

BULLETIN OF THE **POLONUS** PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Meets Every 4th Friday at Polish American Congress, 5844 Milwaukee Av., Chgo.

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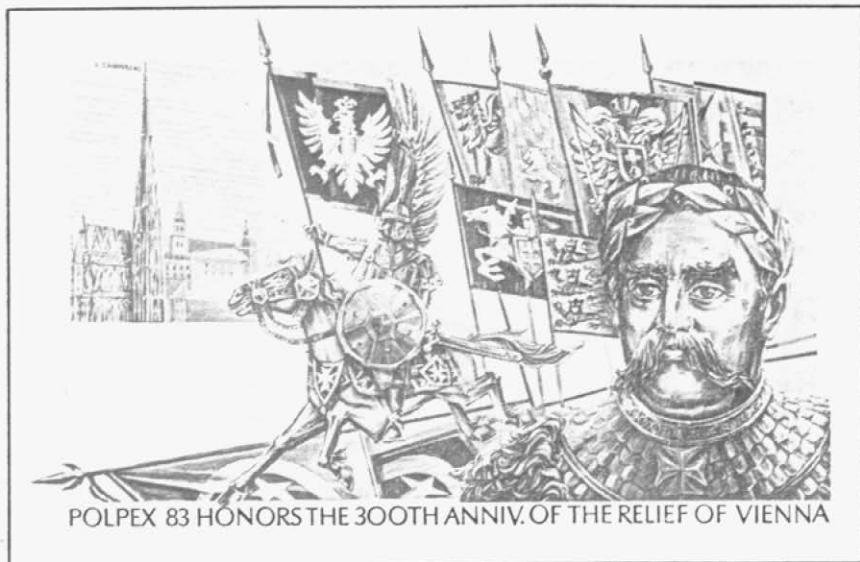
March-April, 1983

WELCOME TO POLPEX 83/MILITARIA!

In just a few weeks POLPEX 83/MILITARIA, the 44th Annual Polonus Philatelic Society Stamp and Coin Exhibition will be held at the Palmer House, Monroe and State Streets in Downtown Chicago. Hours: Friday, March 18th 10 AM to 8 PM; Saturday, March 19th 10 AM to 6 PM; Sunday, March 20th 10 AM to 4 PM.

The most prominent exhibit will be *BRITISH CAMPAIGN MAIL 1704-1900*, which will be presented by the National British Museum with

permission of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. This superb exhibit, usually reserved for international exhibitions only, will show major achievements of the British Forces in two centuries. We have been swamped with entries and have been forced to increase the exhibition by 25% to a total of 250 frames. About 50% of the exhibits will show Polish Military Mail thru three centuries and related material. The Polish American Numisma-



Multicolor Souvenir Sheet designed by Leon Kawecki to be available

tic Association will feature an exhibit of King John III Sobieski medals.

Our beautifully minted Sobieski medals just arrived. They will be given as awards and will also be presented in gilded gold to financial sponsors who contribute \$50.00 or more towards the expenses of the exhibition.

As with every Polpex exhibition, colorful and artistic souvenirs designed by members L. Kawecki and A. Szebel, will be available during the show and by mail from John Bartczak, 10428 So. Avenue "O", Chicago, Illinois 60617.

- 2 Souvenir sheets with show theme and for the 20th Anniversary of PANA\$1.00
- 3 Covers for different days of show (in 4 colors) with special postmark\$2.00
- 1 Souvenir card with Poland and Austria Sobieski stamps
Mint\$1.50
Used\$2.00
- 1 U.N. First Day cover
"Safely at Sea"\$1.50
(Add \$1.00 for postage per set.)

An exhibition catalog with interesting articles will be at the exhibition for \$1.50. A bourse of 50 dealers is expected. Among them will be our member J. Bieniecki of Granite City, IL with an excellent selection of Polish material.

The official Opening Ceremony will take place Friday at 11:00 AM followed by the United Nations First Day Ceremony of the "Safely at Sea" stamps at 12:00 noon.

Our Beeba-Banquet and Presentation of Awards will take place on Saturday, March 19th in the Monroe Ballroom of the Palmer House. A delicious dinner and program are planned. Aloysius A. Mazewski, President of the Polish American Congress and Polish National Alliance, will be the main speaker; Dr. Ed-

ward C. Rozanski, Chairman of the P.A.C. National Committee of the King John III Sobieski 300th Anniversary, will be guest speaker; Prof. Wenceslas Wagner of the University of Detroit, will be M.C.; Bernard Hennig will make the award presentations. Tickets at \$20. per person are available from Roman Strzelecki 1620 N. Latrobe, Chicago, Illinois 60639, Phone after 6:00 PM (312) 237-7366. We would like to see as many members as possible, renew old acquaintances in a traditional, cordial Polonus Beeba atmosphere.

Two groups, the War Cover Club and P.O.W. Study Group, will hold their spring meetings at POLPEX 83 /MILITARIA along with a dozen other societies, on Saturday and Sunday. Check the program on the exhibition floor for time and rooms.

We will need help to set-up the exhibits Thursday, March 17th from 6:00 PM in the lower exhibition hall of the Palmer House. Help will also be needed to man the Polonus tables and hospitality room on all three days. Donations of liquor for our hospitality room are also welcome. If you have not yet responded to our call for help, phone Alfred Szebel at 299-2580 after 7:00 PM.

POLPEX 83/MILITARIA will be the biggest Polonus spectacular ever — you can't afford to miss this one!!

—A. Szebel, Chairman

WINNER'S CIRCLE

CASEY SADOWSKI, Gold Medal and Grand Award, at EUPEX in Cleveland, Ohio for "Polish P.O.W. Mail."

NEW MEMBERS

Edmund J. Marciniak
3215 8th Avenue S.
Great Falls, MT 59405
Gerald E. Rusk
1262 S. E. Skyline Drive
Santa Ana, CA 92705

BE A POLPEX SPONSOR . . .

A limited minting of gilded medals is being made available to financial sponsors of POLPEX 83 who contribute \$50.00 or more to cover the expenses of our most ambitious undertaking. For those who can't afford the sponsorship fee of \$50.00, you can be a Patron for \$5.00 a name. A \$3.00 or more donation, will entitle you to be a Well Wisher and have your name printed in the

official program and catalog of POLPEX 83/MILITARIA. Make checks payable to *Polonus* and send them to Mr. Stanley Rusin, Treasurer, P.O. Box 56148, Chicago, IL 60656.

The list of financial sponsors is growing. Don't be left out. So far the following members and friends of *Polonus* became sponsors of our large exhibition in Downtown Chicago at the Palmer House.

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Visiting Chicago For POLPEX 83?

POLPEX 83 will be a wonderful opportunity for out-of-town members and friends of *Polonus* to come to Chicago and meet with fellow members from our continent and abroad. Please notify us if you are planning to come so we may know what to expect.

Space arrangements have been made for those persons desiring overnight accommodations at the Palmer House Hotel, State & Madison St., downtown Chicago, during

POLPEX 83 Stamp and Coin Exhibition, on March 18-20, 1983.

The rates for accommodations at the Palmer House are:

Singles:	\$65	\$ 85	\$ 95
Doubles:	\$85	\$105	\$115
Twins:	\$85	\$105	\$115

Reservations for the above may be made directly with Palmer House State & Madison St., Chicago, IL 60690, Reservations Dept., phone: 312/726-7500.

—Alfred Szebel

Underground Stamps From Poland

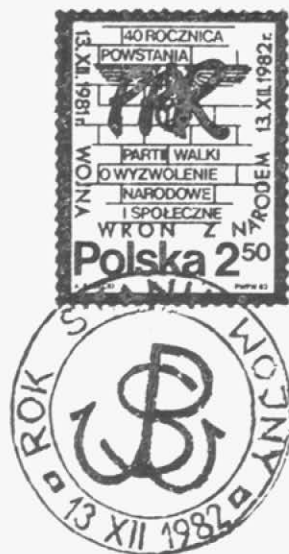
By STANLEY KRONENBERG

Polonus Philatelic Society received an anonymous letter from Poland, mailed by registered Air Mail on December 23, 1982. A part of this letter translated from Polish reads:

"Dear Sirs:

I am sincerely informing you that an underground stamp was issued in Poland to "commemorate" the anniversary of the Military Rule. I was authorized by the issuers of this stamp to notify you about this. I am enclosing:

1. Four of the above stamps whose total number issued is 6,200.
2. A First Day Cover of which 300 were issued.
3. An imprint on white paper of the printing plate (consisting of 5 x 5 overprints) for use by your expertization committee . . ."



The Figures show the "F.D.C." with the stamp on it and the overprint imprinted on the Polish stamp issued on January 5, 1982 (red, pink and black) which commemo-



Overprint on stamp

rates the 40th Anniversary of the foundation of the Polish Workers' Party. The carefully made overprint shows the dates: '13.XII.1981' and '13.XII.1982'. In the center is shown the Nazi Eagle (such as, for example was used to overprint Polish stamps in 1940) whose swastika is replaced by the Soviet five-arm-star. This symbolizes the similarities of the German occupation and the current Soviet domination of Poland. The translated inscription is: "The War between W.R.O.N. (Military Council of National Salvation) and the Nation"; W.R.O.N.: *Woj-skowa Rada Ocalenia Narodowego*.

The above information is presented here for the benefit of philatelists. These overprinted stamps should be considered an interesting souvenir of the difficult present times in Poland and document the Polish resistance to the imposed military rule. However, one must emphasize that they cannot be considered as being postage stamps. They were made for propaganda and fund-raising purposes rather than to meet postage needs and do not meet the criteria of postage stamps. For one thing, there is no post office or postal service anywhere that would accept them for the payment of postage.

Allied Occupation Troops In The German-Polish Plebiscite Areas, 1920-1922

By R. K. Mickey

(Reprinted from "German Postal Specialist" of April 1982)

I. Introduction

The Versailles Treaty imposed on Germany at the end of the First World War stipulated that plebiscites be held in five areas then belonging to the German Empire. In Schleswig, the inhabitants voted between Germany and Denmark. In the Saar, the vote was to be held after fifteen years economic association with France. In the remaining three areas the voters had to decide between Germany and Poland. These areas were: Allenstein, or Olsztyn in Polish; Marienwerder, or Kwidzyn; and Upper Silesia (which has a neutral English name).

In each of these three areas, as in Schleswig, occupation troops of the victorious allies were stationed in the plebiscite territories before and during the voting in order to ensure a free vote. All German Army units had to withdraw, while local government officials (including police) became responsible to the Plebiscite Commissions during the plebiscite period.

Col. Halle's article in the December, 1981, *Specialist* provided some details on the occupation troops in Schleswig (although it is worth noting that there were also French and British naval units in the occupation force). Postal history of the occupation troops in the Saar Plebiscite of 1935 is covered in the *Michel* catalogue. This article briefly summarizes the activities of the allied troops in the German-Polish plebiscite areas and provides some details of their postal arrangements. A bibliography is provided for those interested in further study. The history of the various regions and the plebiscites themselves are mentioned only in passing, nor does this article deal with the special stamps issued for use in these areas.

Some general considerations applied to all plebiscite occupation forces in this period. The three countries supplying troops (Britain, France and Italy) had difficulties in meeting their obligations. All three were, in 1920, completing the demobilization of the mass armies of World War I and reorganizing on a peacetime basis. They had, as well, to garrison their overseas empires. The French and British had some "police actions" to worry about in the Middle East (and the British Army was fighting the I.R.A.) while Italy was in the throes of large-scale strikes and civil disorders requiring the armed services use at home. These problems were added to the difficulty that the United States Army had originally been expected to provide contingents, but, of course, did not after the Senate's rejection of the Peace Treaty. In none of the three areas under consideration were the occupation forces really large enough to assure order.

In Allenstein and Marienwerder the Commissions were composed of civilian officials (mostly diplomats) who gave orders through the allied commander in each region. However, in Upper Silesia, the Commissioners were all military officers who evidently also exercised operational control over their respective national contingents.

It is interesting to note that one French unit, the 2nd Bn., Chasseurs Alpines, served in both the Schleswig and Upper Silesia forces. (The contrast between the rather orderly and peaceful Schleswig and the shooting war in which the occupation troops became involved in Upper Silesia was quite a switch for them.)

II. Allenstein (Olsztyn) and Marienwerder (Kwidzyn)

These two districts were part of East Prussia. Prior to the partitions of Poland in the 18th century, parts of each district had been Polish and a substantial part of the population of each was of Polish origin. Although they comprised two separate plebiscites, the occupation forces to some extent overlapped, so they are conveniently treated together.

Both Allenstein and Marienwerder were predominantly rural. Unlike Schleswig, there was a great deal of turbulence associated with the holding of the plebiscite and numerous instances of violence were alleged. To complicate matters, large numbers of unemployed veterans were camping out in the woods in the area and living by less than legal means. While the level of violence never approached that of Upper Silesia, the allied occupation troops had their hands full during their tour of duty. Allenstein and Marienwerder each had a Commission made up of one representative from Britain, France, Italy and Japan, the four "major allies."

In Allenstein, the occupation troops consisted of one Italian infantry battalion and one "weak" British battalion (650 men) of the Royal Irish Regiment. One company of the latter was detached from the Allenstein command and stationed at Deutsch Eylau, Marienwerder, where — used to guard the railway lines and trains which supplied the — from Danzig. It was thus unavailable for actual plebiscite duties.

The Marienwerder force was commanded by the Italian Colonel Fernando Po and consisted of one battalion of Italian Bersaglieri. In addition, a number of individual British, French and Italian officers were attached to each Plebiscite commission. The Allenstein Commission took over its administrative duties on Feb. 14, 1920, the Marienwerder Commission on Feb. 17.

The British battalion was served by Army Post Office S.120 (I.e., a stationary post office) at their main station in Allenstein town. Companies were at times detached to other towns. A.P.O. S.120 was closed on Aug. 13, 1920. The company stationed at Deutsch Eylau may have used this post office, but as they were under the direct command of the British General Officer Commanding in Danzig, their mail may have been routed through Field Post Office H.2 which served the troops in Danzig.

It is worth noting that Gen. Haking, the G.O.C. Danzig, held not only the command of the occupation troops in Danzig (which was not a plebiscite zone), French as well as British, but also held over-all command of all British troops in all the plebiscite areas. Within each plebiscite zone, the troops were under the orders of the local Plebiscite Commission, each of which was responsible to the Conference of Ambassadors in Paris. This dual chain-of-command naturally produced some friction, as in the unavailing attempts of the Allenstein Commission to get the company of Royal Irish returned to them from Marienwerder.

The Italian battalion in the Allenstein area was stationed at Lyck, about 100 miles from Allenstein town. They also had detachments at other towns at various times. It is likely that the Italians used the ordinary postal services in both Allenstein and Marienwerder, as they did for some purposes in Upper

Silesia (see below).

Wambaugh states that there was a small contingent of French troops in Marienwerder. Unless this is a reference to the officers attached to the Commission, I have found no other reference to a French contingent.

The voting in both Allenstein and Marienwerder went overwhelmingly for Germany. The Poles claimed that this was in large part due to intimidation of the Polish population by the mostly German police forces upon which the Commissions had to rely, due to the small number of allied troops at their disposal (less than 1600 men for both districts). At one time German paramilitary "police" units, armed with machine guns, grenades and mortars, outnumbered the occupation forces! (Most of these units were later disarmed.) This was certainly a factor in the voting, but other causes existed which also help to explain the small vote for Poland in these two areas, particularly the fact that the Polish-Russian war was in full *furor* during the voting — Germany, where conscription had been outlawed by the Versailles Treaty, must have looked inviting compared to Poland, where every available man was being drafted.

III. Upper Silesia

The plebiscite in Upper Silesia was the most bitterly contested of all the post-war plebiscites. The intense national antagonisms between Germans and Poles were even more pronounced in this region than in Allenstein and Marienwerder; the German-Polish rivalry was of course far more severe than the German-Danish rivalry. (The Danes had lost some territory, but not their independence, while the Poles had lived under German, Austrian and Russian rule for more than a century.) Further, in Upper Silesia the Poles were a much greater percentage of the population and were much better organized than in the northern plebiscite areas.

In 1919, before the Versailles Treaty had gone into effect, there was a large Polish insurrection (the first of three) against German rule, which was defeated by regular German troops. The German Army was withdrawn from Upper Silesia in accordance with the Treaty (which was effective as of Jan. 10, 1920). The first units of the occupation troops began to arrive in Upper Silesia about January 20th, the Plebiscite Commission about three weeks later. The Commission consisted of members from Britain, France and Italy, under the presidency of the French General Le Rond.

The victorious Allies were, by 1920, following rather divergent policies with regard to Germany and Eastern Europe. These differences in policy were fully reflected in Upper Silesia. The French plebiscite officials and occupation troops were obviously supportive of the Polish efforts, while the British were certainly considered by the Poles to be unduly sympathetic to Germany. (The British, of course, considered themselves to be the only completely fair people involved in the affair.) The Italians attempted to steer a middle course, but most often sided with the British. This reflected the post-war rivalries among the former comrades-in-arms, who were now competitors for the political, strategic and economic benefits of the post-war period.

To begin with, the occupation troops were French and Italian, except for a number of British officers attached to the commission. The units consisted of ten French and two Italian battalions plus support troops. The maximum strength at any one time between Feb. and Sept., 1920, was 13,000 men. This was simply not enough for a region of this size and volatility of Upper Silesia; the force had to be reinforced considerably after September.

Again, resort was had to pre-existing German police units, often directly

commanded by allied officers, but consisting mostly of the type of nationalistic German veterans who joined the **Freikorps** during this period. There was no way that such units could behave as an impartial police force.

However, in Upper Silesia, the Poles had their own paramilitary organizations, particularly among the coal miners. These were augmented by volunteers from Poland itself. The level of violence continued to escalate on both sides throughout 1920 and the occupation troops had to intervene more and more often; the shortage of allied manpower became glaringly obvious.

The tension was heightened during the summer of 1920 by the Russo-Polish War. The Germans favored the Russians, both because they hated the Poles and because a large part of the German working class sympathized with the Bolshevik Revolution. The French were allied with the Poles and had a large group of advisors and technicians serving with the Polish armies. The German Silesians feared that the predominantly French army of occupation would be used to actively support the Poles. German railwaymen delayed and attempted to stop trains bringing reinforcements into Silesia. Riots by Germans followed, directed sometimes against the Poles, sometimes against the French troops. During some of these affairs the French troops were confined to their barracks, but at other times they engaged in pitched battles with killed and wounded on both sides.

The Polish Silesians replied to these German demonstrations with the "Second Silesian Insurrection" in August and September of 1920. Encouraged by the great Polish victory in the Battle of Warsaw, the Polish Silesians, reinforced by their compatriots from across the border, combined armed risings with a general strike of Polish workers. The French army largely stood aside and gave tacit support to the Poles.

The Second Insurrection resulted in Polish dominance of many of the industrial districts of Upper Silesia. The German organizations had to compromise. The old police force was finally disbanded. Other aspects of the Plebiscite Administration were also reformed.

The increasing level of violence also led to a reinforcement of the Italian contingent and a commitment by the British to send four battalions to reinforce the army of occupation in time for the actual voting in March of 1921. The day of the plebiscite (March 20, 1921) was completely orderly and the voting took place without incident. The Germans had the largest total vote, but the Poles gained a majority in some districts and about 40% of the total ballots.

The process of dividing the province, confirming as much as possible to the voting patterns, began. In May, in opposition to the rumored division of Upper Silesia in a manner thought to be too generous to Germany, the Polish Silesians launched their Third Insurrection.

Most of the British troops had been withdrawn in April, after the voting, for service in Ireland. General Le Rond, the French head of the Plebiscite Commission, had gone on leave to Paris. (The British, Italians and Germans thought that he had prior knowledge of the insurrection and was unwilling to have to command the troops against it.) The Italian General de Marinis, as Acting President, moved energetically to suppress the Polish revolt. Some twenty Italian soldiers were killed, and others wounded, in fighting with the Poles.

However, as the French troops were sympathetic to the Poles and there were only a small number of British left to support the Italians, General de Marinis had to concentrate on holding key towns only. The Polish insurgents, led, as in both earlier revolts by Włochiech Korfanty (a pre-war **Reichstag** member from Silesia) gained control of much of the province, even issuing their own postage stamps.

The Germans responded by bringing in **Freikorps** units to fight against the Poles. They had some success. (It is said this was done with the "benevolent tolerance" of General de Marinis and the British Commissioner, Colonel Perceval). Gradually the troops of the army of occupation were able to interpose themselves between the other combatants, but they were not able to completely reestablish the rule of the Allied Commission until July 7, 1921.

Eventually, a partition plan was approved by the Conference of Ambassadors in Paris that satisfied no one. The Allied Commission's occupation came to an end on July 14, 1922.

The French units of the occupation composed the 46th Infantry Division. They were reinforced by the 22nd Chasseurs Alpins (who had served in Schleswig). The French troops used "Tresor et Postes 181." The mail of some officers was franked with official stamps and/or handstamped cachets of the Commission. Covers with both official cachets and the "Tresor et Postes 181" cancel are known.

The Italian units and their stations, as of Oct. 31, 1921, were as follows:

"Comando Truppe Italiane in Alta Slesia," and technical troops, at Ratibor

Administrative units, ordinance, commissariat & hospital units, at Cosel
Special Artillery Group — at Cosel

131th Infantry Regt. (HQ & 4 Bns.) — detachments at Ratibor, Lubow, Leobschutz, Ober-Glogau, Cosel, Kandrzin & Gleiwitz

Provisional Regt., Siena Brigade (HQ & 2 Bns.) — Oppeln & Kreuzburg

Independent Bn., Sicilian Brigade — Ratibor

Independent Grenadier Bn. — Ratibor

The Italian troops had no postal unit authorized. The Ministry of War did authorize a special courier service, for field post cards **only**, from Upper Silesia to Military Post Office Nr. 1 at Udine. This service was later routed through the regular P. & T. office at Udine Ferrovia. These cards went free when franked with the official oval cachet of the Italian command. Letters and other mail from the Italian troops was sent via the regular Upper Silesian postal service at standard rates.

The British operated three A.P.O.'s in Upper Silesia. Army Post Office S.120 operated at Oppeln from Jan., 1921 to Feb. 16, 1922. A.P.O. S.64 was at Gleiwitz in June 1921, later in Tarnowitz from Sep. 21, 1921 until May 13, 1922. A.P.O. S.110 was in the Rosenberg area in mid-1921. These facilities were presumably used by the British officers and men attached to the commission, the Plebiscite Police, etc., as well as by the four battalions mentioned, who were organized as the First and Second Silesian Brigades, British Silesian Force. The First Silesian Brigade, at least, also had its own unit cachet.

IV. Sources

Plebiscites Since the World War by Sarah Wambaugh (2 vols.; Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1933) is the standard English-language work on the history of the plebiscites. It includes much information on the occupation troops & allied administrations, as well as official documents.

Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939 First Series, vols. X and XI, ed. Rohan Butler and J.P.T. Bury (London: H.M.S.O., 1960, 1961) contains many interesting details of the various allied contingents, etc.

History of British Army Postal Service, Vol. II, 1903-1927 by E. B. Proud (Dereham, Norfolk: Proud-Bailey Co., Ltd.) has illustrations of the cancels used by the British in the plebiscite territories, as well as photographs of covers and an informative text.

Histoire Postale et Militaire by Lt. Col. C. Deloste (Paris: Editions de l'Enchaniste Universal) contains a brief summary of French units in Schleswig & Upper Silesia (illustrated).

"Le Truppe Italiane in Alta Slesia" by Aldo Cecchi, in **II Collezionista-Italia Filatelica**, Nr. 3, 1973, is very detailed on the Italians in Upper Silesia, with photos of covers.

PLEWACKI POST SHOW

The Plewacki Post Stamp Society will sponsor its annual stamp and coin exhibition ALPEX, March 25-27, at the Adam Plewacki American Legion Post 799, 385 Paderewski Drive, Buffalo, NY.

The 120-frame exhibition is open to all collectors of philatelic material, postcards, cinderella items and paper currency. 19 stamp dealers and 12 coin dealers will participate in the bourse.

Awards will be presented at a banquet to be held at 7 p.m. March 26 at Cypress Gardens in Buffalo.

A show cachet and special cancellation will be available.

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Description	Price
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— GEMS OF POLISH PHILATELY —

The newly formed Polish State lost little time in holding its first Philatelic Exhibition in Warsaw beginning May 3, 1919. To honor the event and also to raise funds to finance the exhibition, Poland issued its first semi-postal stamps. Five stamps of the "Northern Series" were overprinted "First Polish

stamps, and type II was used on the 25+5 and 50+5 fennig stamps. The series comes both perforated and imperforated. However, one sheet of the imperforate 50 fennig stamp was overprinted with the Type I overprint. Of the 100 stamps in the sheet, many have been lost over the years, and singles are elusive, blocks are rarities. The block shown here is especially important since it can be plated as positions 5-6, 15-16, and shows the upward shift of the overprint.



Stamp Exhibition" and "5 Fennig" surcharge. The overprints were in two forms, type I was used on the 5+5, 10+5, and the 15+5 fennig

LITERATURE REVIEW

"World War II P.O.W. and Internment Camps"

By Derek Tomlin. published by Author. Guernsey, Channel Island, 1982. softcover, 34 pages, Price \$4.95 ppd., available from Theo. Van Dam, Box 26, Brewster, NY 10509, U.S.A.

This handy booklet is ideal for the "War Cover" Collector. It gives a very extensive listing of World War II P.O.W., Internment and Concentration Camps.

It starts off with the German "Of-lags", "Stalags", etc. by letters and locations in the various areas and gives also a listing of the Concentration Camps in various countries, including Slave Labor Camps, Internment Camps and many more.

Furthermore, it lists the Camps in Italy, France and other European countries by location and gives details regarding the type of prisoners housed there.

The English Camps Nos. 1 through 1026 are all listed as well as the Camps in the various Commonwealth countries.

The last part of the booklet gives the Camps in Japan and Manchuria, in many cases with amount of prisoners housed and their nationality.

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

James Mazepa, Publications Comm.
P.O. Box 1217, Oak Park, IL 60304
Address all correspondence to:
P.O. Box 82, River Grove, IL 60171
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(Please remit in U.S. Currency)

Stanley Rusin, Treasurer

P.O. Box 56148, Chicago, IL 60656