

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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Issue 258

April, 1968

Polonus Medal Offered For Best Poland Exhibit

For many years now Polonus talked and planned of having its own medal. Upon investigating the expenses involved we found it a very costly matter to make up the original die and the society hesitated to go any further.

Our dream was finally realized this year when Alfred Szebel renewed the inquiries and made a successful contact with a firm in California. In February, just before Polpex 1968, we received our first supply of Polonus medals. For the first time at a Polpex our own medals were distributed as awards.

The original medal is made up in brass. Especially for the Polpex we had them plated in gold, silver and bronze. A gold plated medal mounted on a special plaque was presented to Dr. L. P. Kozakiewicz as an Honorary Membership Award.

Several years ago, when Polonus was under the presidency of Stefan Kochanski, it was decided that to further promote Polish philately, Polonus should offer an award to other stamp exhibitions to be given to the best Poland exhibit. Mr. Kochanski undertook the task and had a certificate made up which was presented at several out of town shows.

Now that we have our own medal, Polonus is proud to offer this as the



prize for the best Poland exhibit. And the first stamp show that we offered it to was ALPEX 799 held on April 5, 6 & 7 at Buffalo, N.Y. by the Plewacki Post Stamp Society. Of the seven Poland exhibits in the show the judges awarded our medal to Robert Hochmuth for his specialized material of the Polish Heroes Issue of 1944 (Scott's 341-343). Mr. Hochmuth incidentally, is also a member of Polonus and visited us in Chicago at our last Polpex.

Mr. Szebel, who has taken on the work of the Polonus Awards committee, announces that the next Polonus medal will be awarded at COMPEX which will be held May 31, June 1 & 2 in Chicago.

Out of town members who know
(Continued at bottom of page 258-7)

Highest British and American Honors Are Bestowed on Polonus Member Herbert Bloch

We are proud beyond words that Herbert J. Bloch, Polonus Member 408, is the recipient of the very highest philatelic honors both in the United States and in Great Britain.



The Hon. Secretary of the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain reported that Mr. Bloch had been elected to be a Signer of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists. The significance of this selection is explained on page 6 of the April-May, 1967 issue of the Polonus Bulletin.

Almost simultaneously with this selection the Collectors Club's Board of Directors announced in New York that Herbert Bloch was the unanimous choice for the 1968 Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award "for distinguished services to philately." Thus, for the first time, the highest philatelic honor in both Great Britain and the United States has been accorded to the same philatelist.

Herbert Bloch graduated as a specialist in law from Heidelberg Univers-

ity and came to America in 1936 as a professional philatelist. Besides operating as a stamp dealer in his own right, he helped other dealers in preparing their material for auctions. In 1943 he joined H. R. Harmer in New York to describe their auction lots and it was his fortune to prepare the President Roosevelt and the Alfred Caspary collections for sale.

He joined Otto Friedl and Edwin Muller as a member of their Experts Committee and acts as consultant to the Philatelic Foundation (Life Member) and to the Royal Philatelic Society (London). He is now partner in the Mercury Stamp Company.

Herbert Bloch is widely in demand as a judge at international and other philatelic exhibitions. He is a recognized authority on overprints — the group which is easiest to falsify and the most difficult to distinguish. He has built up perhaps the greatest reference collection of overprints of the world. Although he is a professional by trade and an ardent collector at heart, his human qualities rise above all his other virtues. He always has time for his fellow collectors — he is always ready to serve with his broad and deep knowledge. His enthusiasm for philately just beams at all times.

Mr. Bloch's contribution to the philately of Poland cannot be stressed too strongly. I have special reference to the Cracow overprints of 1919, Scott Nos. 41-60, J1-J12 and P1-P5. The accepted experts on the stamps were mainly in Poland where Prof. Mikstein of Cracow was the recognized head. These were the years of World War II and immediately after, when direct contact with Poland was not easy, and uncertain at best. Other experts on the continent and in Great Britain might have been reliable, but

not necessarily so. American efforts at expertising the Cracow issues lacked credence. There were all kinds of signatures and "guarantees," but in the final analysis the limitation "caveat emptor" ("let the buyer beware") prevailed. In spite of the extremely small quantity of some values, the prices were quite low because no one would venture a guess as to which were actually good and which were not. Even Prof. Mikstein's handstamp was forged on occasion.

The war was still on and Victor Bukinik, Polonus founder member 61, told me of the young wonder at H. R. Harmer who knew the stamps so well that he could merely glance at the stamp and not only detect whether the stamp was good or not, but also would determine its position in the sheet. This is the time when I first met Herbert — the name by which I have known him for this full quarter century. He really could analyze the overprint — although for the most part it was not any magic touch but usually required much study and earnest effort. His eyes were really bleary from burning the midnight oil.

Herbert took a real personal interest in the Cracow overprints. He knew the history of the stamps and was familiar with technology of the graphic arts. He had adequate reference material. He regarded the Cracow overprints as the most interesting group in the entire domain of philately. To him the Cracow overprints presented a challenge — they were the real obstacle to overcome. And he mastered the problem beautifully.

I had vast holdings from important collections to be verified and also many additions which I accumulated. Herbert brought order out of chaos — he threw out some of my "gems," then again he salvaged some doubtful items, he plated my stamps, he helped me build up my collection, he taught

me a dozen tricks and revealed many fine points of the art. With his command of German, he was perfectly at home with Mikstein's handbook which won for Mikstein a medal at WIPA 1933. It wasn't long before Herbert was expertising Cracows for everyone — the dealers, auction houses, collectors, expert committees, the Philatelic Foundation — everyone.

From this point on, everyone demanded Herbert's opinion. Auction sales brought higher prices if the stamp had Herbert's guarantee. Catalog values of the Cracow issues rose from year to year.

Just as a matter of comparison, here is a tabulation of the No. 1 and the Cracow issues of Poland over a 40-year span. It is stressed here that the values really began to rise after buyers could have assurance that their objects of interest were genuine and not doubtful copies. Having Herbert Bloch handy to determine this point made it possible for dealers to withdraw spurious copies and for collectors to pay judiciously for genuine copies. Herbert's role in this growth is fully recognized.

Never did I dream in those days that I would live to see the value of a stamp of Poland in Scott's catalog rise up and beyond a thousand dollars. The Cracow issues simply rose and rose in value. Because today one may be sure, prices realized reach and even exceed catalog listings, whereas in the late 30's and early 40's, the prices brought only 40 or 50% of catalog.

Herbert never gave an opinion unless he was reasonably sure. He had the basic knowledge, he had the reference material, he had the personal qualities of character where he would not guess. He himself had to be sincerely and fully convinced before he gave his opinion.

He helped me and he helped hundreds of others. He helped philately.

40 YEARS GROWTH		Scott 1928	Mint 1968
1860 Poland #1		20.	225.
3h Cracow No.	41	.75	50.
5	42	1.00	50.
6	43	.20	4.
10	44	1.25	50.
12	45	.35	5.
40	46	.20	2.25
50	48	.15	1.
60	48	.12	1.
80	49	.10	.70
90	50	6.	250.
1K	51	.15	1.
2K	52	.15	1.25
3K	53	1.75	15.
4K	54	2.50	30.
10K	55	65.	750.
15	56	.20	1.50
20	57	1.	20.
25	58	3.	250.
30	59	.75	40.
25/80	60	.10	1.
5h postage due	J1	.25	1.50
10	J2	.75	350.
15	J3	.10	1.25
20	J4	6.	200.
25	J5	.75	6.
30	J6	12.	250.
40	J7	6.	100.
1K	J8	100.	600.
5K	J9	100.	600.
10K red	J10	200.	1200.
10K black	J10a	300.	1750.
15/36	J11	10.	150.
50/40	J12	1.	12.50
2h newspaper	P1	.30	4.
4	P2	.10	1.
6	P3	.10	.75
10	P4	.50	12.
30	P5	.15	2.

He made friends. Is it any wonder then, that the coveted Lichtenstein memorial award was unanimously pointed at Herbert? And that he was elected to be a Signer to the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists?

Myron E. Steczynski

NEW MEMBERS

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The First Philatelic Broadside of World War II

By SHIRLEY JOHNSON

(Reprinted from the "German Postal Specialist" of March, 1968)



On a significant historical date -- November 11th, 1938 -- the Polish Postal Department issued a series of stamps (see Scott #320-332) commemorating the 20th anniversary of Poland's independence. The issuance of these stamps by Poland immediately set off a political/diplomatic chain-reaction. One could say that it was the beginning of the "philatelic battle" of World War Two.

To better understand the bitter resentment by the Germans on one hand and the historical pride of the Poles on the other hand; we must go back in history to the year 1410.

Poland and Lithuania had solved their differences and had combined forces against the common enemy -- the Prussian Teutonic Order. About the middle of July, 1410, King Jagiello of Poland led his Polish-Lithuanian forces across the Prussian border. The great battle that followed, between the Prussian and the Polish forces, is known as the Battle of Grunwald. It is also referred to as the Battle of Tannenberg by some historians. The area of Grunwald or Tannenberg was a much fought-over land surface before and after this particular battle. 500 years later, during World War

One, the Germans won a victory in a great battle at this place and this battle is also known as the Battle of Tannenberg. History records: that on the eve of the 1410 battle of Grunwald; King Jagiello and his wife, Queen Jadwiga, received an emissary from the Master of the Teutonic Order in the royal tent. (Note: Scott #322, Poland 15g) The Prussian Teutonic Master, by the emissary messenger, sent King Jagiello a gift of a Prussian Helmet and two battle swords. The Prussian leader sent further offers -- as well as his low opinion of the Polish fighting men he faced. In general, the Teutonic Master stated: "It is common knowledge that the Polish battle equipment is inferior to the Prussians". Furthermore, "the Polish King was offered his choice of the high ground and/or battle position as it was also common knowledge that the Polish men were far inferior as soldiers to the Prussians".

King Jagiello accepted the helmet and swords and stated to the emissary: "Soldiers never have too many weapons and therefore we will make use of this helmet and swords". However, King Jagiello rejected the battle position offer. On about July 14,

1410, these two great forces met and "resolved" their differences in a two-day battle. The Prussians were thoroughly defeated in a crushing victory by the Polish forces and the Teutonic (Prussian) Order was physically and politically shaken to its very foundation. After the Battle of Grunwald, Poland emerged as a European State to be reckoned with by other European nations.

It goes without saying that the first battle of Tannenberg (or the battle of Grunwald) was a very sore spot with the Germans and also a delight to the history of the Polish people. The Nazis, especially, wished to bury this part of military history.

By the fall of 1938, Hitler and the Nazis had already swallowed up Austria in a practically bloodless victory, occupied the Sudetenland and then all of Czechoslovakia. Hitler was at his political peak with a mighty Nazi military machine at his disposal. The Nazis seemed invincible and no European or other nation dared oppose them — politically or militarily. Then on November 11th, 1938, the Poles dropped their philatelic/political bomb — they issued a commemorative stamp set. The Polish issue (Scott #322) shows King Jagiello and Queen Jadwiga in front of the royal tent with the Teutonic emissary. On the ground, in front of the King and Queen, lie the helmet and swords which were the "gifts" of the Prussians.

Aside from the affront, to the Nazis, of the stamp commemorating the Polish victory over the Germans; it was issued on the 20th anniversary of the total defeat of the Germans in World War One.

The German ambassador, in Warsaw, immediately entered a very strong protest to the Polish government against the issuance of the stamps and

demanding an immediate withdrawal of the entire series.

The Polish ambassador, in Berlin, was put "on the carpet" by the German Minister of State. Propaganda Minister Goebbels increased his tirade against the Poles. Whatever the intent of the Polish Postal Authorities; they had, indeed, zeroed in on a very very tender "nerve point" — historically speaking.

At that time; Poland was not only under terrific pressure from the Nazis, other European nations — also fearful of Hitler, brought diplomatic pressure upon the Polish government to withdraw the stamp issues. With political and/or military pressure from all sides: Poland withdrew the stamp issue and on February 6th, 1939, reissued the series making one slight concession. The 15gr (Scott #339) reissue was precisely as the initial stamp but the helmet and swords, at the foot of the King and Queen, had been "removed". The Polish government, evidently, felt that this was "enough" of a concession to make and continued with the commemorative series. The Nazis, of course, still persisted in having the whole series withdrawn but the cold philatelic battle yielded to the first phases of World War Two when the Nazis crossed the Polish borders in September of that same year.

Soon after this initial military phase started and World War Two began to heat up and spread over the world; the various propaganda/espionage and stamp forgery issues (if not before) entered the great battle. Most of these issues did not surface until well after World War Two. Even today, not all of the facts are known about many of the propaganda/espionage/forgery philatelic issues. Between World War One and World War Two, before the Polish issues described, there were various other propaganda stamps

and/or labels printed. However — somehow — I've always felt that the Polish commemorative issues of Nov. 11th, 1938 was the first philatelic broadside of World War Two.

NEW ISSUES

Fairy Tales

On March 15, 1968 the Polish Post issued a set consisting of 8 multi-color stamps featuring illustrations of

mon paper in sheets of 20 stamps by P.W.P.W. Warsaw. Designed by Helena Matuszewska. Quantities issued:

20 gr.	5,000,000
40 gr.	6,000,000
60 gr.	5,500,000
2.00 zl.	3,000,000
2.50 zl.	3,700,000
3.40 zl.	4,000,000
5.50 zl.	1,100,000
7.00 zl.	1,100,000



some of the most popular children's fairy tales.

20 gr - Puss in Boots; 40 gr - A Raven and a Fox 60 gr - Pan Twardowski; 2.00 zl. - About a Fisherman and a Fish; 2.50 zl. - Little Red Coat; 3.40 zl. - Cinderella; 5.50 zl. - Inch Girl; 7.00 zl - Snow White.

Most of these fairy tales are based folk motives and originate from the famous Greek fablist Aesop who dealt with this kind of literature in the 6th century B.C. Later, from the 7th century on, many poets and writers gave these fairy tales a new literary shape, and among others: Frenchmen — La Fontaine and Perrault; Germans — Grimm brothers; Dane — Andersen; Russians — Pushkin and Krylov; Poles — Krasicki and Mickiewicz. Generally the plot of their fairy tales is based on the same folk motives and the morals they contain have not lost their meaning till our days.

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IN MEMORIAM

Stanley Buck #723

STECZYNSKI TALK ON PULASKI AT PROGRAM MEETING

Myron Steczynski was our speaker at the April 26th Program Meeting. He spoke on Clement Pulaski and showed and described material in his collection of U.S. Pulaski stamps. It is surprising to see such a large collection built up from this one 2-cent stamp.

POLONUS MEDAL

(Continued from page 258-1)

of stamp exhibitions where Poland stamps will be shown are asked to inform us so that we can make our Polonus Award available to them. Write to Alfred Szebel, 9041 Emerson St., Des Plaines, Ill. 60016.

POLONUS WILL MEET AT COMPEX '68

At our Business Meeting held on Good Friday, it was decided that our Program Meeting in the month of May be changed from the fourth Friday of the month to the fifth Friday, or May 31st, the opening day of COMPEX '68. On this evening Polonus members will meet at the In Salle Hotel in downtown Chicago. A short meeting will be held in Room 1850 at 8:30 p.m. after which the members may view the exhibition.

A special cacheted envelope will be printed up for the occasion cancelled with the special CompeX postmark and will be distributed gratis to members attending.

MEETING OF MAY 10th

For this meeting we ask the Chicagoland members to bring along their forgeries or doubtful Poland stamps. After the business end of the meeting, Dr. L. P. Kozakiewicz will have his three volume collection of Poland

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— Annual Dues are \$2.50 —

forgeries and fantasy issues available. Members will be able to compare their forgeries and check them out.

Dr. Kozakiewicz is building up this collection as a reference collection and will eventually donate it to the Polonus Philatelic Library. He asks that members who have forgeries that are missing in his collection, to donate them to him so that he can make it as complete as possible. Send them to Dr. Leon P. Kozakiewicz, 1530 N. Damen Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60622.

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