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POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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Polish 2nd Corps

by Chester A. Schafer



FORMATION AND ACTIVITY

Shortly after Germany went to war against Russia in 1941, a Polish-Russian Treaty was signed which began the organization of the Polish Army in Russia. It was the strangest army in the world, from generals to the youngest soldier, all were prisoners of war. The haggard masses of Poles liberated from prisons came to this army. In the autumn of 1941, the first regiments were organized. They began training under severe conditions. Clothes and boots were lacking, and only in December did the first coats arrive from England. But for all the Poles the biggest complaint was that they had to suffer the indignity of training with wooden rifles. Temperatures of 60 degrees below zero on the steppes near the Volga, and 108 degrees of heat under the Pamir mountains near the Chinese frontier tested the mettle of these soldiers. After this preliminary training they evacuated to Persia and Iraq in the autumn of 1942. The Polish Divisions embarked at Krasnovodzk and sailed through the Caspian Sea landing at the Persian harbor of Pahlevi. Here they were conditioned, well fed, and trained; and with the arrival of Transport columns, they moved to the sands of the boundless desert between the Tigres and the Euphrates, to the town of Fable, near Baghdad in Iraq. They received weapons and equipment for a further period of organization and training, and upon completing their final training with highly successful exercises in the Holy Land, they were transferred to Egypt in December, 1943.

In February, 1944, they embarked at Port Said and Alexandria, and crossed the Mediterranean. They returned to Europe. After long years they were following their ancestors, ("Z ziemi wloskiej do Polski") from Italian soil to Poland. During the patrols and fire fights on Monte Croce, they inflicted their first losses on the enemy. In the last days of April, preparations for the assault on Monte Cassino had begun. Monte Cassino is of strategic importance as it juts into the valley and bars the road to Rome. In this fortress of concrete and stone, the Germans were firmly entrenched, and the towering summit of Monte Cairo gave the enemy an eagle's-eye view of all the country round about. Several previous futile attempts were made before the Poles were assigned to take this im-

pregnable bastion. On the 12th of May, after forty minutes of artillery fire, the infantry assaulted outer pill-boxes and strong points. Casualties were extremely heavy. The enemy was stunned but determined to hold their position at all costs. At dawn on the 17th, guns began another barrage, and artillery fire mowed down the trees until there was nothing to see but stumps; yet they failed to dislodge the enemy which hid in the corridors and caves of the monastery. The infantry climbed the craggy slope of these mountains at a price that was dear in human blood. On the 18th of April, the Polish flag waved over the monastery—the Poles had opened the road to Rome.

A new plan called for the Poles to attack on a front up the Adriatic coast. From Pescara to the Gothic Line, tanks and infantry began to pursue the German Divisions without respite. The advance continued through the broiling summer. Centrafinestra, Cura Nuova, Margherita, Villa Nuova, Castelfidardo, Osimo, P. Del Cannone, Simonetti, and Monte Della Crescia were occupied as one attack followed another. The decisive battle was centered at Ancona which was the keystone of German defense from the Tyrrhenian Sea to the Adriatic coast. The Germans had to retreat and abandon all positions south of the Esino River. Poles lashed out, cut the German lines of retreat, and captured many enemy troops. The town and harbor of Ancona was occupied on July 18, 1944. Thus, the allies had got the best harbor on the Adriatic, and a starting point for the assault of the Gothic Line by the British Eighth Army.

In the assault of the Gothic Line, Poles played the part in the difficult drive through the Appenine Mountains. Continual rain and mud impaired the long journey of the tanks and infantry. Rations and ammunition had to be transported by mules. Two days after the first attack, the Poles occupied Santa Sofia and the hills surrounding the town. Continuing along the Rabbi River, they pursued the retreating enemy. Winter saw them in the battle for Faenza. They cleared the Germans from the area between the rivers Senio and Sintria. In the spring, the big attack began on Bologna which guards the entrance to the Po Valley. After bitter fighting they entered Castel Bolognese and Im-

ola on the road to Bologna. In the hardest battle of all at the Gaiano, they gave a knockout blow to the German paratroops, and on the 21st of April, 1945, the Poles entered Bologna. The last bulwark of German resistance in Italy had fallen.

On all the roads of war, the Poles have left white crosses as signposts on the road back to Poland. For what ideal did the Poles offer their lives? Why does their blood enrich Italian soil? They were mowed down like corn in the fields, without any thought for themselves. They died with a vision—of the Hill of the Three Crosses in Wilno, of the woods of the Carpathians, and of the hills surrounding Lwow—before their eyes. They fell “for our and your freedom” in order that might should not triumph over right. They fought for the right to return to work on their own soil, and to reconstruct their own lives for all Poland, for the right to mold the future of Polish people, on Polish soil, with Polish hands.

POSTAL ISSUES

In December, 1945, Headquarters of the Polish 2nd Corps, attached to the British Eighth Army, issued a set of four stamps and a souvenir sheet for use among Polish soldiers serving with the Central Mediterranean Forces in Italy and the Middle East.

The 45 groszy green-gray pictures the Monte Cassino abbey and bears the dates of the assault, May 11-18, 1944. The 55 groszy gray-blue depicts the harbor at Ancona and carries the dates of that campaign, July 7-18, 1944. The 1 zloty gray shows a view of Bologna and the dates of the battle, April 9-21, 1945. The 2 zloty brown bears a portrait of General Anders, Commander of the 2nd Corps.

The stamps were printed at the “Novissima” printery under the supervision of the Polish Main Field Post office #104 at Rome. They appear in sheets of 50, perforated, and also imperforate in a sheet with the Polish Army Eagle and the inscription “Polska Poczta Polowa 2 Korpusu.” Sheets were sold at a premium of 4 zlotys (8 zlotys total value of sheet) for the benefit of orphans and widows of deceased soldiers of the 2nd Corps.

On letters from camp to camp, these stamps paid the postage; but on mail sent to a place other than a Polish

camp, a British stamp had to be added. According to one Polish soldier, a British stamp is added not because it is compulsory but because British Postal authorities “look dissatisfied” if there were none. However, covers come through without British stamps. The writer has seen four such covers, registered mail properly backstamped Miami, Fla., and Chicago, Ill., which were received by Charles Cwiakala.

AUDIT OF TREASURER'S BOOKS

As of the end of January 1946

INCOME

Membership dues	\$218.00
Frame rental	14.50
Sale of Seals	5.05
Publication com. refund	23.95
Polpex 1945	274.09
Balance of 1944	301.10
Total Income	\$836.69

EXPENSE

Bulletin	\$275.00
Rent 1946	36.00
Stationery & Print.	23.50
Beeba	20.77
Postage	
J. Domar	6.72
A. Kloskowski	.41
T. Stanczak	.77
J. Rux 1943	6.00
J. Rux 1945	7.08
Secretary	2.10
Publicity Com.	1.70
Charter	1.00
Stamps Magazine	5.00
Coral Book	1.50
Kosciuszko Foundation	5.00
Addressograph Supplies	1.87
Central Federation	1.00
Nat. Federation (1945)	1.00
Nat. Federation (1946)	1.00
S. P. A. Dues (1945-46)	1.00
Minor Expenses	
Secretary's gift	2.25
Dr. Kozakiewicz's Diploma &	
100 C. P. S. sheets	4.75
Total Expenses	\$404.97

Total Income	\$836.69
Total Expense	404.97
Balance 1/29/46	\$431.72

Kad. Władysław Grabarz
Braunschweig-Germany

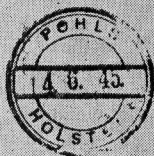
obóz polski nr. 6
Karl Hinze Weg 1.

POCZTA POLSKA
Polish Post 1945
Brunswick

obóz polski nr. 6
Braunschweig

20. Juli 1945

POCZTA
POLSKA



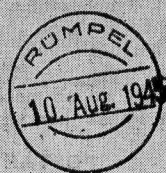
CROSS

POCZTA
POLSKA



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oflag 8 C

KARTA POCHTOWA
CARTE POSTALE

POCZTA
POLSKA



Polish Red Cross

iplanof

POCZTA
POLSKA



Polski Czerwony Krzyz



LONDON S. W. 1

Portions of covers from the group supplied to the author, per accompanying article. The stamps pictured on the bottom two covers were printed in May 1945, in red (4,500 copies) and in blue (1,000 printed), and were of a 1 mark value. They were used by Polish former internees in the Lubeck sector.

Cut courtesy STAMPS.

POLAND FORMER PRISON CAMP POST OFFICES

Clement A. Pulaski

In addition to the stamp news from the Woldenberg camp (which was treated in the article "Barbed Wire Stamps" in the Feb. 1946 Bulletin), it is reported that postal systems in various forms were set up in the camp of Grossborn, Murnau, Lubeka, Rumpel and Pohls, all centers of confinement for Polish prisoners of war. This is a story of fact, possibly without parallel in stamp news.

With deep gratitude we acknowledge the receipt of some helpful information concerning this subject, from an attache of the Polish Government. He supplied a number of representative items, of which several are herewith illustrated.

The following is a translation of the official document announcing the opening of the postal service at the Pohls camp:

Pohls, May 11, 1945.

To the Ministry of Postage and Telegraph in London:

A group of Officers and enlisted Poles liberated May 3, 1945, by the British Forces, established a Polish postal system at Pohls, near Lubeck, and later additional post offices were opened at other localities.

The stamps now doing service were made from wood plates under primitive camp conditions, while awaiting the moment of freedom.

Inasmuch as the German post offices are inactive, and the English office, function only for their own military needs, the establishment of a Polish postal system benefits also units of the Belgian and French armies.

The enclosed stamps and postal cards represent the complete series used by the Polish post offices.

For the Postal Commissions.

(Signed) F. Naperski.

(Signed) J. Goswiacki.

Enclosures:

Strips of three stamps.

2 postal cards.

*—Reprinted from STAMPS.

NEW MEMBERS

- 280 Walter Szymlek
2732 W. Haddon Ave.
Chicago 22, Illinois
(Poland, U. S., Philippines, For.)
281 Vincent Czarnowski



The 20 fen. red and chocolate appeared in May 1945, at Lubeck. (16,800 printed).



The 40 fen. brown lilac was issued in August 1945, at Lubeck. (68,980 printed).

761 W. 231st St.
New York 63, N. Y.
(Poland and Latin America)

282 Tadeusz Hyrc
Zakosciele 746
Niepolomice k. Krakowa
Poland
(Poland)

283 Dr. R. J. Kazyzowski
1704 W. 19th St.
Chicago 8, Illinois
(Foreign, U. S. and Revenues)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

T/4 Stanley J. Falcon, 36840440
Co. D., Special Troops, Hq. Sec.
Tacoma, Washington.



The four-stamp set issued by Polish Military Headquarters in Rome for use by forces of the Second Polish Corps in Italy and by civilian Polish refugees in the Italian provinces of Trani and Barletta has been received in New York.

The 1-lir, blue, illustrated in this column shows four bars of the Polish national anthem topped by the "Virtuti Militari," highest Polish military medal. The 3-lir red shows a map of Poland with a medieval grenadier talking to a young soldier who is holding a Tommy gun. The 5-lir purple pictures an unarmed soldier with a mother and child who are refugees. It is inscribed "War Relief Services." The 10-lir, green shows a map of Italy coats-of-arms and the Polish eagle.

These stamps were printed by the Istituto Poligrafico della Stato Officina at Rome in sheets of 200 with four numbered panes. They are also said to exist in a souvenir sheet.

An airmail stamp has been added to the Trani-Barletta set of four postage stamps. For this airpost item, the 1-lir blue of music design was reprinted in yellow and overprinted in black with the silhouette of an airplane, "POCZTA LOTNICZA" (air mail) and "L.25 + 100." It is said that 10,000 were issued on Feb. 11, the day the postage series appeared in a printing

said to consist of 40,000 sets.

*—Reprinted from STAMPS.

A NEW SPECIALIZED POLAND CATALOG

Dr. S. M. Mioduszewski submitted a catalog **POLISH POST SEVEN YEARS WAR** by H. M. Smith published in England, which contains a complete record of all stamps, seals, Field-Posts, and labels issued by the Polish Postal Authorities at home and abroad from 1939 to 1945.

Part One starts with the London Issues and gives a wealth of information about them including the four Monte Cassino overprint errors. Then the Field-Post in France is covered (described in the January 1945 **BULLETIN**), followed with the Polish Field-Post in Great Britain, with illustrations of the interesting seals and Postage Due stamps.

In Part Two Field-Post covers are listed of the French Period (see May 1945 **BULLETIN**) and of the British Period. Various Field-Posts overseas in the Soviet Union, Middle East, in Italy, and Canada are described in Part Three.

Part Four deals with covers from the many Internment Camps in Roumania, Hungary, Baltic States and Sweden, Switzerland, and Spain. Part Five—Prisoner of War Camps covers. Part Six illustrates the many special Airgraphs or V-Mails.

Part Seven comprises a list of Field-Post Offices, post-marks, slogans, and cancellations. Part Eight has all the issues of the Association of Polish Philatelists in Great Britain. Part Nine covers the German Occupation of Poland and lists all the General Government Issues.

The last 22 pages of the catalog are a supplement and deal with Prisoner of War Local Camp Posts in Germany. A complete listing and elaborate illustrations of all the Woldenberg Issues with accompanying information fill the greater part of this supplement. The Murnau Issues receive similar treatment, and all special cancellations of both camps are shown.

The catalog revealed much philatelic material heretofore unknown. Polonus members desiring to secure this catalog may send their orders to Jack Rux, 6136 Addison St., Chicago 34, Illinois. The price of this catalog is \$1.30, plus postage.

POLAND NO. 153

by Frank Jancowski



The 40 fenig bright violet (Scott's No. 153) of the 1920 issue, was found to be of little use, due to the rapidly rising postal rates. The inflation and unsettled financial condition of the country during the war with Russia caused the postal rates to be changed ever higher, two and three times a month.

The postal administration decided to make use of the 6,000,000 stamps of the 40 fenig value, by surcharging them with a new value. Proofs of a proposed surcharge show that the figure "3" was the same height as the letters Mk., and the original value was to be blotted out by a solid bar across the bottom of the stamp. This proposal was rejected, and the proofs were placed in the Postal Museum at Warsaw.

A figure "3" almost twice the size of the letters Mk. was used instead, and five thin lines across the full width of the stamp, instead of a solid bar, made up the surcharge. There were several printings beginning with January, 1921. At first a dull black ink was used, and later was changed to a glossy black.

Only one form was used throughout the entire period, and the following varieties are found on every sheet:

In the first four top rows the space between the figure "3" and "Mk." is $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm. whereas the balance of the sheet has 3 mm spacings.

There are also two types of periods after "Mk." On stamps Nos. 17, 24, 34, 38, 45, 50, 62, 71, 84, 91 and 99 the period is round. The remaining stamps of the sheet have a square period, with the exception of stamp No. 51, which has a comma after "Mk." in the early printings, but not on the later ones.

In the original 40 fenig value the perforations are 9x9, 10x10, 10x11½, 11½x11½, 11½x10, also imperforate.

In the surcharged stamps the perfs are 10x10, 10x11½, 11½x11½ and 11½x10.

There are also numerous printing varieties, such as shifted print, missing letters, surcharge "Mk." but no figure "3," five obliterating lines over the original value but no 3 Mk. surcharge.

The gum is either white or yellowish, the paper is of the thick smooth wove variety and is of even texture.

Double and inverted surcharges also exist.

*—Reprinted from STAMPS.

THIS n' THAT

Dr. John C. Moraczewski was shot by a holdup man and is at St. Mary's Hospital. His condition is improving.

At a past meeting it was brought up to resume Polonus efforts in the securing of a baloptican. This matter was shelved during the war as they could not be obtained then. Ben Reeves started a Baloptican Fund with a contribution which was quickly followed with donations by Dr. Uznanski, Miss Bain, J. Gapinski, C. Mikucki, and Roman Reinowski.

Roman Wojciecki, former Society historian, will move to Decatur, Ill., to make his new home there. He holds a job with the U. S. Army Signal Depot which will be transferred to a new location in Decatur. He has been promoted to foreman in the Teletype section. Good luck Roman!

The Jack Knight Airmail Society will hold its annual exhibit and bourse at Olympic Hall, Cicero, April 2-28.

Madame Curie, honored throughout the world for scientific achievement, has never been portrayed on a single stamp of Poland—country of her birth! The closest that she came to realizing this accomplishment was when her portrait was pictured on some seals which were sold to raise money for the building of a radium institute in Warsaw.

POLISH THUMBNAIL SKETCHES

by Bert Powell

Students of heraldry generally agree that the flag of Poland (as depicted on the U. S. Overrun Nations stamps) is the source of design for the United States Cavalry flag. The design was chosen in deference to the country of Pulaski who played an important part in the American Revolution and who did so much to organize the cavalry of that period.

* * *

Nikolaus Copernicus, the great astronomer whose Polish ancestry is indelibly recorded in the pages of time, was the subject of typical nazi propaganda. When the Germans overran Poland, they issued one or two stamps in honor of this great Pole, but imprinted the margins of the sheets with the statement that Copernicus was German. As if the historical records of the world could be brushed aside by mere wishful thinking!

* * *

The Gordon-Bennett International Balloon Race overprints of 1936 on Scott 306 and 307 of Poland were issued in the amount of 250,000 pairs. Incidentally many fakes exist of the overprint and the collector is cautioned against purchasing any "bargains" on this issue.

* * *

WANTED— A Polish specialist to collect and classify Scott's Poland 163. He'll have a life-time job for the known perforation, color, printing and paper varieties on this stamp number over 600!

Two of the scarcest Polish postage due stamps which are missing in most collections are Scott's J-92 and J-94 on VERTICALLY RIBBED instead of HORIZONTALLY RIBBED paper. There were only 200 of the former and 400 of the latter printed in error.

* * *

Among some of the most interesting Polish items in this country are the cardboard proofs in many colors of Scott's Nos. 219, 267, 301, 331, 278, 332, 1K35 and 217. These proofs were a part of the Polish Governmental display sent to this country for the Polish Pavilion at the New York World's

Fair in 1939-40. After the Fair this interesting display was loaned to the Polish Roman Catholic Archives and Museum in Chicago where the 1946 Polpex is being held. This great display of Polish stamps will afford collectors an unusual opportunity to view material that is very unusual and very seldom observed, as proofs of this type very rarely find their way to the open market.

* * *

Scott's Poland Nos. 246-7-8, depicting the likeness of Dr. Karol Kaczowski has the unique distinction of being a set of stamps which was printed by three different processes! The flat bed, rotary press and offset methods were all employed to print this series, each method producing one of the stamps in this historical commemorative set. A fact not generally known is that the works of this great Polish doctor were frequently consulted by the chief medical staff of the United States Army at the time that plans were being formulated for the building of the Panama Canal. The doctor was an authority on cholera and his studies and work on this dread disease have proved to be of immeasurable value to the medical world to this day ...and were an effective means of control at the building of the Panama Canal.

* * *

Many collectors of Polish stamps have often wondered about the semi-postal White Cross series Scott's B-1 to B-10. Their curiosity is aroused over the employment of the words "White Cross," "Why White Cross?" they ask. Has this term any relation to the Red Cross? is another question frequently asked of the Polish collector. The answer is that at the time of the issuance of this series of stamps, Poland was not yet an independent nation and therefore could not join the association of the International Red Cross. It therefore organized the White Cross and the founder of this organization whose aims were identical with that of the Red Cross, was Mme. Paderevski, the wife of the great pianist. The organization had an enviable record of accomplishment during the early days of reconstruction in Poland after the last war.

*—Reprinted from STAMPS.