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Computer Generated Forgeries of General Gouvernement Stamps 1940-43

By STANLEY KRONENBERG

Extra material by Alan Blunt

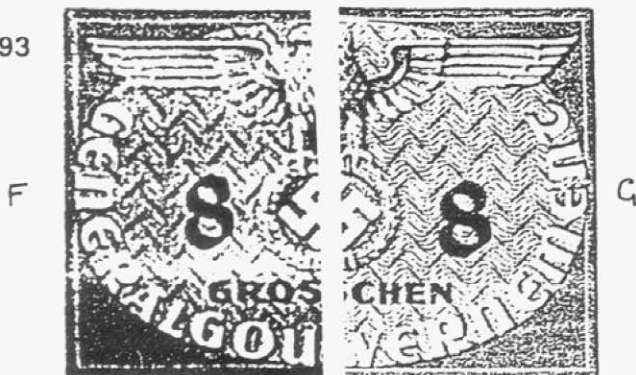
The story begins with a visit from Les Leech to the Editor during which he produced a stock sheet of stamps that he had purchased for a relatively modest sum as forgeries from a local dealer at a stamp fair.

The centerpiece was a set of large size Official stamps (SG 0 392 to 0 415). At first sight the only odd thing to stand out was that they were all on card rather than paper. They had also been separated by guillotining through the perforations but this did not seem to be of importance. Closer inspection of the stamps showed that the figures of value lacked the characteristic bumps in the paper of a typographed portion of the design.

They were sent to Dr. Stanley Kronenberg for his observations and he replied as follows:

"I was expecting it to happen sooner or later and finally it did happen: postage stamps have been forged by means of a computer to defraud collectors.

SG 0 393



F

SG O 460



G



"I received from England mint World War II German occupational stamps of Poland. They are: Scott #N 73, 74 and 75 and Official Mail stamps 1 through 36 (SG equivalent O 392-415, O 456-467 and 420-422). Their owner was aware of the fact that they were not normal stamps and wanted me to have them identified.

"These forgeries were made using a high resolution digital camera. The images were down-loaded on a computer and edited. For example all traces of ink were removed from stamp margins and color shades were adjusted to resemble the originals closely. The images were then printed out using a high quality printer on a stiff illustration type paper. Finally gum was applied to the reverse and perforations were made.

"These forgeries have a crisp and fresh appearance and without examination can easily be mistaken for authentic stamps. However, examination under magnification identifies them in all cases for what they are.

SG 421 and 422



F

G

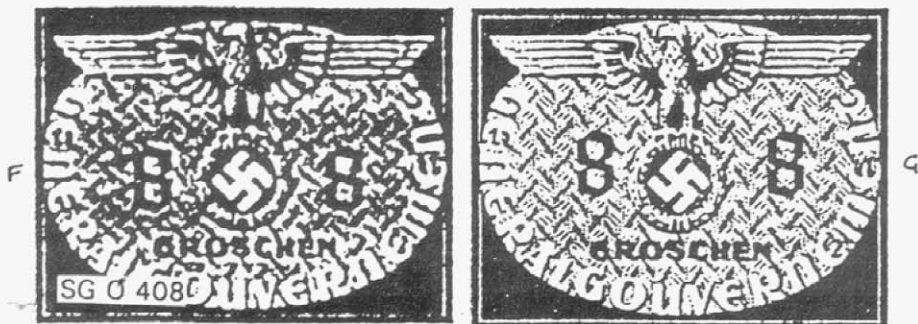


"Forgeries of the intaglio (recess-printed) stamps are very easy to identify. The fine lines of the engravings are blurred or missing and this effect is quite marked at even four times magnification. The photocopies show this quite clearly.

"In the case of the Official mail stamps, where the originals were printed by photogravure and the numerals were imprinted typographically in a separate operation, the appearance of the forgeries is very close to the appearance of authentic stamps. One can distinguish these forgeries from authentic stamps using strong magnification. (30 times is convenient). Under this magnification you can see dots in the design whose colors are different from the overall color of the stamp. This is an artefact of all digital cameras and never occurs in authentic stamps. (As a cross-check - 8 times magnification obtained using a photocopier shows a distinctly "harder" image for the authentic stamp as against the forgery).

"These forgeries can also be identified by their paper which is thick and shows a bright white fluorescence under UV light. Other types of paper though could have been used in other printings.

"These forgeries are recent - they certainly could not have been made before digital imaging technology became available. These forgeries are dangerous and their existence casts a cloud over all material to be seen. This information has also been sent to "Germany Specialist."



Postal fraud in the Kingdom of Poland 1858 – 1870

By ZBIGNIEW MIKULSKI

Translated from Polish by dr Paul Buchsbayew

The World Philatelic Exhibition POLSKA 93 is already the third international exhibition to be held in Poland. It has become traditional to include in the exhibition catalogue an article pertaining to the classical period of Polish philately, that is postal history in the Kingdom of Poland.

Continuing this tradition, I have decided to describe in the catalogue an interesting chapter from that period, namely postal fraud from 1858 to 1870. This subject is well represented in my collection of the Kingdom of Poland which has been during the past ten years at various International exhibitions. It has been displayed for the first time in Poland during the showing of my collection in the Postal Museum in Wrocław, June 1990.

The introduction of postage stamps on 1 (13) January, 1858 in Russia and the Kingdom of Poland was an invitation for fraud espe-

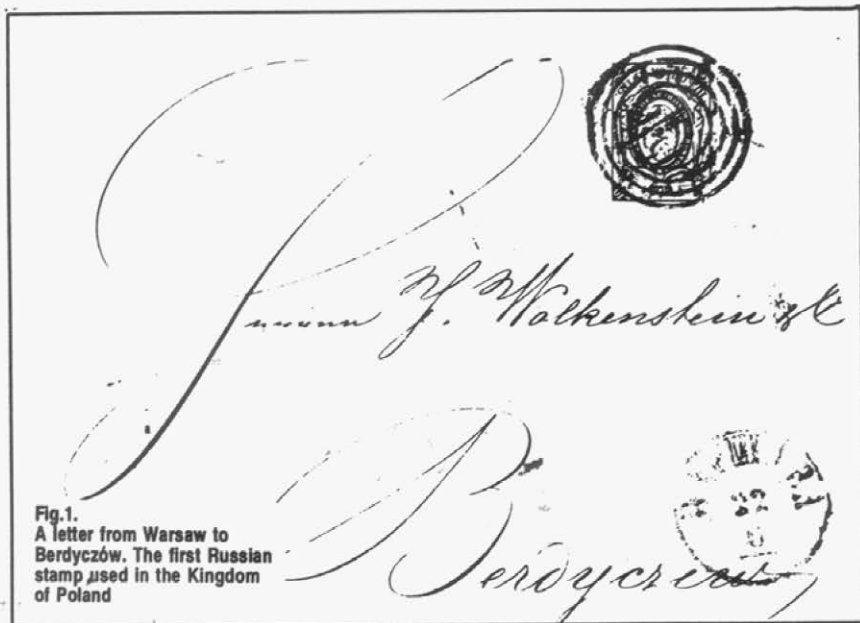


Fig.1.
A letter from Warsaw to
Berdyczów. The first Russian
stamp used in the Kingdom
of Poland

cially in view of the postal regulation requiring the stamps to be cancelled by pen. Postal fraud involved removal of such cancelled stamps from letters, bleaching the pen cancellation and re-use or future correspondence. The post office was of course only paid once for its services. This procedure was in fact facilitated by the practice of pre-paying the postage in cash, with the postal clerks physically affixing the stamps on envelopes and cancelling them by pen.

The removal of pen cancellation from postage stamps was not a problem for the offenders. Chemicals to remove ink were readily available and in fact widely used to edit written correspondence. The Postal Administration in St. Petersburg realized soon after the introduction of postage stamps that they are being cleaned and re-used. On February 28, 1858 a new method of cancelling stamps was introduced: instead of pen cancellations, stamps were to be invalidated by the use of a city postmark, exactly the same as before the advent of the postage stamp, or during the pre-stamp period.

The usage of the pre-stamp handstamps did not last long however. On May 31, 1858 Russia adapted the use of number postmarks. In the Kingdom of Poland, on March 17-27, 1858 cancellations appeared in the form of four concentric rings and a numeral corresponding to a different locality. Despite these new cancelling devices, postal fraud persisted. One of such examples is a letter from Warsaw 22.6.1858 to Berdyczów in Russia (Fig. 1). The cover is franked with the first Russian stamp, which under the Warsaw "1" postmark has another red cancellation with the date inserted manually "16/6", or six (!) days before the actual mailing of the letter in Warsaw. Furthermore, two first Russian stamps indicate double and fraudulent usage:



Fig. 2.
Polish No "1" postmark on
the Russian "Żytomierz"
postmark



Fig. 3.
Polish "120" postmark on the
Russian number postmark
"104" from Białystok

The first stamp (Fig. 2) is cancelled by Warsaw "1" strike. Under this postmark we find the pre-philatelic postmark from Żytomierz in Russia. The second stamp, cancelled by "120" of Kielce (Fig. 3) has been previously used in Białystok and shows traces of the "104" dot postmark.

Later Russian issues used in the Kingdom of Poland before the introduction of its first postage stamp on January 1, 1860, have also been fraudulently used. In fact, some businesses have massively abused the post by re-using previously cancelled stamps on their correspondence.

Fig. 4.
A letter sent by the "Kopalnie
i Huta Hordliczki" firm

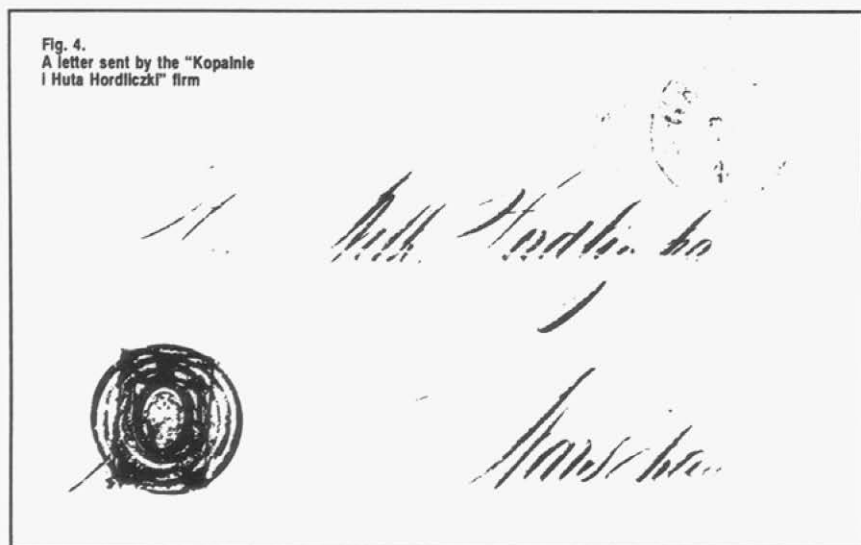


Fig. 5.
Frauds in Radom: a letter
from 1858

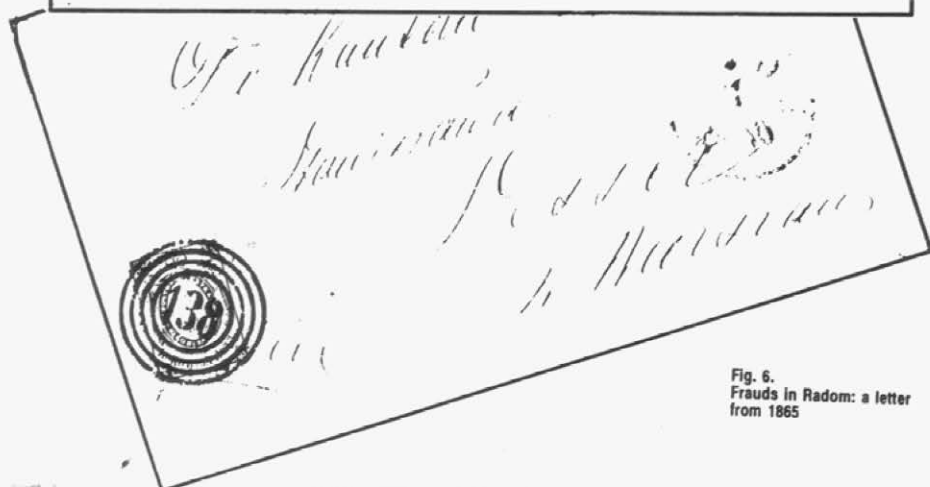


Fig. 6.
Frauds in Radom: a letter
from 1865

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 490-11)

78th Apostolic Journey of Pope John Paul II to Poland (6th Visit)

By ARKADIUSZ WALINSKI

(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS ISSUE)

MAY 31—JUNE 10, 1997



Wrocław - May 31, 1997:

Commemorative postmark. Portrait of Pope John Paul II and his coat of arms. — * V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE * / 31.05.1997 Wrocław 1. (5th Visit of Pope John Paul II in Poland).

Legnica - June 2, 1997:

Commemorative postmark. Pope John Paul II with Pastoral Cross. Coat of arms of the city of Legnica (Lion and crossed St. Peter's keys). PIERWSZA WIZYTA OJCA ŚW. JANA PAWŁA II W LEGNICY / LEGNICA 7 / 02.06.1997. (1st Visit of the Holy Father John Paul II).

Gorzów Wielkopolski - June 2, 1997:

Commemorative postmark. Pope John Paul II imparting blessing. V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE / 02.06.1997 GORZÓW WLKP. 16 / (5th Visit of Pope John Paul II in Poland).



Gniezno - June 2, 1997:

Commemorative postmark. Portrait of Pope John Paul II. V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE / 02.06.1997. GNIEZNO 1. (5th visit of Pope John Paul II in Poland).

Poznań - June 3, 1997

Commemorative postmark. Portrait of Pope John Paul II.
V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE /
03.06.1997 POZNAŃ 1. (5th visit of Pope John Paul in Poland).

Kalisz - June 4, 1997:

Commemorative postmark. Pope John Paul II imparting blessing.
17th century image of the Holy Family from the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady of Kalisz.
V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE /
KALISZ 1 / 04.06.1997. (5th visit of Pope John Paul in Poland).



Częstochowa - June 4, 1997:

Commemorative postmark. Shrine of Our Lady of Jasna Góra (Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady) and the coat of arms of Pope John Paul II.

V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE /
04.06.1997 CZĘSTOCHOWA 1 / (5th visit of John Paul II in Pol.).

Zakopane - June 6, 1997:

Commemorative postmark. Coat of arms of Pope John Paul II.
View of Giewont Peak in the Tatra Mountains.
OJCIEC ŚW. W TATRACH / ZAKOPANE 1 * 06.06.1997
(The Holy Father in the Tatra Mountains).

Ludźmierz - June 7, 1997:

Commemorative postmark. Christ on cross with landscape of the Podhale region. V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE / 07.06.1997. LUDŹMIERZ
(5th visit of Pope John Paul II in Poland).



**MATKA BOSKA
LUDŹMIERSKA**



Ludźmierz - June 7, 1997

Commemorative postmark. The Holy Father reciting the Rosary in front of the statue of the Madonna and Child of Ludźmierz. SANKTUARIUM MARYJNE / LUDŹMIERZ / 07.06.1997 / V PIELGRZYMKA / JANA PAWŁA II / (Marian Sanctuary of Ludźmierz, 5th Pilgrimage of John Paul II).

Kraków - June 7, 1997

Commemorative postmark. Basilica of St. Mary in Kraków. Coat of arms of Pope John Paul II. V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE / 07.06.1997 KRAKÓW 1 / (5th visit of Pope John Paul II in Poland).

Kraków - June 8, 1997

Commemorative postmark. Statue of Queen Jadwiga and Coat of arms of the Faculty of Theology of the University in Kraków. KANONIZACJA BŁOGOSŁAWIONEJ KRÓLOWEJ JADWIGI / OJ. ŚW. JAN PAWEŁ II W POLSCE / KRAKÓW 1 - 08.06.1997 (Canonization of Blessed Queen Jadwiga. (Holy Father John Paul II in Poland).



Kraków - June 8, 1997

Commemorative postmark. Coat of arms of Pope John Paul II, Faculty of Theology and the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. 600-LECIE WYDZIAŁU TEologicznego UNIWERSYTETU JAGIELLOŃSKIEGO / OJ. ŚW. JAN PAWEŁ II W POLSCE / 08.06.1997 / KRAKÓW 1 / (600th Anniversary of the Faculty of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. Holy Fr. John Paul II in Poland).

dine Franciscans in Dukla built in 1740-42. Coat of arms of Pope John Paul II. * V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE * / 09.06.1997 DUKŁA. (5th Visit of Pope John Paul II in Poland).

Kraków - June 9, 1997

Commemorative postmark. Statue of St. Hedwig, Church of Saint Hedwig containing the relics of the Saint, and coat of arms of Pope

Dukla - June 9, 1997

Commemorative postmark. Baroque friary church of the Bernardine John Paul II. WIZYTA OJCA ŚW. JANA PAWŁA II W KOŚCIELE ŚW. JADWIGI / 09.06.1997 / KRAKÓW 23 / (Visit of the Holy Father John Paul II in the Church of St. Hedwig).



Krosno - June 10, 1996:

Pope John Paul II with open arms. Church of St. Peter the Apostle and St. John of Dukla in Krosno. Pope John Paul II's coat of arms OJCIEC ŚW. JAN PAWEŁ II NA PODKARPACIU / KROSNO 1 10.06.1997. (Holy Father John Paul II visits the Podkarpacie region.)

Krosno - June 10, 1997:

Commemorative postmark. Franciscan Church of the Visitation of Our Lady in Krosno. Coat of arms of Pope John Paul II.

* V WIZYTA PAPIEŻA JANA PAWŁA II W POLSCE * / 10.06.1997. KROSNO-1. (5th visit of Pope John Paul II in Poland).

Rybnik - June 1, 1997:

Commemorative postmark used for mail flown by plane from Rybnik to Wrocław. Portrait of Pope John Paul II. POCZTA SAMOLOTOWA + V PIELGRZYMKA PAPIEŻA / JANA PAWŁA II DO POLSKI / 01.06.1997 + RYBNIK 1.

(Plane Post. 5th pilgrimage of Pope John Paul II to Poland).

In addition to the postal postmark, another round cancel was used

showing JAK 12 plane. PRZEWIEZIONO POCZTA SAMOLOTOWA NA TRASIE / RYBNIK - WROCŁAW / Piloci: Aleksander Sewiński / Tadeusz Mężyk / JAK 12 SP AWZ. Flown by plane post on the route Rybnik-Wrocław. Names of pilots and type of plane.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



In my collection there are three letters from the firm "Kopalnic i Huta Hordliczki" (The Mines and Foundry plant "Hordliczki") in Zagórz, all franked by Russian stamps no. 2, 3 (Fig. 4) and no. 5 issued 1858-59, all previously used. In some post offices, fraud persisted for a long period of time. This is illustrated by covers from Radom. The first used in 1858 and franked with Russian stamps issued the same year (Fig. 5); the second used in 1865 (Fig. 6). Both letters are franked by previously used stamps. The introduction of the first Polish stamp on January 1, 1860 did not interrupt the illegal manipulations. On the contrary, the re-use of stamps persisted with virtually official sanction. Studying postal archives, we discover several affairs where postal officials from various districts actually cooperated with each other and exchanged stocks of previously used stamps.

Here are some examples of postal fraud using the first Polish stamp:

- A fragment of letter from Biała to Winnitsa (Fig. 7) - The Polish stamp has been cancelled by "55" of Biała. Under this cancellation there is a red postmark "202" of Widawa.

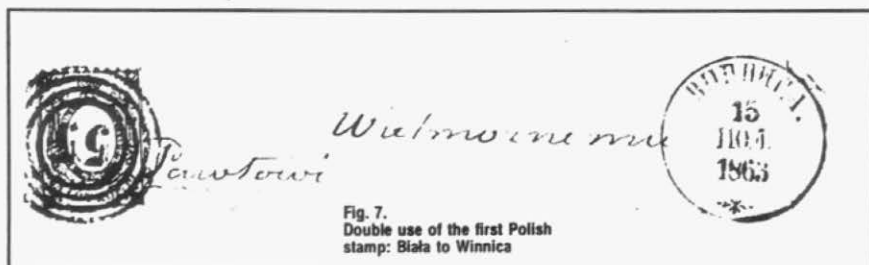


Fig. 7.
Double use of the first Polish
stamp: Biała to Winnica

- Cover from Gombin, 1861 to Soczewka (Fig. 8) - The Polish stamp has under the strike "234" of Gombin the partially scraped "1" cancellation of Warsaw.



Fig. 8.
Double use of the first Polish
stamp: A letter from Gombin
to Soczewka

— A cover from Ciechocinek, 1862 to St. Petersburg franked with three examples of the first Polish stamp (Fig. 9). Two of the stamps are re-used and underneath the "240" cancellation of Ciechocinek, we see "1" strikes of Warsaw.

Two postal administrations, one in Kibarty (cancellation "282") and the other in Wierzbolów (cancellation "25") permitted massive postal fraud during the 1861-64 period. Most interesting is the fact that



Fig. 9.
Double use of the first Polish
stamp: A letter from
Ciechocinek

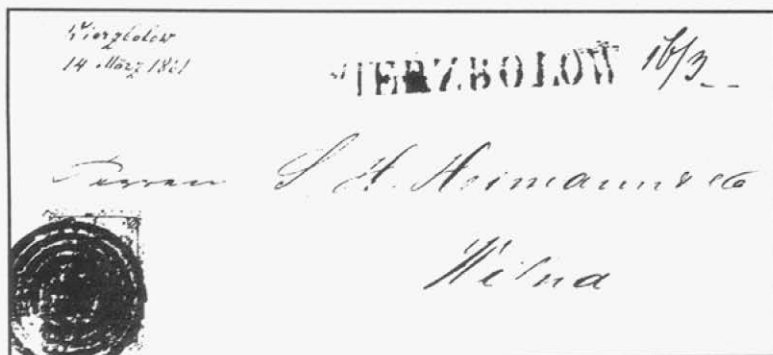
these Polish post offices used for the purpose of fraud Russian stamps which in fact were no longer valid in Poland during that time. Virtually all letters are franked with Russian no. 5, which under the Polish cancellation bear the Russian numeral postmarks.

Postal officials did not even bother removing or cleaning the previous Russian postmarks. To cover them, they simply applied extra force to the new Polish numeral strikes (Figs. 10-11).



Fig. 10.
A letter from Kibarty

Fig.11.
A letter from Wierzbolow



Another interesting postal fraud, this time to the detriment of the Russian post offices is the fragment franked with the first Polish stamp cancelled by "24" of Mitawa in Kurland.

Under the Russian Mitawa postmark we find the Polish "28" postmark from Suwałki (Fig. 12). The history of this stamp is as follows:

During 1860-1870, the firm of L.I. Salzmann of Mitawa continued extensive commercial correspondence. This firm had to 'cooperate' with the postal authorities, since much of their correspondence shows postal fraud and re-use of previously cancelled stamps (Fig. 13). It is possible that an employee of the firm removed a stamp from a letter that came from the Kingdom of Poland and without realizing that the stamp had

Fig.12.
The fraudulent use of the first Polish stamp in Mitawa (Russia)

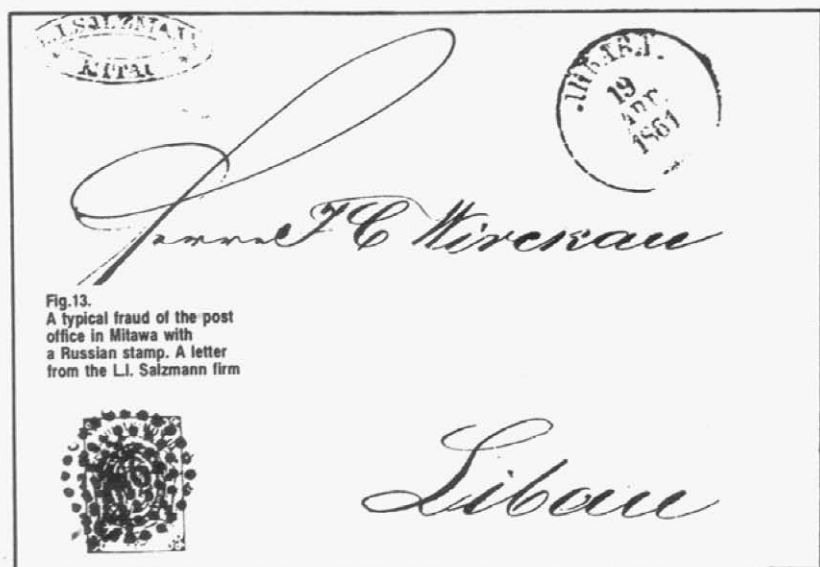


Fig.13.
A typical fraud of the post office in Mitawa with a Russian stamp. A letter from the L.I. Salzmann firm

no validity on the Russian territory, placed it on an outgoing letter to Kurland. A postal clerk, no doubt an accomplice in an ongoing fraud, accepted the stamp as proper postage. The re-introduction of Russian stamps after the withdrawal of the first Polish stamp in 1865 did not stop the already existing fraudulent practices. A letter from Kłomnica in 1869 to Wrocław is franked by a previously used adhesive (Fig. 14).

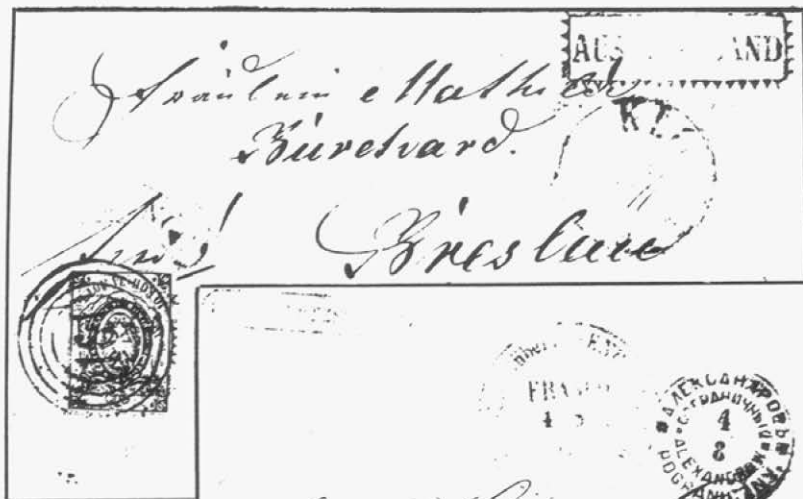


Fig. 14.
A letter from Kłomnica to
Wrocław from 1869

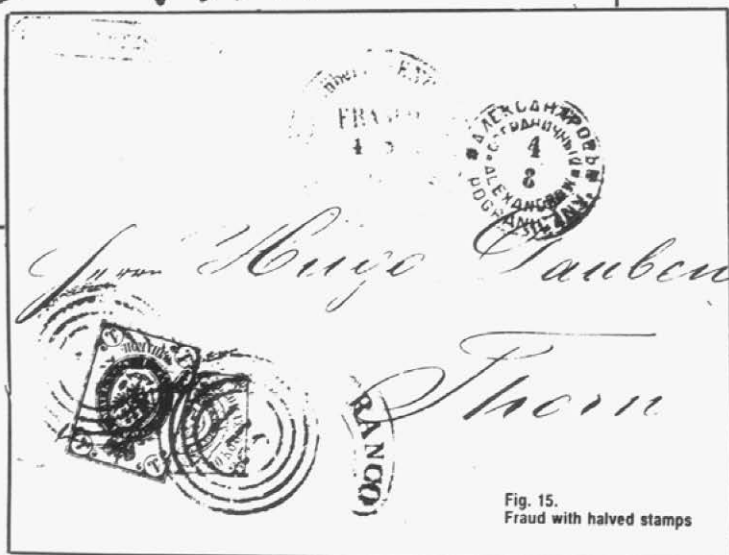


Fig. 15.
Fraud with halved stamps

Another kind of fraud involved using bisected stamps, placed on letters in a fashion which prevented detection that only halves of stamps were used. Two examples of this fraud are shown: A letter from Alexandrow Pogranychny to Toruń franked with 1k and half of 10k (Fig. 15). The bisected 10k is placed in a particular way suggesting that it is actually overlapped by the 1k. The second letter (Fig. 16) from Warsaw to Trieste is similarly franked with half of 10k, this one already previously cancelled in Warsaw. What we have here is a double fraud, a half a stamp, used twice and further imitating the entire adhesive.

A final aspect of postal fraud which I would like to describe, involved actual theft of stamps from letters. Two covers from Warsaw: 29.1.1864 and 7.2.1864, both from Płock (Fig. 17 and 18) illustrate

Fig. 16.
Fraud with halved stamps

Wertvoll!



Herrn Geiger & Söhne
Grossh.

Fig. 17.
Letter with stolen stamps

FRANCO

Michalina Jan. Luboradska
w. Stochu!
Wiesława W. M. M. M.



this type of theft. Both covers were posted in Warsaw, the one from 29.1. had the stamp originally at the upper right corner, while the one from 7.2. had the stamp on the left side. Both stamps were cancelled by numeral strikes, parts of which are still showing. The stamps were removed from both of these letters by a postal employee. To mask the evidence of this theft, the places where parts of the postmarks were visible, were struck with "FRANCO" handstamps which were used exclusively for foreign mail.

Fig. 18.
Letter with stolen stamps

Michalina Jan.
Luboradska
w. Stochu
Dra. W. M. M. M.



Postal fraud in the Kingdom of Poland, specifically the reuse of previously cancelled stamps, was truly wide-spread with over 40 different localities taking part in this practice. Until now little attention has centered on this truly fascinating aspect of postal history of Poland. I hope that this article will encourage further research and study of similar manipulations to defraud postal service.

POLISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION 1998

The Polish American Heritage Month Committee has announced that preparations for the 1998 national celebration in October are now underway. Since the committee was organized in 1981, it has continued to unite cultural, civic, religious and social organizations for a month-long celebration which highlights Polish history and culture. The national Heritage Month Committee is headquartered in the Polish American Cultural Center Museum, 308 Walnut St. in historic Philadelphia, and works closely with the Polish American Congress, an umbrella organization with over 3,000 member Polish American groups across the United States. Together they strive to highlight Polish heritage by sponsoring local coloring and essay contests, book fairs, cultural events, folk art displays, concerts and other activities to assemble Polish Americans for a meaningful celebration.

During the October 1998 celebration, the national committee will highlight in its coloring contest artwork the accomplishments of Adam Mickiewicz, noted writer and poet during the 200th anniversary of his birth. A brief history of Adam Mickiewicz will be printed on the reverse side of the artwork to help students learn more about this famous figure in world history. Organizations interested in sponsoring a local coloring contest this year can contact the national committee for a free copy of the coloring contest artwork.

National Chairman, Michael Blichasz, encourages all proud Polish Americans to sponsor activities during October that will unite and educate Polonia and the general public about the accomplishments of Poles and Polish Americans in the fields of science, art, music, literature and the military. If you would like a free packet of information, write to the Polish American Heritage Month Committee, c/o Polish American Cultural Center Museum, 308 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106. You can also visit them on the internet at the Cultural Center's web site at www.polishamericancenter.org.

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Annual dues, which include a subscription to the Bulletin are \$16.00 (U.S. currency only) and should be sent to the Polonus Treasurer, P.O. Box 458, Berwyn, IL 60402. Membership dues are payable by December 31st, for the next calendar year. New members will receive all the 'Bulletins' for the year in which they join. Changes of address, problems with receiving the Bulletin, should be addressed to: Polonus Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 458, Berwyn, IL 60402. General matters pertaining to the Society, contribution of articles for the Bulletin, complaints or other matters should be directed to the President.