

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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The Warsaw Municipals*

By J. J. DOMAR

One of the most intriguing branches of Polish philately is the Municipals, or Local Posts, used during the collapse of the occupational postal services during the period 1915 to 1918.

Because little or no attention was paid to the requirements of the civilian population by the German and Austrian Field Posts, especially regarding the delivery of mail, local services were established. The municipal councils of the various communities, therefore, had stamps designed and printed. The proceeds from the sale of these stamps were used to defray the cost of delivery. Some of the issues, however, did not receive the sanction of the German authorities and so were abolished after being in use for only a few days. Such used copies are very interesting and very rare.

This article describes the first and most important of these issues, "The Warsaw Municipals" or, as they are more commonly known, "The Warsaw Locals."

History

The establishment and maintenance of this system in the city of Warsaw was assumed by the Warsaw Citizens Committee. The German Occupation authorities turned over to them the local delivery of mail brought to Warsaw by the German Postal System. It was the function of the Citizens

Committee to deliver all ordinary or regular mail, as well as notices concerning registered mail and postal money orders for which the addressee formerly had to appear in person at the Main German Post Office. This Main Post Office was established by the German authorities on September 20, 1915, and on September 23 at 5:00 P.M. the Warsaw Citizens Committee began the local delivery of mail.

The Warsaw City Post Office acted not only in the delivery of mail to the residents of Warsaw, but also aided in the distribution of mail to many of the neighboring towns and villages within a radius of 20 to 30 kilometers from Warsaw. The Postal authorities in these towns and villages would come to the Warsaw City Post Office, where the mail was sorted and delivered to them free for their respective communities.

In the beginning, the Warsaw City Post Office delivered only mail that originated outside of Warsaw, and it was not until October 21, 1915, that the German authorities permitted the collection and distribution of strictly local mail; that is, letters posted in Warsaw and having Warsaw delivery addresses. Letters originating in Warsaw, either for out of the city or for local delivery, had to have affixed to them German stamps of the 1906-11 issue, overprinted "Russisch Polen," and later "Gen. Gouv. Warschau," of the same value as that required for out of the city mail. Let-

*Reprinted by permission of STAMPS

ters for Warsaw could have both the German stamps and the Warsaw locals affixed to them, in which case they were rubber stamped "Wreczenie Oplacone," meaning "Delivery paid for."

On May 10, 1916, when the Municipal Government was created in Warsaw, the Warsaw Citizens Committee disbanded and on that day relinquished all of its authority and duties, including the handling of mail. During February, 1918 the City of Warsaw offered the City Post Office to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the proposed Kingdom of Poland as the beginning and foundation of the future National Postal System. The offer was accepted and on July 1, 1918 the Warsaw City Post Office was taken over by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

After three years of activity the

City Post Office accepted for the last time on November 16, 1918 payment for the delivery of mail in Warsaw. After this date it became a part of the postal system of Poland, and was thenceforth known as Warsaw Post Office No. 1.

The Stamps

Getting back to the stamps, they were designed by Prof. Edward Trojanowski and lithographed by the firm of Jan Cotty, both of Warsaw. Two designs were prepared; the 5 groszy featuring the siren which forms the Coat of Arms of Warsaw, and the 10 groszy showing the Polish Eagle. Both include the date "1915" and the initials K. O. M. W., meaning "Komitet Obywatelski Miasta Warszawy" (Citizens Committee of Warsaw). The designs were printed by stone lithography in sheets of 40 stamps (8

DATA ON WARSAW MUNICIPALS

Stamp	Basic Design	Surch.	Date of Issue	Quantity Issued	Description
1	5 gr.	None	Sept. 14, 1915	2,000	Drab or dark green with beige or greenish tint blks.
2	10 gr.	None	Sept. 14, 1915	2,000	Black blue, greenish (or brownish) tintblock.
1	5 gr.	None	Sept. 20, 1915	268,000	Black blue, greenish (or brownish) tintblock.
2	5 gr.	None	Sept. 22, 1915		Hand stamped on No. 1 in red, violet and black.
3	5 gr.	6 groszy	Sept. 30, 1915		Hand stamped on No. 1 in red, violet and black.
4	5 gr.	6 6	Oct. 30, 1915	103,250	Surcharged on No. 1 in black or dark blue.
4A	5 gr.	6 6	Oct. 30, 1915	14,750	Ditto.
4B	5 gr.	6 groszy		30	Surcharged on No. 1 in greenish-blue.
4C	5 gr.	6 groszy		45	Ditto.
4D	5 gr.	6 6		5	Ditto.
5	10 gr.	None	Sept. 23, 1915 with reprints to July, 1916	1,666,000	Several reds, yellow and beige tintblocks.
6	10 gr.	2 2	Nov. 10, 1915	92,000	Surcharge on No. 5.
7	5 gr.	6 6	Nov. 22, 1915	720,000	Green, beige or greenish tintblock and surcharged.
8	10 gr.	2 2	Dec. 18, 1915	308,000	Surcharged on No. 5 and on new issue.
9	10 gr.	*2 gr.*	Feb. 2, 1916	556,000	Surcharged on new issue in dull red.
10	10 gr.	*2 gr.*	April, 1916	397,200	Surcharge on new issue in glossy red.
11	10 gr.	*2 gr.*	Sept., 1916	960,000	Surcharge in dull red on thin bluish paper.
12	5 gr.	*6 gr.*	Feb. 2, 1916	506,000	Surcharge on grass green, brownish tintblock.
12	5 gr.	*6 gr.*	Mar. 19, 1916	1,011,200	Surcharge on grayish green with beige tintblock.
14	5 gr.	*6 gr.*	June 17-21, 1916	1,600,000	Surcharge on light green, yellowish tintblock.

wide and 5 high) on medium wove paper, perforated $11\frac{1}{2}$; 2,000 stamps of each design were issued. These stamps differ from those of later issues in that the outlines are sharper and more delicate, and have wider borders around the sheets (3 CM).

Imperforate sheets of both issues were not gummed and were submitted as samples to be approved by Prof. Trojanowski; 13 copies of the 5-gr. and 16 copies of the 10-gr. were in the collection of the Museum of Stamps and Telecommunication in Warsaw; the balance in private collections, all of which bore the guaranteed approval of Stanislas Ejsmond.

Stamp No. 1

The first issue of Stamp No. 1 was printed from a large stone covering 8 sheets of 40 stamps each, as were all succeeding issues. Although printed as a 5-gr. value, the rate at the time of release had already been increased to 6-gr., so it was simply used as a 6-gr. stamp (never as a 5-gr.). With such an arrangement and understanding, much time was saved in hand-stamping the new value. This stamp without surcharge was used as a 6-gr. until the early days of November in spite of the fact that stamps Nos. 2, 3 and 4 were in circulation. Partly imperforate and privately perforated edges occur.

The first sheets have the brownish tint block, but perhaps due to bleeding from the blue of the key plate the successive sheets had an increasingly greenish background. Various perforated and imperforate proofs exist. Counterfeits have a greenish blue color of glossy (instead of dull) ink.

Stamp No. 2 (Small overprints)

Stamp No. 2 was made by surcharging Stamp No. 1 with a hand-stamp "6 groszy," commonly placed diagonally from the lower left to the upper right corner. It is also found inverted, double, double with one inverted, etc. in red, red-lilac, and black. The stamping was done either on the whole sheet or on stamps already placed on the mail matter.

Two rubber stamps were used and can be distinguished by the ball of the numeral 6 being the same height as the letters of "groszy," whereas in the second form the ball of the 6 extends above the letters of "groszy."

Owing to its constant use, this second rubber stamp became damaged and the left arm of the letter "y" of

groszy broke off. Counterfeits exist in various colors of surcharges on both original and faked stamps.

Stamp No. 3 (Large overprint)

Because the small surcharge was not always legible, it was decided to replace it by one more readily identified. It was a 5-groszy value, blue-black on greenish and hand-stamped "6 groszy." The letters are 5 mm. high within an oblong frame $13\frac{1}{2}$ mm. x $27\frac{1}{2}$ mm. The genuine surcharge can usually be identified because of a small bulge at the top of the letter "s" of the word "groszy." These characteristic marks, however, are not always legible, the result of haste and lack of care while making the impression. The surcharge is usually in red or violet, the black being unknown on authentic covers. This surcharge is faked on genuine and forged stamps. The prominent characteristics of the five known counterfeits are as follows:

- (1) Foot of "R" wide; (2) Figure "6" Gothic instead of Roman, being wider, of uniform thickness and a trifle higher than the original; (3) Figure "6" thinner and definitely convex at the right side; (4) Slanted line of letter "Z" leans toward the perpendicular; (5) Letters in the word "groszy" are of different style (grotesque).

Stamps No. 4 and 4A

These stamps were overprinted by Rubiszewski and Wrotnowski. Due to a lack of sufficient type in one style, another style was used in the last perpendicular column, resulting in each sheet having 35 stamps No. 4 and 5 stamps, No. 4A. Stamp No. 4 is frequently found lightly cancelled within an oval antedated 15.X.1915.

Stamps No. 4B, 4C and 4D

Two sheets of Stamp No. 1 were overprinted as proofs in greenish blue. One of these sheets included an unusual block covering all three forms of machine surcharges. This block comprises positions 15, 16, 23 and 24. On stamp 15, a slight defect in print is visible, a sort of comma under the figure 6. On the other stamps, this defect does not appear.

Partly Imperforate Stamps, No. 1 to 4

During the period of circulation of Stamps No. 1 to No. 4, the application of stamps on correspondence and cancelling was done, not by the postal

clerks, but by the letter carriers who did this work not too carefully. Sheets with missing perforations and with partially perforated stamps were torn by the carriers and not cut. As a result these partially imperforate ones with torn edges are spoiled as philatelic pieces.

Stamp No. 5

This stamp is printed in red, with a buff background, and was reprinted several times. Each issue produced a different shade as given below but many intermediate shades, especially in the tint block, may be found—sometimes in the very same sheet:

(A) Brownish red, beige background; (B) Red aniline, yellow background; (C) Dull red, beige background; (D) Glossy red, yellow background; (E) Glossy dark red, grayish background on thinner grayish blue paper.

Varieties also exist with deep rose, green, and blue backgrounds which are definitely of speculative origin as are stamps having a serrated or saw-tooth perforation on all sides. Some of the speculative stamps can be found with false cancellations.

Stamps Nos. 5C, 5D and 5E are found quite abundantly having unusual features such as wholly imperforated, ungummed, without background, background offset, double background, perforation through the center of the stamp, etc. These are taken from printer's waste or else printed purposely as alleged peculiarities.

There were 1,660,000 of Stamp No. 5 issued, with disposition made as follows:

Used on 43,350 packages over 250 gr.	43,350
Used on 47,581 telegrams with 2 stamps	95,162
Used on 71,513 special del. with 2 stamps	143,026

Total postally used	281,538
*Used as documentary—about	1,000,000
Later surcharged as Stamp No. 6	92,000
Left overs, etc.	284,462

Total Issue	1,660,000
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* A ruling made way back on December 27, 1833 permitted the Warsaw Magistrate to exact a payment of 10 Kop (2 10-gr. stamps) for all documents attested to by the police authorities. To cover these payments, special local stamps were used. At the time, when the Russian police in Warsaw were replaced by the city militia, the use of local stamps with Russian titles was naturally discontinued, and it was the practice right along to use the 10-gr. Warsaw locals while they were in use postally. These stamps were used in pairs (20-gr.—10-kop) and usually were cancelled (seldom black). The seals bore the circular inscription "City Militia of Warsaw" and had a mermaid in the center with a horizontal line below and a provision for the commissariat number. Occasionally a hand stamp M. M. (Municipal Militia) was used alongside or above the other cancellation.

Stamp No. 6

A total of 92,000 Stamps No. 5A, 5B and 5C were surcharged and of these about 13,000 were used for letters. The usual counterfeits of this issue were made on Stamp No. 5D with dull ink and with the figures often out of line.

Stamp No. 7

A total of 720,000 stamps were issued, with about half of them used on letters and 40,000 of the remainder returned to the Citizens Committee on March 22, 1916. This issue was in use for a longer period than any of the previous ones. Its color was green instead of the black-blue to make the cancellation visible and to prevent reuse. The stamps were not supposed to be issued without the surcharge, but they are found on covers with genuine cancellations. Imperforate copies are counterfeits, as are all inverted surcharges, double surcharges, etc.

Stamp No. 8

A portion of the dull red copies was printed on remainders of 5C stamps, while all of the distinctly glossy red copies were prepared especially for this issue. The dull red stamps are known imperforated, without background, and gummed. These were made from waste. Ungummed glossy red stamps were left imperforated to create a variety. Poorly imitated surcharges are cancelled with the Municipal Militia handstamp. Total issue of Stamp No. 8 was 308,000, of which 37,000 were used on letters.



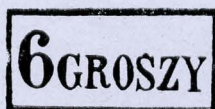
1



5

6 groszy

2



3

6

6

4

6

6

6 groszy

4 A

4 B

6 gr.

6

6

4 C

4 D

2

2

2

2

6

8

6

6

7

2 gr.



9 10 11

6 gr.



12 13 14

The number under each illustration above refers to the table on second page. Numbers 1 and 5 are basic designs—all other numbers refer to surcharges on either No. 1 or No. 5.

Stamp No. 9

This stamp has a black lithographed surcharge 2-gr. with eight-pointed asterisks covering the two original values. A six-pointed asterisk instead of the eight-pointed one is found only on the 28th stamp of the sheet, and that only on the first two sheets of the set-up of the 8 plates comprising a full printed sheet. In the second of these sheets on which the right asterisk is six-pointed, the left one is flattened as if poorly imprinted; furthermore, the figure "2" is thin and slanting and the lower portion of the letter "G" is cut. The errors were soon discovered and removed from the stone, substituting a normal asterisk which differed from the others in having somewhat thinner rays.

There is one known ungummed, imperforated block of 8 stamps containing a 6-ray asterisk, originating no doubt from a sheet purposely left imperforated. In addition, some of the 6-ray asterisk surcharges are found, either lower or higher than the left one.

Two counterfeits exist of the 6-pointed asterisk. The first is found on single copies, made on stamp 5C and 5D. The asterisk is larger than the original, rays thinner, center dot flattened not round, and base of figure "2" is slanting. In the second counterfeit made in pairs on Stamps 5C or 5E, the asterisk is smaller than the original, rays are of uneven length and the base of the figure "2" is shorter than on the original prints. Both counterfeits are found authentically cancelled, even on letters.

The original 6-pointed asterisk exists only as specified on the 28th stamp of the sheet and is characterized by a dot above the left winding line of scroll, serpentine dash in numeral 9, and the straight and waved border joined at left upper corner. This provides a further check against counterfeits.

Stamp No. 10

Besides the regular perforated issue, Stamp No. 10 also occurs imperforated with printing on the reverse side is under the gum. It is also found in such oddities as surcharge shifted upward over the initials K. O. M. W., surcharge reversed, and double surcharge—one normal and one reversed, in two different spacings between surcharges and with each surcharge of different intensity.

All of these peculiarities frequently occur both perforated and imperforated, indicating that they did not arise by accident.

Stamp No. 11

This issue was printed on thin bluish paper in dull red ink at the end of September, 1916, so relatively few are found on letters. From a total of 1,513,200 of stamps Nos. 9, 10 and 11, only 446,732 were used on correspondence.

Stamp No. 12

Stamps of this issue without the surcharge were definitely left for philatelic purposes on two kinds of paper, medium and thin wove. Those without surcharge were never in circulation despite the fact they are occasionally seen on covers bearing genuine cancellations. Those without the surcharge have also been counterfeited with the small and large hand-stamps, no doubt as imitations of Stamps No. 3 and No. 4.

Stamp No. 12 without surcharge can be identified by its sawtooth perforations on all sides.

Stamp No. 13

This stamp is found in the same oddities as described under Stamp No. 10. It is perforated as well as imperforated, with and without the surcharge, indicating its speculative character. It was used to make spurious, imperforated Stamps No. 6. Stamps No. 13 without surcharge resemble somewhat the shade of Stamps No. 1, differing however chiefly in that the lines are not as sharp, being printed from a large and slightly used stone.

Stamp No. 14

As a result of using the above-mentioned stone, the stamp outlines were very blunt as though smudged, and stamps on either the left or right side of the sheet have a damaged border line in the entire inner space. Surcharges on Stamps No. 14 for the same reason are also not very sharp, especially the asterisks. Of the 3,117,200 copies of Stamps Nos. 12, 13 and 14, only 2,587,013 copies were used on correspondence.

In the printing of the 5 groszy stamps, only one stone was used for all issues; however, in the printing of the 10-gr. issues, a new stone was used for editions 5D and 5E. All litho-

graph stones in due time were officially destroyed. In the meantime, the basic zinc plates, two of each value, were placed in the National Museum of Warsaw in 1919.

Slight oversights appeared already in the original matrix in the form of blots, dots, gaps, etc., resulting in the fact that practically all of the 40 stamps of a sheet possess some characteristic mark which permits their distinction from other stamps.

Paper

Paper used for these stamps is quite uniform—smooth, white, and medium wove. Stamps on very heavy or on thin paper, as well as on yellowish paper, are occasionally found. In the printing of Stamps Nos. 11, 14 and 5E, however, a thinner paper with a bluish tint was used.

Perforation

As so frequently happens in line perforating, stamps are found partly imperforated horizontally or vertically as the result of a skip in the perforating machine or else in not punching through all the sheets, leaving only traces of the punches.

Oddities

Because of the great demand for the Warsaw stamps, speculation developed on a big scale. In the beginning, it was limited to mass purchases of stamps at the post office with the purpose of re-selling at higher prices. Some issues increased in value so much, however, that mass purchases ceased to be practical. Stamps from printer's waste appeared and later the various oddities were made purposely and offered to collectors as genuine errors. Here belong all imperforated, ungummed, key plate only, tint block only, double tint blocks, and distinctly different colors than normal stamps in circulation, as well as unlisted stamps without surcharge, all abnormalities in print (except the 6-ray asterisks) and finally the dazzling issues of Stamps Nos. 11 and 12.

Because it was so easy for anyone to apply special cancellations both at the Warsaw City and German Post Offices, very many peculiarities are found on covers and post cards which at first glance appear as of normal postal circulation.

Copies have been found where the stamps were printed on pages of a German calendar; also stamps with

the 5 groszy green printed on top of the 10 groszy red, etc. These oddities also include the 6 groszy green Stamps Nos. 7, 12 and 13, on which the entire design is skillfully gone over with black India ink to imitate Stamp No. 1. Most of these oddities appeared abroad and came to Poland only after the larger foreign firms began to liquidate their stocks.

Bisects

Bisects are found in philatelic trade. According to general opinion, they were used instead of the 2 groszy, but the Citizens Committee never approved nor agreed to the bisecting of its stamps. The closest tolerable bisects are those placed on letters with the postage paid. Therefore, all covers bearing bisected stamps are cancelled to order, with the exceptions of cancellations dated 5/12/15 and 3/3/16 tied on covers to bisected Stamp No. 7. Bisected stamps were produced in quantity by cancelling them on sheets of paper. In some cases lightly cancelled stamps were bisected and then cancelled again tied to paper. Even the 2 groszy stamps were bisected on cut squares and such combinations as a bisect of the 2 groszy and a bisect of the 6 groszy have appeared on the same cover, clearly indicating their speculative character.

(Editor's note: The author, in collaboration with Myron E. Steczynski, is preparing another article on the same subject. If you have any additional information, or can suggest changes or corrections, send your comments to the author, J. J. Doman, 3715 Clinton Ave., Berwyn, Illinois.)

IN MEMORIAM

On April 19, 1944, Zdislaw Dworkowski died in Detroit. In his passing we lose a good friend and an outstanding collector of the stamps of Poland. Those members of Polonus who attended the S. P. A. Convention in Detroit will remember him as a kindly elderly gentleman who talked about Poland and her stamps at a Polonus regional meeting held in conjunction with the Convention.

We didn't know him so well but twelve years ago Ken Laub said this about him in the Detroit News, in part: "But his chief pride is in his specialized collection of Poland—

practically a complete collection in singles, pairs and blocks and containing many items, particularly in the wartime issues, not in the standard catalogs. Administration work in Poland following the war enabled him to pick up many fine items at relatively little expense."

He was born in Bydgoszcz, Poland, in 1873, and began his collecting activities when he was about seven years old. He was a member of many stamp clubs in Detroit, including the Pulaski Philatelic Society. And while he was not a member of Polonus at any time, we join his host of friends in extending our deepest sympathies to his bereaved family.

The Editor.

MEET THE NEW MEMBERS

Member No. 224. William S. Wykes, 22 Grant Avenue, Manoa (Upper Darby P. O.) Penna. (EPP and Czechoslovakia)

Member No. 225. M. Schumacker, 2155 MacDonald Street, Regina, Sask., Canada. (EPP)

THIS 'n THAT

Polonus members are seeking high offices in the S. P. A. Vincent Domanski, Jr., is candidate for president and Stephen G. Rich is candidate for treasurer. We note they are unopposed in the coming election.

* * *

J. J. Doman, Secretary advises that he is very busy with spring house cleaning—that he will not be able to answer letters for some time. So, if you do not get a reply from Jack do not despair, he will write as soon as he finishes his home work.

* * *

June 1st, 1944, will be "Polonus Night" at the Chicago Philatelic Society meeting at the Atlantic Hotel. All members of Polonus are invited to attend. The speaker of the evening will be Lester Jankowski.

* * *

From our member T/Sgt. W. J. Lewinski, somewhere in England we

received the following message: "Received the March issue of the Polonus BULLETIN several days ago and needless to say it was read eagerly from the first to the last page. I was very pleased and as a fellow member very proud to learn that POLPEX 1944 turned out to be such a success. I am feeling great and have found England to be quite different from what I had pictured."

* * *

From Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, Cap. Edward Lewandowski writes: "We had a truly wonderful time at POLPEX—August seems a long way off, but if I'm at McCoy, I'll be looking forward to the BEEBA during the S. P. A. Convention. Remember me to the boys at Polonus."

* * *

At the recent Jack Knight Air Mail Society's Airpex (we called it Apex by mistake) First Award was won by Stanley Bialkowski, with his Airmail Week Covers exhibit. Second Award was won by Chester Langner with his exhibit of Flag Stamps of the Over-run Nations of Europe. Third Awards were won by Ben Reeves, Stanley Michalak (Toledo) and Chester Langner.

* * *

The Regina Bain Donation Auction netted the neat sum of \$69.93. We are indeed indebted to Mrs. Bain for her generosity.

* * *

To manifest its appreciation for the splendid cooperation received from the Polish Roman Catholic Union Archives and Museum in connection with POLPEX 1944 the Society subscribed to a Life Membership in the Archives and Museum. This subscription will cost \$100.00. One half of this amount has already been paid. Dr. Leon P. Kozakiewicz suggested that the other half could be raised by a donation auction. Dr. Kozy has promised twenty lots. Will you join with us in raising the money in this manner? If you will, send your donation lot to Roman Reinowski, 1939 S. Highland Avenue, Berwyn, Illinois. We will announce the date of the Auction in the June issue of the BULLETIN.

It has been brought to our attention by Sidney S. Jalkut and Jacques H. Rogers, both of New York, that Poland issued stamps in booklets. Does any one have any information about this? If you have, send it to the Editor.

* * *

We hope to be able to present an article in the near future about these booklet stamps. The more information we have the better will be the article.

* * *

Al Diamond, secretary of the S. P. A. says, "You fellows better have a lot of Polish sausage and Polish sardines at your BEEBA. Why, I'll bet you will have 150 people there."

* * *

Here is the list of candidates in the coming S. P. A. election:

President—Vincent Domanski, Jr.
Vice-president—Henry W. Meyer
Treasurer—Stephen G. Rich
Secretary—Alfred Diamond
Directors (two to be elected)

Anthony C. Russo
Arthur W. Deas
Hill F. Best
Walter Vredenburg
Walter Fischel
Lee Cornel

* * *

Treasurer Thad. Stanczak announces a number of members have not paid their dues for 1944. June 1, 1944, is the deadline. If your dues are not paid, you may not receive the BULLETIN for June, and you will be suspended to boot!

* * *

The Secretary would like to know how many of our out of town members will attend the S. P. A. Convention and be present at our meeting August 11, 1944. Remember the BEEBA will be held immediately after the meeting. Write to the secretary if you will be in Chicago at that time.

Marian Carne Zinsmeister presents the Souvenir sheets of Poland in the May issue of the S. P. A. Journal.

* * *

Buy War Bonds & Stamps