in Warsaw used a stamp which can be found on cash receipts. It was a circular stamp with a crowned White Eagle in the middle or under it a postal horn with the mouthpiece turned right and an inscription: KRÓLESTWO POLSKIE (—Kingdom of Poland) in the upper part and KASSA G-LNA POCZT (—Central Accounting of Posts), in the lower part.

Since the constant growth and development of posts required improvements, and one of the improvements was the indication of the place of origin of the mail, the General Directorate of Royal Posts issued postal regulation in 1817 by virtue of which die impressed, inked postmarks of origin were introduced and applied to every outgoing piece of mail. The first of such postmarks was a single line postmark WARSZAWA to which

a date was added in manuscript. It was probably used prior to the introduction of the regulation of 1817. After the introduction of the new regulations, letters leaving Warsaw were stamped with two-line postmarks. In the first line was the name of the office (of origin), WARSZAWA and under it, day and month (of dispatch written) in Latin. The month was given in the second case and abbreviated e.g. FEBii. These postmarks were as a rule stamped in red (ink) and varied in size and the shape of letters, length of the name WARSZAWA and in spacing between the name of the office (of origin) and the name of the month (Fig. 9-a, 9-b and 10). They were used mainly up to the end of the (eighteen) thirties, but one can find some that were used later than that.

Single ring circular postmarks containing the name of the office of (origin) WARSZAWA, around the perimeter and the day and month of dispatch, in Arabic numbers, in the middle of the postmark, appeared in the late (eighteen) twenties. They were stamped in red. In the beginning, they were 18 to 20 mm. in diameter. Many varieties exist differing in the distribution of letters, their size and shape, as well as the disposition of the numbers separated by the horizontal line or without it. An ornamental, 24 mm. in diameter postmark appeared in 1844. It had, in its lower part, two crossed laurel leaf branches. In the (eighteen) forties, the postmarks used are from 22 to 25 mm. in diameter. Among these there are also many differences in size, shape of the letters and the disposition of the numbers. In the (eighteen) fifties, along with these postmarks, postmarks of a smaller — 18 to 20 mm. diameter, again were being used. (Fig. 11–17).

Money letters, beside wax seals applied by the post office, carried a red, octagonal postmark 22.5 x 20 mm. (in size), in the middle of which was the semi-circular inscription WARSZAWA and below it, the date, day & month in Arabic numbers, separated by a horizontal line. (Fig. 18).

After 1860, bilingual, circular postmarks, 24 mm. in diameter, were introduced in Warsaw, with the Russian version of the name Warsaw at the top, separated from the Polish name below, by stars or dots (Fig. 19). In the center, as usual, day and month in Arabic numbers. All these postmarks were also impressed in red (ink).

In 1866, 24 mm. diameter, unilingual, Russian only, Warsaw postmarks were introduced, imprinted in black ink (or) very rarely in red. They were a single ring (postmark) as all those previously used in Warsaw (Fig. 20). In 1869, a double ring, 26 mm. in diameter postmark was used, with the Russian version of (the name)Warsaw at the top, and the hour (of dispatch) and an indication of the time of day, at the bottom. In the middle — date: day, month and year. (Fig. 21).

In addition to the postmarks of origin, postal instructions of 1817 introduced special frameless postmarks "Porto Zagraniczne" (—Foreign postage) used in border post offices, for the purpose of determining the amount of postage to be collected from the recipient of the mail. They were struck in red ink on the back of the envelope and the post office was obliged to indicate the amount of postage in green ink. This procedure

was often not used. "Porto Zagraniczne" postmarks were also used in Warsaw, since it was designated as a border post office. (Fig. 22).

Government mail, in accordance with instructions was marked with suitable postmarks, framed or unframed, usually in black but in exceptional cases in red ink, inscribed: INTERES RZĄDOWY (—On Government Service), SŁUŻBA POCZTOWA (—On Postal Service) and so on. At times when stamp die was not available, manuscript, abbreviated inscriptions were used, such as: "I.R." — "Interes Rządowy", "od P.G.K.P." — "od Prokuratorii Generalnej Królestwa Polskiego" (—from the Prosecutor General of the Kingdom of Poland) etc., etc. (Fig. 23–25).

Around 1842, special kidney shaped postmarks with the inscription FRANCO came into use (Fig. 26-a). These postmarks were used to indicate that the postage was pre-paid by the sender. On the other hand when the postage had to be paid by the recipient of the letter, such letters were usually marked with a manuscript annotation "Porto" written in ink or "Porto od..." (—Porto from...). In the (eighteen) thirties, in Warsaw, a postmark with an inscription PORTO written in italics, in a rectangular frame with slightly rounded corners, 26 x 11 mm. overall, was used. (Fig. 26-b).

(To be continued)



Fig. 1

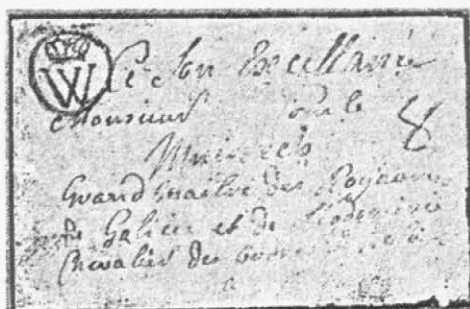


Fig. 3

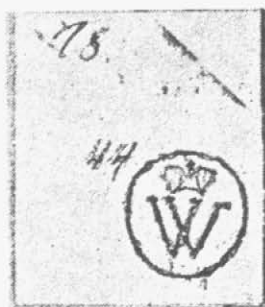


Fig. 2

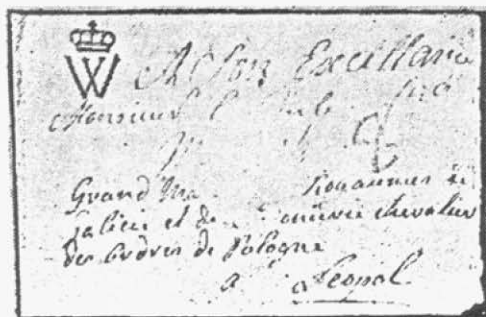


Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

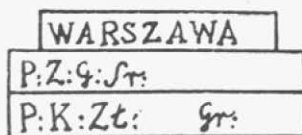


Fig. 8

WARSZAWA
25 JANUARI

Fig. 9-a

WARSZAWA
21 FEB RII

Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig. 16



Fig. 17



Fig. 18



Fig. 19



Fig. 20



Fig. 21

*Porto Lagr.
Gr.*

Fig. 22

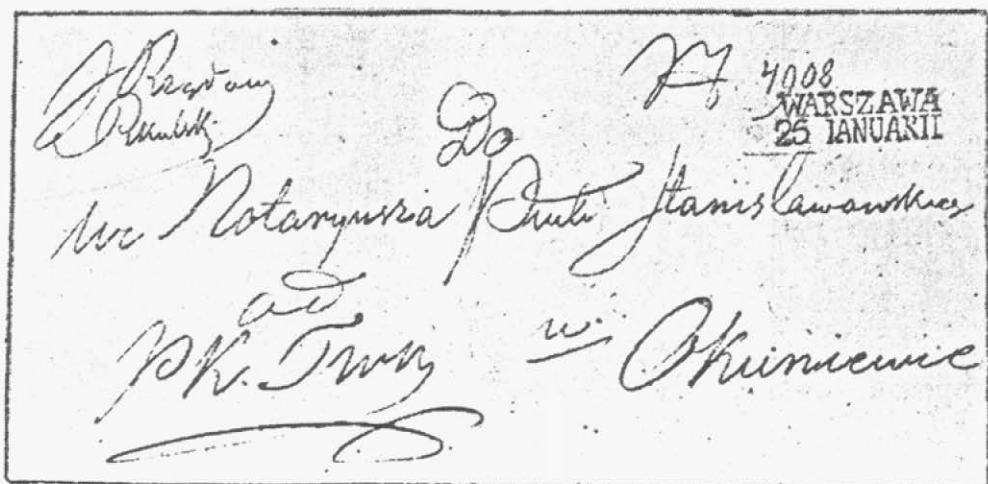


Fig. 9-b

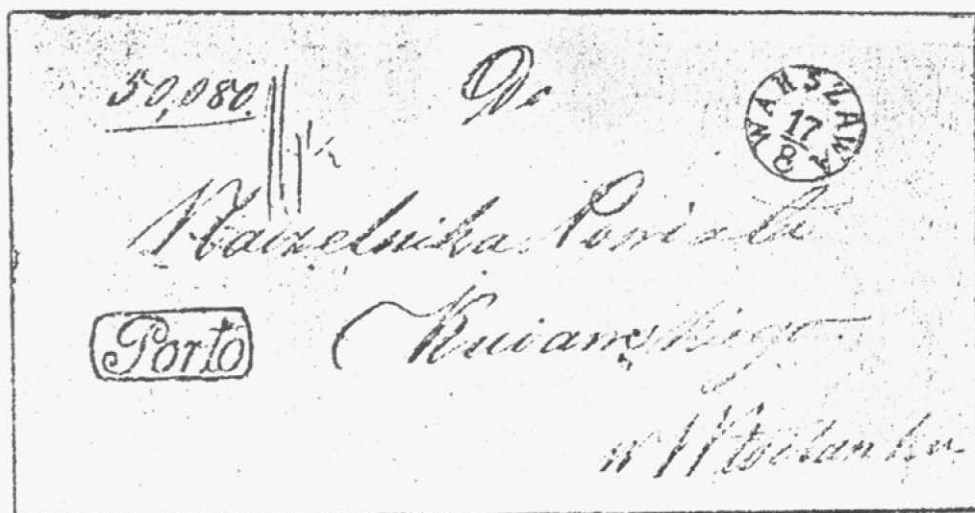


Fig. 26-b



The Engraving Art of Czeslaw Slania

by Stanley Kronenberg

Philately makes it possible for every lover of fine arts to own original prints of engravings, in the form of postage stamps made by great graphic artists. One of the greatest in the art of stamp engraving is the Swedish artist Czeslaw Slania. He is one of only two persons ever to have been distinguished by the title "Engraver of the Court" (*Hovgravör*), which was given to him by King Gustav VI. (The other engraver who received such an honor was Ferdinand Schimbock, in the Austrian Empire 1914.)

Slania is a most prolific artist. Between March 1951 and the end of 1983 he designed, engraved, or designed and engraved a total of 765 issued postage stamps.

Among them are: fifty-six stamps of Poland, where he started his career; 345 stamps of Sweden; 196 stamps of Denmark; seventy-two stamps of Greenland; thirty-eight stamps of Faroe Islands; forty-five stamps of Monaco; seven stamps of San Marino; two stamps each of France and Iceland; and one stamp each of the United States and Ireland. (A complete listing of these stamps by *Scott Catalogue* number has been compiled by Mrs. Dulcie



Figure 2.

Apgar, Box 1513, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360, and can be obtained for \$1 and a self-addressed legal-size envelope with thirty-seven-cent franking.)

Examples are illustrated here which depict some of these engravings and try to show that this form of graphic art goes far beyond the skillful transfer of designs on steel plates, and requires much artistic creativity and originality.

Figure 1 shows the 1.15-krona value of the Swedish mushroom set (Scott Nos. 1259-1264). Note the very delicate lines and dots that make up the design. Colors of this stamp match the engraving style by being delicate and subdued. In sharp contrast is the dark blue 1981 Faroe Islands stamp (Scott No. 62) in Figure 2, which reproduces a sketch of Old Torshavn by Ingjalazur Reyni. Its lines are strong, irregular, and bold, giving the impression of a rough charcoal drawing. The strong shad-



Figure 1.

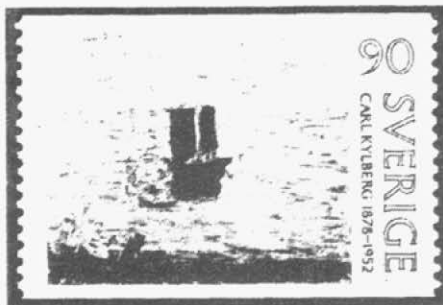


Figure 3.



Figure 4.

ows mixed with blank surfaces result in a clear and effective presentation.

Figure 3 is Slania's reproduction of *The Sailing Boat* by Carl Kylberg (Sweden Scott No. 1254). The lines of this engraving are of variable thickness, irregular, and often change direction, imitating masterfully the strokes of the brush in the original oil painting.

The Swedish Fairy Tale stamp (Scott No. 1393) in Figure 4 shows a troll couple and the tiny princess. It was both designed and engraved by Slania. Here, the balanced composition, the choice of dots and randomly positioned lines, generate a remarkably pleasant and at the same time humorous impression.



Figure 5.

Slania loves his art and work, and even in his free time he often engraves. Privately, he thus created labels which by their size, shape, and design resemble postage stamps and can be used as letter seals. Among them are portraits of movie stars: Brigitte Bardot, Sophia Loren, Marilyn Monroe, and Doris Day. Another set depicts champions of boxing, and a third



Figure 6.

set, political figures: Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, Mao Tse-tung, and John F. Kennedy. For the Polish Philatelic Society in Great Britain Slania designed and engraved a label that commemorates the 1,000th anniversary of Poland (1966), as well as portraits of Poland's statesmen and leaders.

To celebrate his sixtieth birthday, in 1981, Slania made labels with his self-portrait, shown in Figure 5. This engraving achieves the utmost in an engraved portrait; its balance of lights and shadows and the utilization of different kinds of lines create a very plastic, almost three-dimensional image.

Slania submitted his diploma engraving in 1953 to the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, Poland (Figure 6). It represents an unissued postage stamp of Poland which depicts the Battle of Grunwald in 1410 between the Poles and the Teutonic Knights. The original is a very large oil painting by the famous naturalist painter Jan Matejko (1838-1893).

This engraving is unbelievably complex and one can study it under magnification for a long time discovering new persons and details. Copies made with the original plate were occasionally used by philatelists to frank letters, which then passed unnoticed through the mails. Figure 7 shows an example of this engraving used together with normal Polish stamps (Scott No. 657-659) on a registered air mail letter from Niepolomice, Poland, to the U.S. It was postmarked on 9 November 1955. On the reverse it has the purple registration arrival postmark of Granite City, Illinois, dated 19 November 1955.

One must point out that high-quality stamps made by means of engraved steel plates lose much of their effectiveness in reproductions such as these. To be fully appreciated and enjoyed as works of art, original stamps must be seen.

Reprinted from
American Philatelist

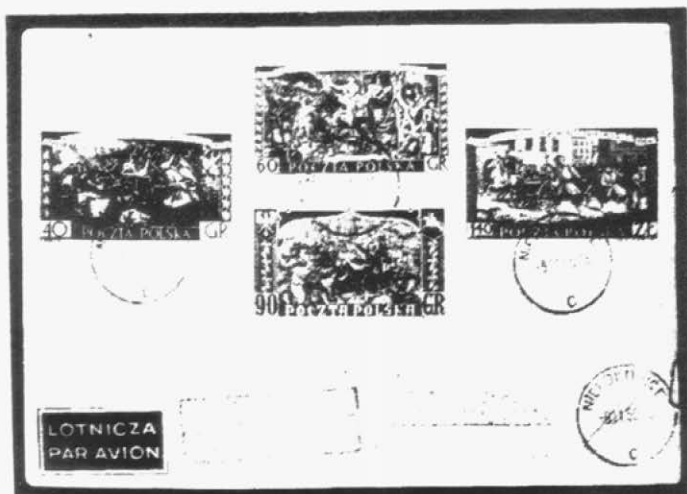


Figure 7.

Polish labels in Italy

Collectors' Forum received a heavy flurry of mail in the wake of Ben Schaps' question in the Nov. 2 column regarding Polish-language stamps inscribed "ITALII."

According to George Cosentini of Houston, Texas, 150,000 sets of nine basic stamps, from 15 centesimi to 10 lire, translated as "centow" and "lirow" in Polish, were printed by Istituto Poligrafico della Stato Officina in Rome, Italy, in 1946.

One collector, whose signature we were regrettably unable to decipher, thoughtfully supplied pages from 1946, 1947 and 1955 issues of the *Bulletin of the Polonus Philatelic Society* that collectively tell the tale of these adhesives.

To simplify a complex story, these items are private charity labels produced to aid Polish civilian refugees and displaced persons in postwar Italy.

Their production was underwritten by the National Catholic Welfare Council of the United States, chaired by Cardinal Stritch of Chi-



These unusual items, inscribed in Polish and seemingly intended for use in Italy, are not true postage stamps.

cago. Funds from the sale of these issues were to be used to assist the refugees.

Later overprints of these labels also exist, which read "Honor the Four Freedoms" in English, French or Polish, with the facsimile signature of Franklin D. Roosevelt. These private overprints were produced to honor the late president, and presumably to enhance the prospects of selling the unsold balance of these labels.

These adhesives are known tied by what appear to be Polish-language postmarks of the Barletta-Trani refugee camp in Italy to cacheted covers, including one shown to us by Walt Colton of Chicago, Ill. However, no evidence was furnished that these covers ever traveled through the mails.

As the Second Polish Corps in Italy had previously issued a set of stamps inscribed "POCZTA POLOWA/2 KORPUSU" in 1946 that saw limited but apparently genuine postal use, the story initially circulated that these later labels were in some way related. That is not the case.

Their status seems to depend a great deal on the point of view of the collector. Some of what is written about them is extremely scathing, while other specialists take the view that they are significant souvenirs of a chapter in the history of the Polish people.

Whatever one chooses to make of them, both the *Ruch Ilustrowany Katalog Znaczkow Polskich* specialized Polish catalog and the *Sassone* specialized Italian catalog have listed these issues. The *Sassone* catalog shows a price of \$2.80 for the set of nine.

Reprinted from Linn's Weekly.

Warsaw Uprising

I would like to tell you a personal story about CAPEX.

I was a member of the Polish Underground army fighting in the Warsaw Uprising against the Germans in August 1944.

While in Warsaw, I was able to drop three letters addressed to myself in a mailbox operated by the Boy Scout post within the city.

In order to do so, I had to walk through ruins, mostly in underground passages between buildings to avoid enemy fire.

It was a risky walk to the mailbox for a philatelic souvenir.

Anyway, all three letters were sent back to me with Scout mail cancellations and censor markings.

After Warsaw surrendered Oct. 3, I was taken to a prisoner-of-war camp in Lamsdorf, Germany (now part of Poland).

I took the covers with me to the POW camp, but during a body search at the camp by German soldiers, the letters were confiscated.

A few weeks later I was transferred to a different POW camp in Germany and the Russian army took over the Lamsdorf camp.

What a surprise it was to me 43 years later to see one of the three letters addressed to myself at CAPEX in a Scout mail exhibit by someone in West Germany.

Since the exhibitor, a Mr. Zimmerman of Korntal, West Germany, is the author of a book on Scout mail, I took his address from the book and wrote him about the cover.

I asked him if he was willing to sell the cover to me.

I did send him a stamped, addressed envelope, but did not get a reply.

Too bad I cannot learn about the history of my cover during the 43-year period.

I did enquire at the American Philatelic Society's desk if I might claim ownership of the cover. In the APS' opinion, it is too late.

Winston Gruscyk
Downsview, Ontario, Canada



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