



BULLETIN OF THE POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Overprint Errors on 1919 Cracow Letter Cards

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The Polonus Philatelic Society is a non-profit, tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organization incorporated in 1939 in the State of Illinois. The Society is organized exclusively for educational purposes with the objective of promoting Polish philately through the dissemination of information in the English language. The opinions expressed by authors of articles appearing in the Polonus Bulletin do not necessarily reflect the views of the Polonus Philatelic Society.

Membership: Members participate in all the services and activities offered by the Society, including complete access to the Society website (www.polonus.org) and the option of receiving a quarterly bulletin in print or electronically. The two membership categories are: **Regular and Junior**. Annual dues for **Regular Members** opting to receive **Printed Bulletin (via mail)** are: **North America - \$30 / Outside N.A. - \$40** or **Electronic Bulletin (via website)** are: **North America - \$25 / Outside N.A. - \$25**. Annual dues for **Junior Members** (under age 16 and electronic bulletin only) are: \$10. Annual dues are payable in US funds no later than the end of March of each calendar year. Dues for new members are pro-rated for the time of the year application is submitted, i.e., for period **Jan – Mar 100%** of annual dues; **Apr – Jun 75%**; **Jul – Sep 50%**; and **Oct – Dec 125%** (to cover full payment for following year).

Dues and Changes of Address to be sent to: Polonus Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 489, Maryville, IL 62062.

Articles for publication to be sent to: Chairman of Publication Committee.

Membership queries to be sent to: Membership Chairman.

General Society matters and complaints to be sent to: President.

Bulletin Advertising:

Member to Member Ads – Members have the opportunity to post ads to fellow members **free of charge**. Limit of 500 characters, defined as a letter, space, number or punctuation mark. Member's names and addresses are not included in this limitation.

Dealer Ads – Dealers wishing to advertise to members have the following options:

Business Card Ad: \$50.00 annual fee for insertion in four issues.

Send ad copy to: Chairman of Publication Committee and make check payable to: Polonus Philatelic Society

Other Ads: Full page or insert ads for single copy available. Send e-mail with ad copy to: info@polonus.org for pricing.

Message from the President

By: Bob Ogrodnik

For those of you who thought of attending the PNSE 2011 but didn't, you missed a good time in Philly. You would have seen some outstanding Polish exhibits and enjoyed frosty Żubrówka while meeting with members at the Polonus hospitality suite. Be sure to see the news coverage of this event in this Bulletin issue and start planning for next year in St. Louis!

I cannot recall a national exhibition in which Polonus members received the top award for a multi- and one-frame exhibit. PNSE 2011 may be a first in that Jerzy Kupiec-Weglinski received the PNSE 2011 Grand Award and first-time exhibitor Wiesław Kostka received the Best One-Frame Award. In addition, Robert Puchala was a co-winner in receiving the Polonus Grand Award. Congratulations to these members and to the remaining Polonus exhibitors who garnered recognition at this event.

Membership ratified the resolution to revise the Society By-Laws, which increases the number of Board members to nine (9). This paved the way for the Board's selection of Robert Nowicki to fill the open seat for the remainder of the term.

In another organizational move and as part of our long range leadership succession plan, Hank Bieniecki vacated his position as Vice President and recommended that Richard Jaraczewski be elected by the Board to that position. The Board agreed. For the remainder of the term, Richard will work directly with me and Hank in the numerous day to day administrative functions, in addition to continuing as Chairman of the Membership Committee. Hank will remain fully engaged as a member of the Board of Directors and continue to head the development of the Polonus Website, Chair the Expertizing Committee and function as one of the Senior Contributing Editors.

This issue includes coverage of our 9th Annual Meeting & Exhibition in Philadelphia, hence the larger (24-page) than normal (20-page) Bulletin. Let me bring your attention to the article by Hank Bieniecki, titled "Advantages of Electronic vs. Printed Bulletin". Whether we like it or not, technology and the quest to be "green" are ushering a new way

of communication and retention of reference data. Many of you have already opted for an electronic distribution of the Bulletin and we are hopeful that this becomes the norm rather than the exception.

While on the subject of our electronic communication, check out our website. In addition to having our Bulletins available on the web, you will find that we have added several exhibits, expanded the information on the Kronenberg collection, and modified with additions the useful links. Keep in mind as you visit our website, this is a work-in-progress and a high priority for the Society. We want this to be your first stop for Polish philatelic information, whether directly available on the website or accessible via the expanded "links" section. Visit frequently and give us feedback on what you like and don't like, recommendations, and whether you would be willing to volunteer to be part of the Website Committee. Sam Ginsburg's article on Polonus PURLS expands on Polish Postal History and some of the sites he discusses are already available as links on the Polonus Website.

You will also find some excellent philatelic articles in this issue. I want to bring to your attention Robert Puchala's article "Overprint Errors of the 1919 Cracow Letter Cards", which originally appeared in the Polish language *Filatelista*. Jan Niebrzydowski's article on the "*Cichociemni*" in Brindisi, Italy 1944 is a first for such an article with illustrations of covers never before published. At the request of the Warsaw Uprising Museum, the covers illustrated in this article will be showcased in the museum for the balance of the year.

Jim DeLine presents an interesting analysis of GRO-SZY overprints in his second of a series of articles on the subject. Finally, if you are a bidder and/or a buyer on the internet, be sure to read Roman Sobus' article, "Better Than Printing Money", to discover the latest trend in stamp forgeries.

Please continue to send your comments and questions to my attention at krpsl@earthlink.net. You will note in this issue a letter received commenting on the recent PNSE 2011 event. We appreciate such feedback and value your input.

PNSE 2011 Highlights

By: Bob Ogrodnik

Member attendance at the show was better than expected. Including the new members, a total 22 signed-in at our Society Table. This was a great opportunity for our east coast members to meet and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting some of our members for the first time. Key meeting points for our members was the Society Table, the Annual Membership Meeting, the Awards Reception and our hospitality room at the hotel.



(L-R) Jim Mazepa, Roman Sobus and Richard Jaraczewski at the Society Table

One outstanding highlight was the exhibition of Polish material by our members and the award recognition received. This highlight is covered in more detail in this Bulletin under the title "Polonus Exhibitors Excel at PNSE 2011".

Another highlight was the attendance at and the results of the Annual Membership Meeting. In addition to presenting the President's Report, a copy of which is included with this article, reports from other functions and committees were given. See also the Financial Report included in this issue.

The major action taken at this meeting was the unanimous approval of a By-Laws revision, proposed by Robert Nowicki, Chairman of the ad-hoc committee on By-Laws Review and Revision and approved earlier by the Polonus Board of Directors. The significant change in the new By-Laws is the



Polonus Board of Directors meeting

increase in size of the Board to nine (9) members, eight (8) elected by the membership, plus the immediate past President. Other changes were several technical improvements in the text of the By-Laws. Note: A copy of the new By-Laws is available to any member. Requests should be sent to the Secretary, Roman Sobus at Rsobus9013@cs.com.

Consistent with these new By-Laws, the Board of Directors approved the selection of Robert Nowicki to fill the open Board seat for the remainder of the three-year term. Also, the Board of Directors elected Richard Jaraczewski to the position of Vice President.

I want to thank all who helped make this year's Polonus participation at a National Philatelic Exhibition a success. I also want to remind you of the opportunity to "Meet me in St. Louis" next year.....we will be a



Annual Membership Meeting with Bob Ogrodnik at podium

Society News (cont.)

convening Society and hold our Annual Membership Meeting at the St. Louis Stamp Expo on 16-18 March 2012.



Members meet for dinner at Bertucci's



Polish Specialist working the bourse - (L-R) members John Rudnicki and Tom Wrosek

Frank Wiatr Strikes Gold in Cleveland

Polonus member Frank Wiatr received a Gold Medal and the Dale Pulver Award for the Best Foreign Exhibit for his 8-frame, "Cracow Postal History: From Middle Ages to the Postage Stamp" at the Garfield-Perry Stamp Exhibition in Cleveland this past March. In addition, Frank received a Vermeil Medal for his one-frame, "Vistula River Flotilla Mail". We congratulate Frank Wiatr on achieving this recognition.

Letter to the President

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of myself and my colleagues from New Britain, Mr. Bogdan Charlam and Mr. Ryszard Mroczkowski, I would like to express my sincere thanks to you for having arranged the Polish exhibition as part of the overall Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition. I thought it was the best exhibition in the last 20 years. Thanks to your excellent organization we were able to make the Polonus stand an impressive showcase of Polish philately.

I would also like to put on record my appreciation for Mr. Richard Jaraczewski and Mr. Roman Sobus from your Board of Directors who manned the Polonus stand for three days, offering advice and information to visitors. I was delighted to meet all three charming wives, who managed to find the time to come to the exhibition. I greatly enjoyed the excellent wine and Polish "Bison" vodka offered in your Hospitality Room. It was a good way to relax after a day at the exhibition.

One of my greatest joys was to have met fellow collectors with whom I had been corresponding for many years but had never met in person. We were honored to have been awarded a number of top-ranking medals and awards – an acknowledgement of the quality of our Polish collection.

I greatly appreciated the opportunity to see the fascinating "Kraków issue" overprints of Mr Robert Puchała which I had not seen before. I went through them five times and have never seen so many unique items – a sheer delight. My colleagues described it as a "Pearl of Polish Philately". For myself, I would add that Mr. Puchała is well on the way to international recognition and that all other Polish philatelists should take their hats off to him!

In conclusion, I would like to thank you once again for your valuable support and I look forward to meeting you again next year.

*Yours sincerely,
Jan Niebrzydowski
10 April 2011*

President's Report Polonus Annual Meeting – April 2, 2011 PNSE 2011 – Oaks, Pennsylvania

As I complete the first year of my second and final three-year term as your President, I am pleased to report that Polonus continues to grow as a viable non-profit organization. I am also encouraged by the generous response by our membership to the appeal for tax-deductible contributions along with their dues payments. This response is affirmation that we are on the right course and members approve of the programs that we are delivering.

Now for a summary of the highlights of 2010:

- Our financial position is favorable in spite of the expenses exceeding the revenue this past year. We have a positive total cash on hand at the end of the fiscal year and since our new dues structure and contribution appeal, we have increased the balance cash on hand to \$7,924.00 as of 20 March. I am confident that we will end the year with a positive balance of cash on hand well in excess of the prior year.
- One of the major membership benefits is our bulletin and I am pleased to report that we made the transition of organization discussed at the previous meeting and we have been delivering a quality bulletin on-time since the June issue of 2010 (#539).
- The Membership Directory was delivered with bulletin #539 to our membership as promised in San Francisco and we are currently working to get this data onto our website for use by members only.
- Our new Membership tri-fold brochure was well received and we feel this will be a valuable tool in new member recruitment.
- In response to the action by the Board to revise the dues structure to incentivize the acceptance of an electronic delivery of our bulletin vs. a mailed copy, we adopted a new dues structure which was made effective with 2011 dues payment. Included was a convenient reminder that tax-deductible contributions are a vital component of our revenue stream.
- Another action by the Board that was completed this past year was the revision of our by-laws. Robert Nowicki was appointed ad-hoc Chair of a committee to effect the necessary revision and he will present a proposal for approval at this meeting.
- Membership has grown in 2010 net of attrition to a total of 219, with members from 29 states in the USA and from 9 countries. This continues to be one of our priority programs.
- We had a successful LITHPEX-POLPEX 2010 in Chicago this past year in support of our Chicago Chapter. This was a collaborative effort with the Lithuanian Philatelic Society to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Grunwald.
- The response by members to exhibit at the PNSE 2011 has not been as strong as the previous shows in San Francisco and Sarasota; however, we do have a respectable turnout with 13 exhibits, 47 frames, and more importantly, some of the finest exhibits of Polish material.
- We have begun to make available the Polonus Bulletin on our website, available for members only. This will continue and many of our members renewing their dues are opting for the electronic version.
- The website is a work-in-progress and as we expand the menu of available items that can be accessed on our website, we will increase the value of this resource to our existing and prospective new members.

Overall, we completed the action notes from the prior year and feel confident that we can continue our improvement, generating growth in our membership and revenue. I want to acknowledge and thank the Board of Directors, Officers and Committee Chairs for their contribution towards the accomplishments reported.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert V. Ogrodnik, President

Polonus Exhibitors Excel at PNSE 2011

The Polonus Philatelic Society was well represented at the recent Pennsylvania National Stamp Exhibition at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks, PA. As one of the "hosting societies", Polonus exhibitors entered 13 exhibits and 47 frames of Polish material, representing approximately 25% of the total exhibits. More impressive than the quantity was the quality of exhibits, as demonstrated by the following awards:

Dr. Jerzy Kupiec-Weglinski received the PNSE Grand Award for his exhibit, "The Airmail in Poland 1918 – 1939". In addition to receiving PNSE and Polonus Gold Medals, he received the American Airmail Society Award and was co-winner of the Polonus Joseph Bieniecki Memorial Grand Award.

Wiesław Kostka received the PNSE Best One-Frame Award for his exhibit, "1945 Traugutt 25 Groszy Stamp with Surcharge 5 Zł / 22.I.1863". In addition to receiving PNSE and Polonus Gold Medals, he received the AAPE Award of Honor and the Polonus President's Award. Wiesław also entered a second one-frame exhibit, "Kingdom of Poland Stampless Mail 1815 – 1871" for which he received PNSE Vermeil and Polonus Gold Medals, in addition to receiving the AAPE Novice Award. This was Wiesław's first attempt at exhibiting.

Robert Puchała received PNSE and Polonus Gold Medals for his exhibit, "The Cracow Issue of 1919". In addition, he was co-winner of the Polonus Joseph Bieniecki Memorial Grand Award.



Polonus members following the Awards Reception at PNSE 2011

Dr. Richard D. Mallow received PNSE and Polonus Gold Medals for his exhibit, "The First Issue of the Polish People's Republic". In addition, he received the APS 1940 – 1980 Medal of Excellence.

Jay Carrigan received PNSE and Polonus Gold Medals for his exhibit, "Polish DP Camps in Germany – The Lubeck Complex".

Roman Sobus received PNSE Vermeil and Polonus Gold Medals for his exhibit, "Lwów 1917 – 1941 – The City of the Lion as Part of the Second Polish Republic".

Jan Niebrzydowski received PNSE Vermeil with felicitations for material and Polonus Gold Medals for his exhibit, "One Polish Family's WWII Ordeal". He also received the Rossica Society Award.

Robert Ogrodnik received PNSE Vermeil and Polonus Gold for his exhibit, "Poland: First Air Mail Issue After WWII". He also entered a second exhibit, "A Philatelic Reflection on the Battle of Grunwald" for which he received PNSE and Polonus Silver Medals and the Women Exhibitors Sterling Achievement Award.

Dzintars Grinfelds received PNSE Vermeil and Polonus Gold Medals for his exhibit, "The Republic of Central Lithuania". In addition, he received the AAPE Youth Grand Champion Award.

Frank Karwoski received PNSE and Polonus Silver Medals for his exhibit, "Astronomy Before and After Copernicus – Where are we in the Universe?" In addition, he received the ATA Multi-Frame Grand Award.

Regis Hoffman received PNSE and Polonus Silver Medals for his exhibit, "Polish Refugees in Africa, World War II".

In addition to awards granted to exhibitors, Chairman Dr. James Mazepa received the PNSE National Merit Award. Congratulations to Dr. Mazepa and to all Polonus exhibitors for outstanding achievements at this exhibition.

Advantages of Electronic vs Printed Bulletin

By: Hank Bieniecki

Polonus began offering a PDF (electronic) version of the Polonus Bulletin with the first issue of 2011. The PDF Bulletins are available only to members on the Polonus website (www.polonus.org). The purpose of this article is to outline the advantages to both members and the Society, when members elect to access the PDF Bulletin versus continuing to receive a hard copy by mail.

Ease of Access: Do you know where your Bulletins are? If you subscribe to the PDF version, all Bulletins from 539 forward will always be readily available by logging onto the Polonus website and selecting "Bulletins" from the menu. If you find an interesting article that you want to keep for reference, just print out the pages of interest and file them in a binder by subject/topic. Over time you will be able to create a customized set of reference articles of interest that are easy to access. In the future, Polonus will have a high quality three ring binder bearing the Polonus logo available for sale to members.

Access New Bulletins Early: We will post the final version of the Bulletin on the website on the same day we submit it to our printer. Members in North America will have access to the new PDF Bulletins approximately two weeks before they would arrive by mail. Members around the world will have access three weeks earlier, plus the Post will not have the opportunity to damage it.

Cost Savings: Subscribers to the PDF Bulletin in North America currently save \$5 per year on their annual dues. Members outside of North America save \$15 per year. More importantly, as members convert from hard copy Bulletins to PDF's, the Society will reduce a major annual expenditure for printing, postage and labor. Therefore, annual dues increases will be less frequent and smaller. Additionally, we will all be contributing to a greener world.

Check Out The PDF Bulletin: Okay, you paid the dues to receive a hard copy of the Bulletin and change is hard to accept. However, you too may login on the Polonus website and check out the PDF version. Print too small: use Ctrl + and watch it grow in size. Check out the clarity of the images in the articles. Blow them up for closer examination then use Ctrl – to go back to normal size. You cannot do that with a printed copy.

Note: If you want to change from a mailed Bulletin to the PDF Bulletin, we won't mind. Write Hank Bieniecki at info@polonus.org and we will stop sending it to you via mail. If you have a computer and printer, you may wish to adapt now. At some point in the future a printed version may only be available to libraries and those without computer access.



Wiesław Kostka receiving the PNSE Best One-Frame Award from Judge Ms. Elizabeth Hisey



Robert Puchała receiving a Polonus Gold Medal from Bob Ogrodnik

Polonus PURLS (Polonus Philatelic URLs)

Polish Philatelic History

By: Sam Ginsburg

I am pretty weak on Polish philatelic history, as evidenced by an unsuccessful search for some WW I occupation postage rates I was looking for. Some of you may also have occasion to search for a particular topic in Polish philatelic history, so in this article I am attempting to provide leads for a variety of internet sources.

As usual, try starting with a basic internet search. In this case you would do one for Polish philatelic history and another for Polish postal history[1]. The “advanced search” feature in most search engines and browsers will let you combine both searches into one. Some websites have links to a variety of different postal history sources. Rather than duplicating these listings in this article, I will only provide the major link with an idea of some of the information that can be found on or through the link.

The first is **StampDomain.com** (www.stampdomain.com), mentioned in issue #540. The Resource Page for Collectors of Poland Stamps has links to a variety of history websites. I found the one on Wrocław to be particularly interesting. (Thanks to member Bernard Paull for suggesting another look at this site.) The **Polish Post Office** has a history page (<http://www.poczta-polska.pl/znaczk/en/histzn.php>), but it doesn't mention that Poland officially dates its postal history from 1558. **Wikipedia's** article on Polish Philatelic History (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postage_stamps_and_postal_history_of_Poland) seems more extensive, although it had some errors when I last looked at it. **Wikipedia** has a wide variety of articles on various aspects of postal history; its Timeline of Postal History is quite interesting to me. Ben Nieborg's excellent **Stamp Encyclopaedia Poland** (www.stampspoland.nl/) is a very thorough reference on Polish postal stamps and history. It also has a link to Sandafayre Auction's Stamp Atlas (www.sandafayre.com/atlas/), which includes a section on Poland as well as a variety of maps.

Stampsite: The Encyclopaedia of Postal Authorities (<http://www.jl.sl.btinternet.co.uk/stampsite/home.html>) has a little bit on almost every entity that ever issued stamps. I'll bet you've never heard

of a great many of them. But locals are mostly omitted, so you can't use it to find more about your collection of Warsaw and Zarki locals. The website apparently hasn't changed since early 2008.

Jim Forte's **Postal History** (www.postalhistory.com) has a searchable index. Searching for Poland provides a variety of links, including one to our own Chris Kulpinski's Philatelic PDFs (<http://polishphilatelicliterature.com/>), which I have found very helpful. The **Postal History Society's** links page (<http://stampclubs.com/phs/links.htm>) has a variety of links (unchanged since 2005?), but none specifically on Poland.

Remember that Poland was partitioned from the late 1700's until 1918, with some territories disputed into the 1920's, so if you're interested in that period you may have to look at Austrian, German, and/or Russian philatelic history. Because the borders have changed over the years, you may also have to look at Lithuanian and Ukrainian history as well. (Think Lwów, which was won by the Poles in 1919, but lost to the Ukrainians at the end of World War II.) For example, visiting the bookshop of the The Rossica Society of Russian Philately (<http://www.rossica.org/Bookshop/>) provides a chance to buy David Skip-ton's English translation of S.V. Prigara's 1941 book, *The Russian Post in the Empire, Turkey, China and the Post in The Kingdom of Poland*. (Thanks to Polonus President Bob Ogrodnik for providing some of these leads.)

This column has listed a few resources available for sorting out Polish philatelic history. While these sites may provide just the answers some of you need, many of you will have to search more. In the latter case, if you let me know about the other resources that worked for you, perhaps I can include them in a future column.

Note: Please send your favorite websites to me (samgins1730@yahoo.com) for possible inclusion in a future column and/or on the Polonus website. I'd also appreciate your feedback on any of the sites listed here or names of websites that should be included in this topic. Thanks.

Endnotes:

[1] Sometimes the Links section of my own www.prz.ginsburgs.org website shows up near the top of such searches, but I consider it to be only a start and not authoritative. That page is also targeted at Przedsz. 1917-18 locals.

Gems of Polish Philately

Russia #1 Mixed Franking

By: Dr. James Mazepa

The first stamp to be used in the "Congress Kingdom of Poland" (that part of Poland occupied by Russia) was the stamp we know as Russia #1. Three values were to be issued: 10 kopecks, 20 kopecks, and 30 kopecks. These three stamps were to be issued perforated 14 ½ x 15, but the perforating machine broke and had to be repaired. However, since the Russian post decreed that stamps were to be available on January 1, 1858, supplies of only the 10 kopeck stamp were sent to post offices imperforate.

At first, only pen strokes were used to cancel the stamp. The earliest known use of a Russia #1 in Poland was in the Mazepa collection, which was sold in 1995. The stamp is tied by manuscript "X" pen strokes to a letter which also bears a Warsaw date stamp of January 11th (1858).

The post office soon realized that unscrupulous individuals were "cleaning" the pen cancelled stamp and reusing the stamp. So they decreed that both a pen cancel and a town date stamp had to cancel the stamp. Finally, the post decreed that only a town cancel should be used to cancel the stamp.

The perforating machine was finally fixed and on January 10, 1858 all three values were sent to the post offices. However, these offices continued to use the imperforate stamp until supplies were exhausted. A major rarity recently appeared in a German auction. This is a double rate letter from Warsaw to Wilno franked with both the imperforate and perforate 10 kopeck stamps. This is the only such mixed franking recorded in Poland. The letter is enhanced by the fact that the Russia #1 is a magnificent corner margin copy. The stamps are tied by both a pen cancel and a red Cyrillic Warsaw date stamp of March 4th. This letter sold for approximately US\$175,000.



Jim Mazepa receiving the PNSE National Merit Award from Steve Washburne, President of PNSE



Polonus member/dealer Terry Kurzinski manning his dealer's table

Better than Printing Money

By: Roman Sobus

In these difficult economic times, what could be better than printing money?

Based on a recent survey of items for sale on the internet auction site eBay, Polish stamps have moved their way up as an item of choice. Recent record- high bids for Polish stamps and covers in the international philatelic market are certainly contributing to this trend. This is making the temptation for forging almost irresistible, especially with the availability of high quality scanners and printers, combined with easy access via the internet to virtually a worldwide customer base.

Collectors buy stamps from many sources. Rare expensive items, residing in a collection for decades, may never have been authenticated or may have an old authentication that is suspect.. It is only when the collector or heirs try to sell the collection that they discover that many of their prized pieces are essentially worthless forgeries..

The forging of Polish stamps is not a new phenomenon. Some issues were forged while still in circulation.

The Mueller forgeries of the Kraków overprints are such an example, and according to Mr. Robert Puchała, an expert on the Kraków issue of 1919, certain values were fraudulently printed strictly to fulfill collector demand. In past years, a stamp of questionable authenticity was always offered with a disclaimer, such as: "I am not a collector and know nothing about stamps. This stamp comes from my grandfather's collection that was found in the attic. Look at the pictures"(usually of

poor quality). Such items were frequently purchased cheaply and used as a "space filler" for a desirable but unaffordable stamp.

The current trend is far more disturbing and difficult to understand. The items in **Figure 1**, if genuine and based on national and international auction results, have a value of over \$70,000.00! Finding them all would be a challenge but taking into account the prices realized, sellers are more than willing to come forward and part with cherished items. This lot however sold for \$699.00 on eBay on April 19, 2011, less than one percent of actual value. The seller had placed his disclaimer in large print in the listing: "**Poland set of stamps 1860-1956 - I sell as falsifications**" (Figure 2).

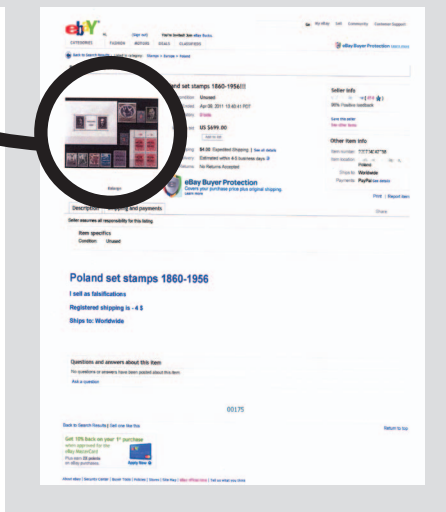
The same items were listed again less than a week later, using the same image, sold once more, though for less money.

More disturbing than the listing itself which was targeting the inexperienced or gullible collector, is that it succeeded to such a high degree. The question is; "What motivates someone to spend hundreds of dollars for laser printed pictures of stamps". Certainly the images are available on the internet for free. Any one with a computer and quality printer can print their own rarities if that is their goal.

However, if collecting Polish stamps was the buyer's intention, I believe that the seller by listing such items does a disservice to Polish philately and philately in general. Will this collector drop Poland as a collecting interest or leave the hobby completely believing that many sellers are frauds and the market is flooded with fakes and forgeries? **Now, more than ever, if a deal appears to be too good to be true, then it almost always is!**



Figure 1 (above) ; Figure 2 (below)



Overprint Errors of the 1919 Cracow Letter Cards

By: Robert Puchała

The classic methodology for producing typographic overprints on philatelic material generally resulted in the production of errors consisting of multiple, shifted and/or inverted overprints. The Cracow overprints of 1919 which were applied to stamps, post cards and letter cards of the former Austro-Hungarian Post are good examples. This article covers errors found on the "letter cards" or "sekretniki" in Polish. They are listed in Fischer Tom II and designated with the prefix "Cs". In the Fischer 2010 issue, they can be found on page 270 [1].

Oddly, even "Polskie Znaki Pocztowe" (PZP - Polish Postal Stamps)[2], published in 1962, over 40 years after the overprinting of the issued letter cards, states "double and inverted overprints are unknown on letter cards". It further states that only rare items with severe shifts of the overprints exist. This article corrects that error by documenting the existence of letter cards with double and/or inverted overprints.

The first types of double overprints are the correcting impressions on type 8a and 10a, overprints produced with an incorrect 15 hal. instead of 25 hal. denomination. The latter has already been described in PZP [2]. The correcting overprint on the Cs3 letter card with the type 10a overprint was made by applying a second impression using a corrected type 10 form. The type 10 differs essentially from the type 10a in the replacement of the digit "1" with the digit "2" in the denomination. When the correcting overprint has been correctly applied, the result is almost ideal. The erroneous value of the second impression is virtually invisible. On most letter cards I have examined that have a correcting overprint, the second impression is barely visible. Examples of both, a precise and a largely shifted correcting overprint, are shown in **Figure 1**.

Correcting overprints made on Cs4 letter cards with the type 8a erroneous denomination of 15 instead of 25 hal. were accomplished utilizing a single digit

"2" applied as a second impression over the "1" in the overprint. The primitive conditions prevailing resulted in skewed and unclear application of the correcting digit with respect to the original overprint. In my opinion, it is entirely possible that the correcting overprint was applied by hand utilizing a single "2" digit. All the examples of this item I have examined have the correcting digit applied at various angles and different heights. I have also examined an example with a double impression of the correcting overprint. **Figure 2** shows two examples of the correcting overprint on Cs4 letter cards with the type 8a overprint.



Figure 2

Double overprints exist on all letter cards. However due to the very small quantities issued, the Cs1 and Cs2 letter cards with a double overprint are true rarities. Only one Cs2 letter card with a type 3 overprint and with non-philatelic usage from Bielsko-Biala is known to the author, while no exemplar of the Cs1 double overprint is known.

Examples of double overprints on unused Cs3 letter cards type 16 and type 2 are shown in **Figure 3**, while types 8 and 3 on Cs4 are shown in **Figure 4**. An interesting item, the only one of its kind known to the author, is shown in **Figure 5**. The letter card

was overprinted twice, first on the reverse, and a second time in the correct position, both times with a type 11 overprint.

Only single examples of triple overprints on Cs3 and Cs4 letter cards are known to exist. The Cs3 example with a type 14 triple overprint is shown in **Figure 6**.

Virtually all overprint errors known to me are on unused letter cards. This resulted from the general



Figure 1

Overprint Errors of the 1919 Cracow Letter Cards (Cont.)



Figure 3



Figure 4

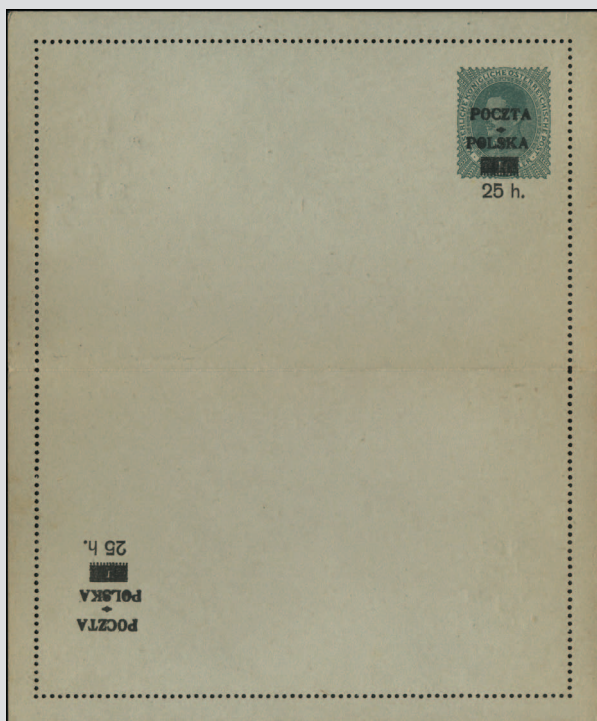


Figure 4

lack of a form designed to provide privacy at a time when virtually all mail was censored. Therefore, postally used examples are rare and of particular interest to collectors. As already mentioned a Cs2 let-

ter card from circulation is known. Figure 7 shows another used letter card with a type 18 double overprint sent from Jabłonków on 15 May 1919 to Vienna.

In general, letter cards with the above-mentioned errors are rare and some examples are truly unique. They certainly deserve mention in subsequent catalogues, especially in view of the approaching 100th anniversary of their overprinting.

Bibliography:

- [1] Fischer, *Katalog Polskich Pocztych*, Tom II, 2010, p. 270
- [2] *Polskie Znaki Pocztove*, PPF RUCH 1962, vol. III, pp. 145-149
- [3] Puchała, R.; „Sekretniki wydania krakowskiego z 1919 roku – typy nadruków”, *Filatelista* Nr 11/2008, pp 580-583

Editor's note: A sheet identifying the various form types was published in the Monthly publication "Filatelista" Nov. 2008 on page 582. It is available for viewing on the Polonus website (under Bulletin 543 Supplement) or as a scan on request [3].



Figure 5

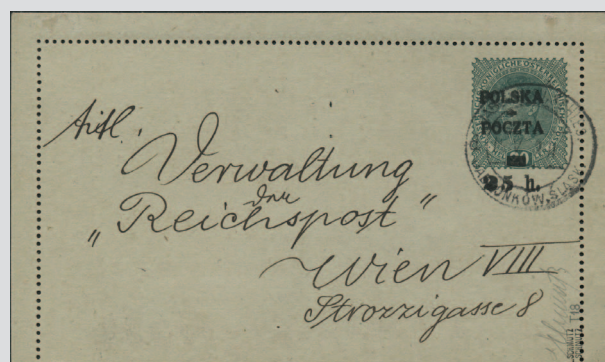


Figure 6

Groszy Overprints - Part II

By: Dr. James DeLine

Editor's Note: This is the second article in a three part series. The previous bulletin (#542) contained the first article which titled GROSZY OVERPRINTS – INTRODUCTION.

This article describes a study of 269 commercial covers. The study focuses on the frequency of usage by overprint type, color, date of usage, and stamps used on this group of commercial covers.

At the same time as the currency was being revalued (1 “new złoty” = 100 “old złoty” effective October 29, 1950), the Polish postal rates tripled. For example, inland rates were 20 zł before the monetary reform (15 zł + 5 zł surcharge for reconstruction of Warsaw). After November 1, 1950, the new rate was 60 zł in the old currency and 60 gr in new currency. As there were no 60 gr stamps in circulation, most covers of this era were franked with multiple stamps. After January 4, 1951, “złoty” denominated stamps that were not overprinted became valid for use with the face value divided by 100 (though they were actually accepted before that – see **Figure 1**).

The following usage tabulation by type, color, dates, and stamp issue was obtained from an accumulation of 269 commercial covers (1065 stamps):

- 1) The bar graph (**Chart 1**) below displays the frequency of Fischer types of GROSZY overprints found in this set of covers. The sub-types with minor size differences are included together (some sources such as Polskie Znaki Pocztowe suggest that such size differences are in fact simply due



to wear on the rubber stamps). There were no local overprints in this accumulation. In the excellent exhibit on GROSZY overprints prepared by Polonus member George Zelwinder, virtually all the Fischer catalog overprint types are displayed (see Polonus website for this exhibit). Most local overprints shown appear to be philatelically inspired, suggesting that commercial usages must have been exceedingly rare.

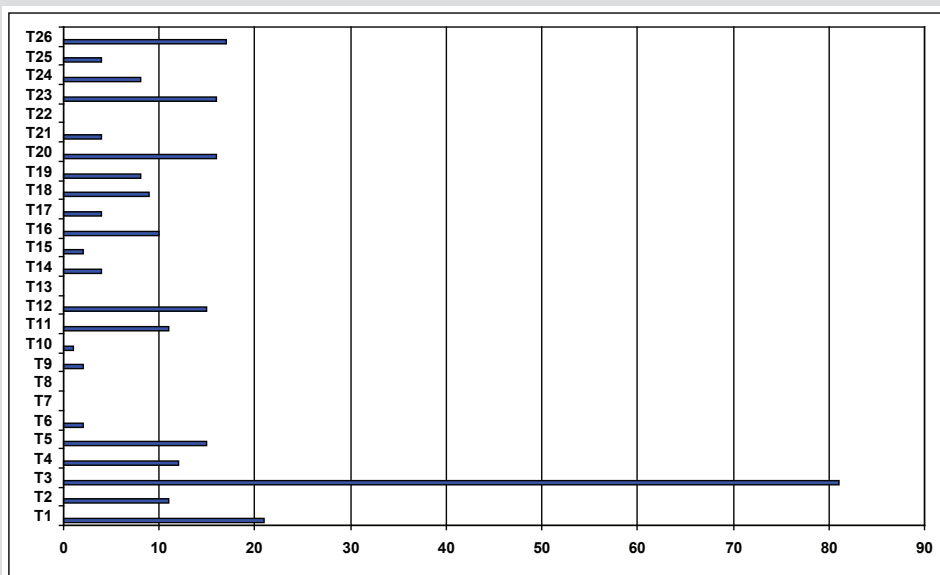


Chart 1 – Types of GROSZY Overprints on Cover

Groszy Overprints - Part II (Cont.)

- 2) Out of 1065 stamps in the study, there were 919 overprinted stamps on the 269 commercial covers. 650 were violet (70%); 122 were black (13%); 101 were red (11%); 35 were red violet (3.8%); 11 were blue (1.2%). While green overprints are known, they are rare (<1%). There were no examples of green overprint in this selection of covers.

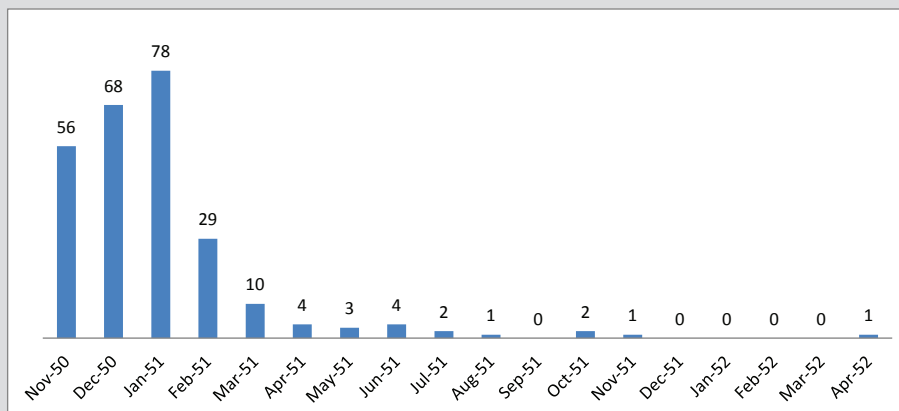


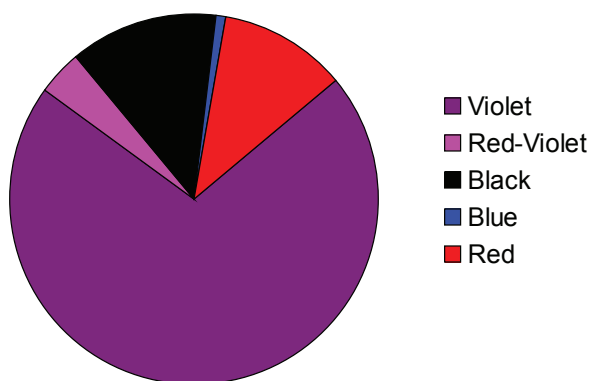
Chart 2 - Month of Usage for GROSZY Overprint Covers

- 3) The bar graph above (**Chart 2**) displays dates of usage of the overprints. In this group of 269 commercial covers, 89% were used in the time period November 1950 through February 1951. As new stamps denominated in groszy became available, they gradually replaced the overprinted stamps. The graph demonstrates a significant decline in the usage of overprinted stamps after April 1951, consistent with the Ministry of Post directive to stop overprinting and return all rubber stamps used for overprinting to the Central Depot. However, overprinted stamps could still be used for about another year (until April 30, 1952). At that time, all stamps issued before

the currency revaluation were withdrawn from circulation.

- 4) While all stamps in circulation at the time of the monetary devaluation could officially be overprinted, most overprinted stamps on commercial covers of the day became the "work-horse" issues of the day. As tabulated in **Table 1** below, these issues were: the centaur airmails (primarily the higher values, #446-449, used for overseas mail, registration, and express mail); the various Bierut stamps (#470-477, 511, 519-526); the 15 zł Congress for People's Movement for Unity (#503); the Reconstruction of Warsaw (#513); and the Polish Workers' type (#527 I & II). As the inland rate was 60 gr during this period, groups of four 15 gr stamps were common (**Figures 2 & 3**). While it was originally created to be used for a required surcharge rate on all mail to fund the reconstruction of Warsaw, #513 was commonly used simply as a make-up stamp for the required rate. **Table 1** below identifies, by Fischer number, the stamps used on commercial mail from this accumulation. The stamps from some philatelic pieces are also included (in italics) for comparison.

GROSZY Overprint Color Variations



The next article in this series on GROSZY overprints will focus on postal rates for mail within Poland during this period

Groszy Overprints - Part II (Cont.)

Table 1 - Stamps Used During GROSZY Overprint Era

The following tabulation is the result of a study of 269 non-philatelic covers (1050 stamps):

- 1) **Centaur Airmail** (#444 – 449) – 29 stamps (2.7% of the total 1065) of this set were used. There were no uses of the low values #444 & 445 and 14 of the 29 uses were the 100 gr stamp (#449) used on registered or express covers.
- 2) The first **Bolesław Bierut** set (#470 – 478) – 153 stamps (14.5%) of this set were used representing heavy usage. Of these nine values, the 10 gr (26 uses) & 15 gr (103 uses) values were the most heavily used. The other values were lightly used: #470 (8); #471 (2); #472 (5); #476 (1); #477 (8).
- 3) **Congress of People's Movement for Unity** (#503) – 42 stamps (4.0%) of this 15 gr value were used rather frequently. There were no uses of the other three values in this set (#501-504).
- 4) **Bolesław Bierut** (#511) – There were only 8 uses of this stamp.
- 5) **Warsaw Reconstruction** (#513) – 129 stamps (12.3%) were used reflecting heavy usage.
- 6) The second main **Bolesław Bierut** set (#519 – 526) – 460 stamps (44.0%) of this set were used representing the most frequently used stamps of this era. Most commonly used were the 5 gr (85 uses) and 10 gr (176 uses) but all of the values were commonly used and pieced together to satisfy the various rates of the day: #521 (42); #522 (21); #523 (38); #524 (35); #525 (44); #526 (19).
- 7) **Polish Workers** (#527) – 164 stamps (15.6%) were commonly used. Both types #527 – I (67) and #527 – II (97) represented the usage of this stamp.

Stamps released after monetary revaluation were in groszy denomination. They were mixed in with the overprinted stamps (71 out of 1050 stamps – 6.7%).

- 1) **Peace Congress** (#530 & 531) - 30 out of 71 post-reform stamps were used (all were 45 gr denomination except one): #530 (1); #531 I – (8); #531 II – (21).
- 2) **Bolesław Bierut** (#533-540) - 30 out of 71 post-reform stamps were used: #533 (2); #534 (8); #535 (8); #536 (2); #537 (4); #538 (2); #539 (1); #540 (3).
- 3) A few other post-reform issues were used: #541 (1); #542- I (4); #542- II (1); #549 (2); #552 (2); #566 (1).

To summarize, in this study of 269 covers (1065 stamps), the Centaur Airmail issues (29), the first (153) and second (460) Bierut sets, the 15gr People's Movement stamp (42), the Warsaw Reconstruction stamp (129), and the Polish Workers stamp (164) together made up 98% of the GROSZY overprinted stamps used on covers of the period.



Figure 2



Figure 3

Airbase of Secret Polish Commando Unit (Cichociemni) In Brindisi, Italy 1944

By: Jan Niebrzydowski

Editor's Note: This article expands on the history of an elite unit of the Polish Army in exile that conducted special operations in occupied Poland during WW II, as told through letters received by Stefania Bardziłowska. These letters are believed to be "never before seen" mail from the Cichociemni, which will be displayed at the Warsaw Uprising Museum. Reference can be made to previous articles by Niebrzydowski in Bulletins #542, #541 and #538. We are grateful to Jan Niebrzydowski for the continuation of his series of articles from his collection of covers addressed to Mrs. Bardziłowska.

With the fall of France, the exiled Polish government moved to London, from where it continued to maintain contact with secret civil and military groups in occupied Poland. In order to carry out special operations and secret political tasks, and to facilitate communications with the Polish underground, the government created an elite commando unit of secret agents who were parachuted into occupied Poland. A number of experienced soldiers, known as *Cichociemni* (literally "silent dark ones") received training in England and were sent behind enemy lines into occupied Poland. Their mission was to train young men in modern combat and subversion techniques and to help organize resistance to the occupying powers.

The first secret flights to occupied Poland were from Great Britain in 1941. After that, there were a few flights from Tunis and, in 1944 from Brindisi in Italy. The operation continued until the end of that year. In total, the operation involved 316 commandos and 28 Polish Government envoys parachuted into occupied Poland. Additionally, 17 Polish commandos were parachuted into Albania, France, Germany, Greece, Italy and Yugoslavia. 670 tons of medical supplies and munitions, 35 million USD and 19 million German marks were delivered to occupied Poland in the course of the operation (see "*Cichociemni*" by J. Tucholski, Warsaw 1984). Several dozen Polish political activists and army personnel were evacuated to the West. One of the most illustrious achievements involved smuggling to the West parts of German V2 rockets, which had been clandestinely acquired by intelligence units of the Polish Underground Home Army. These and other exploits covered their name in glory.

Cichociemni commandos sent to German-occupied Poland were active throughout the war. 112 of them

were killed in action. Some were caught and tortured to death by the Gestapo; others committed suicide in prisons and concentration camps; and others were executed by the Communists during or after the war. Of the 92 *Cichociemni* who took part in the Warsaw Uprising of August 1944, 18 were killed in action. Those who did not manage to escape from Poland were persecuted, arrested and imprisoned after the war. Some remained under cover and continued the struggle against Soviet rule. One of them, General Leopold Okulicki, was deported along with 15 other leaders of the Polish Underground, to Moscow, where he was sentenced under trumped-up charges of sedition. He died in captivity in the USSR. At the beginning of 2011, there were only six of the *Cichociemni* still living in various parts of the world.

On the basis of five letters, I have established that the *Cichociemni* and auxiliary personnel based in the Brindisi base were serviced by the British Field Post Office 725. Their return addresses were listed as ME 48 SP (Special Forces) 1586, and in the final phase of the war, as Dyw (Air Fighter Squad) 301. This was the unit from which Special Forces personnel were recruited. Shown below are these five letters, addressed to Mrs. Stefania Bardziłowska in Boston (**Figures 1 – 5**).



Figure 1 - A letter sent from the air base in Brindisi, Italy via British FPO 725 on 26 August 1944 to Mrs. Bardziłowska in Boston, Mass. Viewed by Censor 6536. As an ordinary letter it was sent free of charge.

Airbase of Secret Polish Commando Unit (Cont.)

(Article Continues on Page 19)



Figure 2 - Air mail letter with British 6d stamp, cancelled at FPO 725 on 24 September 1944. Censor's cachet 9603 and return address: M.E. 48 Special Forces c/o No. 1, C.M.F.



Figure 3 - Air mail letter with British 3d stamp, cancelled at FPO 725 on 7 November 1944. RAF Censor 499 and return address: R.A.F. C.M.F. 1586 Flight. (Royal Air Force Central Mediterranean Forces Flight nr. 1586)



Figure 4 - Air mail letter - US cover with 6c prepaid postage including content sent via FPO 725 on 20 November 1944. RAF Censor 499 and sticky tape OPENED BY EXAMINER 5851. In the 2nd Corps under the command of General Władysław Anders in 1944, US covers with prepaid stamps were allowed as long as they were addressed to the USA. Return address: 301 Polish Sqdn. R.A.F. C.M.F. (301 Polish Squadron Royal Air Force Central Mediterranean Forces). This particular address was in use until the end of 1944.



Figure 5 - Air mail letter with 3d British stamp, cancelled at FPO 725 on 25 December 1944. It was viewed by two British censors as evidenced by cachets: R.A.F. Censor Nr. 43 and 499. Return address: 301 Polish Sqdn. R.A.F. C.M.F.

Airbase of Secret Polish Commando Unit (Cont.)

Finally, I would like to note that almost all *Cichociemni* agents parachuted into occupied Poland risked their lives in a time of military hostilities. Nine were shot down before reaching their targets.

The Polish Post commemorated the *Cichociemni* with the issuance of a stamp on 15 September 1993 (**Figure 6**). In addition, the Commanders of the Underground Polish Army were honored with the issuance of a five-stamp set on 20 December 1991. Among those honored was General Leopold Okulicki (**Figure 7**), mentioned above. On 4 August 1995, the Polish Special Forces unit GROM adopted the name and the traditions of *Cichociemni*.

Figure 6 - 1500 zł stamp, *Cichociemni Soldiers of AK*, designer M. Jędrzyk, Fi 3319



Figure 7 - 6500 zł stamp, Gen. Leopold Okulicki, designer S. Małecki, Fi 3208. This stamp is the highest value in a set of five stamps, Fi 3204 - 3208



(L-R) Bob Ogródnik presenting a Polonus Gold to Jan Niebrzydowski

Jan Niebrzydowski Scores in Paraguay

Polonus member Jan Niebrzydowski received 91 points (Gold equivalent in FIAF events) for his one-frame exhibit, "One Polish Family WW II Ordeal", at the Bicentenario Paraguay 2011. This event was a FIAF (Federacion Interamericana de Filatelia) sanctioned event held in Asunción, Paraguay this past May. We congratulate Jan Niebrzydowski on achieving this recognition.

Financial Report for 2010:

Cash Balance

From all accounts – Jan. 1, 2010\$ 4,981.33

Income

Membership dues 5,075.00
Donations 736.00
Sales & Ads 798.46
All other 640.00
-7,249.46

Expense

Bulletin print & prep 3,646.08
Website & database 613.00
Exhibitions 2,169.65
Membership brochure, directory & cards.....841.10
Postage for mailings 1,275.00
Office supplies, stationary & services.....915.75
All other 405.30
-9,865.88

Net Income<2,616.42>

Cash Balance

From all accounts – Dec. 31, 2010.....\$ 2,364.91

Note: See comment on Financials in President's Report on page 6.

Unaccepted Essay of the Woldenberg Sikorski Mourning Issue

By: Zbigniew Korszeń & Roman Sobus

All post offices provide lists of stamps they plan to issue in the coming year, together with their release dates. The postal authorities of the POW camp in Woldenberg, no doubt, also created such lists with the hope that a portion of these would not have to be printed due to the liberation of the camp and a return to home and family.

Periodically, events occur that warrant an unplanned special issue. These need to be approved by the postal commission, a design chosen, printed, and placed into circulation in a timely fashion. One such event occurred on July 4, 1943, when the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Government in Exile, General Władysław Sikorski, tragically died in a plane crash off the coast of Gibraltar.

The postal authorities at Woldenberg added a mourning issue to their list as way to honor the leader. The accepted design (**Figure 1**), as shown on an artist's proof, has been well documented in the *Polonus Bulletin* and other philatelic publications. It was common practice for the final design of planned issues to be chosen from several submissions by various artists in the camp. However, with this unplanned mourning issue it was believed to be the only submission for this issue.

Recently, another version of this stamp has surfaced, an unaccepted essay, in two stages of production. These are test impressions and very possibly unique.

This design is by camp artist Janusz Lonicki, a prolific engraver and designer of several of the camp's regular issues. The first stage of the essay (**Figure 2**) is of a rough design, with only the General's portrait nearing completion.



Figure 2 First stage of unaccepted essay by Janusz Lonicki



Figure 1 Accepted design by camp artist Marian Stępień.



Figure 3 Second stage of unaccepted essay by Janusz Lonicki

Unaccepted Essay of the Woldenberg Sikorski (Cont.)

The second stage (**Figure 3**) is far more complete, including the “mourning issue” black frame surrounding the design and only the denomination missing. The artist’s initials “JL” appear in the lower right of the frame.

A scan from the reverse side of the second stage (**Figure 4**) shows the translucency of the paper as described below.



Figure 4 Reverse side of second stage showing translucency of paper.

We can only speculate as to why the design of camp artist Marian Stępień was chosen over Lonicki's. Perhaps the design better met the committee's criteria, or perhaps Lt. Lonicki could not complete his engraving before the deadline. The second stage may have been completed some time after the stamp using Stępień's engraving was already issued.

We can wonder if only two artists submitted their work for consideration for this issue? Were there other submissions? Do other essays exist?

The first stage essay impression is on thin, yellowish, somewhat translucent paper. The full sheet is 75 x 99 mm in size, while the image is 28.0 x 31.5 mm. The second stage and later impression is printed on a smaller sheet, 58.0 x 71.5 mm, with the image having dimensions of 38.0 x 46.0 mm.

Both Lonicki essay impressions are in the collection of Zbigniew Korszeń.

New Members

We welcome the following new members who recently joined our Society:

Edward Zamejc - #1718
4110 Pine Blossom Trail
Houston, TX 77059

John J. Wysocki - #1719
56 Notting Hill Gate
Torrington, CT 06790

Richard F. Ropiak - #1720
60 First Avenue - #17C
New York, NY 10009

Richard Mroczkowski - #1721
30 E. Dunlay Street
New Britain, CT 06051

Ronald Labuz - #1722
40 Arlington Road
Utica, NY 13501

Chester Majewski - #1723
728 Charles Street
Laurence Harbor, NJ 08879

New Issues



Date of Issue	February 17, 2011
Sheet Format	20 Stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Agnieszka Sobczyńska

30th Anniversary of Agreement & Registration for Łódź Independent Students Association

This 1.95 zł stamp recognizes the Łódź Students Association created in 1980 at the time of the Gdańsk Agreement and anti-government strike actions. It then constituted the student arm of Solidarity. Banned during martial law by the government beginning in December 1981, it was later reconstituted in 1989 after the fall of communism, and now has a cultural focus. It is today the largest independent student organization in Poland, with 90 chapters and about 20,000 members.



Date of Issue	March 7, 2011
Sheet Format	12 Stamps in tête-bêche
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Ewa Libera

100th Anniversary of Birth of Stefan Kisielewski

This 1.95 zł stamp honors the life of Polish composer, writer, and politician, Stefan Kisielewski (1911-91). His musical work was in the tradition of French neo-classicism, and includes ballet, instrumental works with piano, songs for voice and piano, piano suites, chamber music, and orchestral compositions. In his political career he was one of the founders of the Polish Libertarian and Conservative political party. The stamp depicts him in a photograph holding an egg, and with musical notation in the background.



Date of Issue	March 25, 2011
Sheet Format	100 Stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designer	Jan Konarzewski

Easter (Wielkanoc)

Two colorful stamps were issued to recognize the oldest and most important feast in Christendom, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The 1.55 zł stamp depicts a chick with spring flowers, while the 2.40 zł stamp shows a rabbit also with flowers. The two very colorful official first day covers have cachets showing a Polish couple in traditional attire – one with them holding ceremonial staffs and the other with the man chasing the woman with a pitcher of water (Dyngus Day).

New Issues



Date of Issue	March 31, 2011
Sheet Format	50 Stamps
Printing Method	Rotogravure
Designer	Maciej Jędrzyk

100th Anniversary of Birth of Cardinal Adam Kozłowiecki

This 1.95 zł stamp recognizes Cardinal Adam Kozłowiecki (1911-2007) who served as archbishop of Lusaka in Zambia. He was born in Huta Komorowska in Austria-Hungary, now part of Poland. Ordained as a Jesuit priest in 1937, he was imprisoned at Auschwitz and Dachau during World War II. His fellow inmate at Auschwitz was St. Maximilian Kolbe. He participated in the Second Vatican Council and was proclaimed a cardinal by Pope John Paul II in 1998.



Date of Issue	April 8, 2011
Sheet Format	6 Stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Marzanna Dąbrowska

Smiles of the World in the Photography of Elżbieta Dzikowska

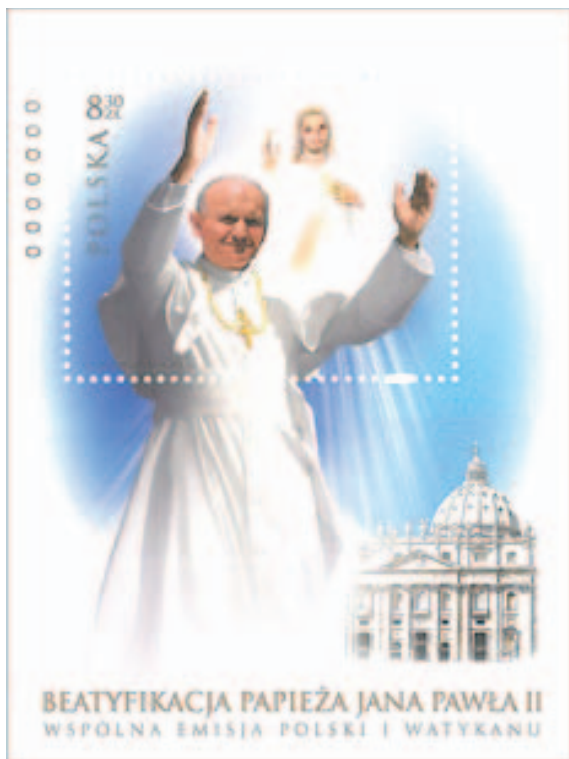
Six stamps were issued to honor the famous Polish photographic artist, explorer, film director, author, art historian, and sinologist: two stamps valued at 1.95 zł, two stamps at 2.40 zł, and two stamps at 3.0 zł. The stamps appear to depict photo-imagery of smiling individuals in different parts of the world (Middle East, Asia, and Africa). Dzikowska was born in Międzyrzec Podlaski. Together with her husband, she produced over 300 documentary films.



Date of Issue	May 5, 2011
Sheet Format	9 Stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Anna Niemierko

Europe (Europa)

This 3 zł stamp, part of the Europa series, depicts a European bison (*Bison bonasus*) or bison or żubr in Polish. The European bison is the largest mammal on the continent – large bulls can stand over 6 feet tall, be over 9 feet long, and weigh over 2,000 pounds. Historically having inhabited the entire European forest, today's remnant population of about 1,000 animals is mostly free-ranging, found in Poland, Belarus, Russia, Lithuania, Romania, and Ukraine. The largest concentration of animals is along Poland's eastern border in the Białowieża National Park which is located contiguous to Belarus' Belovezhskaya Puscha National Park.



Date of Issue	April 28, 2011
Sheet Format	Single in SS
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Marzanna Dąbrowska

Beatification of Pope John Paul II

This 8.30 zł souvenir sheet with a single stamp celebrates the beatification of former Pope John Paul II on May 1, 2011, by Pope Benedict XVI before 1.5 million faithful pilgrims at St. Peter's Square in Vatican City. There was a sea of red and white Polish flags in the square at the ceremony, which is the second of three major steps leading to sainthood. Pope Benedict noted that the former pope had turned back the seemingly irreversible tide of communism with faith, courage, and "the strength of a titan." During the ceremony Pope Benedict pronounced John Paul to be "Blessed" as he received a silver reliquary holding a vial of the former pope's blood, taken during his final hospitalization. This relic, a key feature of beatification ceremonies, was presented by Sister Tobiana, the Polish nun who tended to John Paul during his pontificate, and by Sister Marie Simone-Pierre of France whose inexplicable recovery from Parkinson's dis-

ease was decreed to be a miracle attributable to John Paul. This souvenir sheet is part of a joint philatelic issue by the postal administrations of Vatican City and Poland. The cachet on the official first day cover shows a beautiful blue satellite view of the earth.



Date of Issue	May 27, 2011
Sheet Format	12 Stamps
Printing Method	Offset
Designer	Bohdan Butenko

Gapiszon, Kwapiszon, Gucio & Cezar

These four stamps, two valued at 1.55 zł and two valued at 2.40 zł, appear to recognize popular cartoon characters from the Polish media. The stamps are accompanied by two official first day covers.