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Discovery of a New Type in the Krakow Stamps*

by J. Gapinski and F. E. Wolosewicz

Recently while making a detailed analysis of a block of nine stamps of the Krakow issues, we were faced with a mass of conflicting information which could not be fitted into the framework of existing data.

The unusual thing about this block of nine stamps was that Professor Mikstein's signature appeared on the back of each stamp. A detailed analysis disclosed that the characteristic damages of the surcharge tallied with the known data, but that the dimensions of the surcharge did not agree with the genuine stamps. After checking and rechecking these dimensions, we came to the conclusion that we had discovered a new variety in the reprinted issues of Krakow stamps. Further analysis indicated that Professor Mikstein's signature on the back of each stamp was a rubber stamp forgery.

The discovery of the new type adds further difficulties to the already complicated problem of the Krakow stamps. This new type will be called type XI, in conformity with the types established by Professor Mikstein. Some interesting conclusions will be deduced in the latter part of the article, based on information obtained from a detailed analysis of the block of nine stamps of 80 heller denomination shown in Figure 1.

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Figure 1 (Reduced)—Block of nine stamps recently discovered, Type XI.

In order to make the reading matter of general interest, it is necessary to bring the average collector to date on the historical and philatelic background of Krakow stamps. For more complete analysis, the reader is referred to the articles appearing in STAMPS of August 30, 1941, and July 17, 1943.

The Krakow stamps of Poland consist of a series of overprinted Austrian stamps, issued upon direct authority

of the newly-formed government of Poland in 1919. The principal function of the stamps was to eliminate speculation with Austrian stamps in the territories, thereby safeguarding sources of postal revenue.

These stamps were issued in two different groups. One group was composed of typographed series of impressions, printed over Austrian stamps, while the other group consisted of lithographed impressions printed over other Austrian stamps. In this article only the typographed issues will be discussed.

These stamps were printed by private concerns, under direct supervision of postal authorities. Apparently the supervision was not of the best, as evidenced by the large number of unofficial reprints.

Six distinct types exist in the genuine typographed issues. These types may be classed as incidental, since they represent the major steps taken by the printer in adjusting the form to fit the various sizes of Austrian stamps.

The main controlling dimensions for all types were tabulated by Professor Mikstein of Krakow, Poland. Figure 2, shows all the important controlling dimensions.

Shortly after the issuance of the original stamps, numerous reprints were made, from parts of the reassembled original form. Six distinct types have been cataloged by Professor Mikstein. These he called types V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X. The recent discovery cannot be checked against the above, and is therefore classed as type XI.

The genuineness of every Krakow stamp is determined through dimensional analysis of the surcharge, in-

spection of the ink used in printing the surcharge, and finally, comparing the damaged letters with tabulated data.

The dimensional analysis forms the most important step in checking the stamps. This consists of measuring the various dimensions of the surcharge, and comparing these dimensions with data tabulated by Professor Mikstein.

The ink used in all genuine stamps is heavy bodied, covering the letters fully, while the reprints appear to be made with ink of low surface tension.

Type XI reprints which are the main subject of this article follow closely the genuine type I overprints. Variations exist in the control dimensions "a," "b," "e," "f," and "g" and are indicated in Figure 3.

This tabulation shows the various controlling dimensions in millimeters. The dimensions within the parentheses correspond with the genuine, while those dimensions without the parentheses are the ones found in measuring the subject block. The discrepancies between the two are obvious.

The position of the stamps in the field of 100 has also been established, by comparing the damaged letters, and the dimensions of the surcharge with known data. Thus, the position of the block in the field of 100 stamps has been established as the 56th, 57th, 58th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 76th, 77th and 78th.

The most interesting position is the 56th. Here the dimensions agree with the genuine, and the characteristic damages check with established data. Hence one would conclude that this stamp is genuine.

A closer inspection of the ink in the

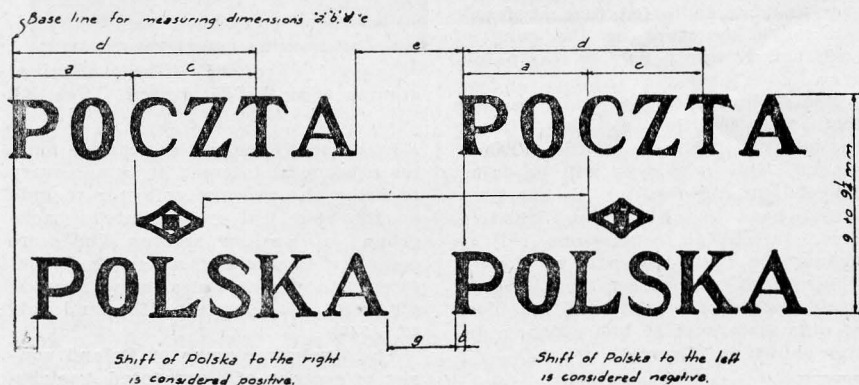


Figure 2—Enlarged view of surcharge showing main controlling dimensions.

$a = 5\frac{3}{4}; (5\frac{3}{4})$ $b = +\frac{1}{4}; (+\frac{1}{4})$ $e = 11\frac{3}{4}; (11\frac{1}{4})$ $f = 23; (23)$ $g = 11\frac{1}{4}; (10\frac{3}{4})$ <u>56th</u>	$a = 5\frac{1}{2}; (5\frac{3}{8})$ $b = +\frac{1}{8}; (+\frac{1}{8})$ $e = 11\frac{3}{4}; (11\frac{1}{4})$ $f = 23; (23\frac{1}{4})$ $g = 11\frac{1}{4}; (10\frac{3}{4})$ <u>57th</u>	$a = 5\frac{1}{8}; (5)$ $b = -\frac{1}{4}; (-\frac{1}{4})$ <u>58th</u>
$a = 5\frac{3}{8}; (5\frac{1}{4})$ $b = \pm\frac{1}{2}; (\pm\frac{3}{8})$ $e = 11\frac{3}{4}; (11\frac{1}{4})$ $f = 23\frac{3}{4}; (23\frac{3}{4})$ $g = 11\frac{1}{4}; (10\frac{3}{4})$ <u>66th</u>	$a = 5\frac{3}{4}; (5\frac{5}{8})$ $b = +\frac{1}{4}; (\frac{1}{4})$ $e = 11\frac{3}{4}; (11\frac{1}{4})$ $f = 23; (23\frac{1}{4})$ $g = 11\frac{1}{4}; (10\frac{3}{4})$ <u>67th</u>	$a = 5\frac{1}{2}; (5\frac{1}{4})$ $b = 0; (0)$ <u>68th</u>
$a = 5\frac{3}{4}; (5\frac{1}{2})$ $b = +\frac{1}{2}; (\frac{3}{8})$ $e = 11\frac{3}{4}; (11\frac{1}{4})$ $f = 23; (23)$ $g = 11\frac{1}{4}; (10\frac{3}{4})$ <u>76th</u>	$a = 5\frac{1}{2}; (5\frac{1}{4})$ $b = +\frac{1}{4}; (+\frac{1}{4})$ $e = 11\frac{3}{4}; (11\frac{1}{4})$ $f = 23\frac{3}{4}; (23\frac{3}{4})$ $g = 11\frac{1}{8}; (10\frac{3}{4})$ <u>77th</u>	$a = 5\frac{3}{4}; (5\frac{5}{8})$ $b = 0; (0)$ <u>78th</u>

Figure 3—Control dimensions for the surcharged stamps.

surcharge, would show that the impressions were made with an ink having a low degree of surface tension. This can be checked readily by viewing the stamp with a magnifying glass under a beam of strong diffused light. The individual letters would show a large number of small colorless islands surrounded by black ink. In a good many cases these colorless spots sometimes occupy the greater part of the letter, while the ink is relegated to the outsides of the letters. On the originals, however, there may be an occasional colorless spot, but as a rule the letters are quite well defined with a uniformly textured ink deposit.

A curious feature of the block is the forged use of Professor Mikstein's signature. Figure 4, shows the two signatures, the genuine and the forged.

The genuine signature, also rubber stamped, consists of heavy and bold letters, while the forgery has thin and weak looking ones. The ink on the genuine is intensely violet, while on the forgery it is rather pale. Slight dimensional differences also exist between the two signatures.

The type XI overprints which have been analyzed, all seem to be printed with an ink closely resembling the genuine, and some difficulty is experienced in trying to evaluate the ink



Figure 4 (Enlarged)—Comparison of the genuine signature—on the left; and the forged signature—on the right.

correctly. The use of low surface tension ink may have been accidental, or this condition may have been brought about through dilution of the original ink.

The dimensional analysis, of the surcharge indicates marked variations from the original, and therefore serves as a helpful basis in establishing the genuineness of the surcharge.

The above brief resume of the Krakow stamps gives a general picture of the difficulties experienced when attempting to reach an honest and impartial conclusion. Inasmuch as the genuine stamps have been issued in limited quantities, all Krakow stamps should be viewed with suspicion, especially if these stamps appear in blocks.

ITEMS OF POLISH PHILATELIC SIGNIFICANCE IN THE FIRST PART OF THE ROOSEVELT STAMP COLLECTION HARMER SALE

1

Lot #52—Pulaski Stamp. Large Die Commemorative Proof—Die sunk on India Paper and on large card. Heretofore known only on wove paper.

2

Lot #127—Pulaski Stamp. Small Die Commemorative Proof—Margins approximately 3 mm and printed on a very faint yellowish soft wove paper .002" thick. Lot contained unused stamp and 3 photos of rejected essays. Only Small Die Proof known.

3

Lot #150—Kosciuszko Stamp. Mint sheet of 100 autographed in the margin by Franklin D. Roosevelt and Henry Morgenthau Jr.

4

Lot #249—Polish Flag Stamp. Mint sheet of 50 autographed in the margin by Franklin D. Roosevelt and Henry Morgenthau Jr.

5

Lot #392—Polish Flag stamp (Lot of 12). First Day Cover—1 of a set of 12—franked with a single stamp and autographed by Ambassador Ciechanowski and signed by Postmaster General Walker under whose direction the covers were prepared. Addressed to President.

6

Lot #393—Polish Flag Stamp (Lot of 12). First Day Cover—1 of a matched set of 12—franked with a single on envelope of P. M. G. and addressed to President.

7

Lot #394—Polish Flag Stamp (Lot of 13). First Day Cover—1 of a matched set of 13—with block of 4 (corner name block) on white house envelope addressed to the President in beautiful "copper plate" style of writing.

8

Lot #395—Polish Flag Stamp (Lot of 23). First Day Cover addressed to the President.

9

Lot #396—Polish Flag Stamp. Name block of 4 on first day cover $11\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ " addressed to the President from the Polish American Council of U. S., Chicago, with artistic letter signed by members of the council; both cover and letter on parchment.

POLPEX SEALS, BULLETINS, AND COVERS

We wish to announce that the following items of Polpex exhibits are still obtainable until the stock is depleted.

Anyone desiring these items, may write for them by sending order and money (including postage) to Seal Director.

The stock of the 1942 Polpex seals in sets are exhausted, but a limited amount of the imperforate sheets are still obtainable.

Items listed below are at current

prices:

POLPEX SEALS

Issue	Per set	25 sets	50 sets	100 sets
1940	.25	3.75	7.25	
1941	.25	3.75	7.25	
1942	.25	Imperforate sheet only		
1943	.15	2.00	3.75	7.00
1944	.15	2.00	3.75	7.00
1945	.15	2.00	3.75	7.00
1946	.15	2.00	3.75	7.00

(2 sets .25)

"Beeba" Souvenir Sheet with envelope—Aug. 11, 1944—.15 each. 25 sheets 2.00.

Polonus Night at Chicago Philatelic Society—June 7, 1945.

Per sheet	25 sheets	50 sheets
.05	1.00	2.00

One Thousand Mark Polish Banknotes, with imprint on border—Polpex 1940—Jan. 24, 25, 26, 1940 at \$1.00 per Banknote.

OLONUS BULLETINS

Back numbers of Polonus Bulletin from Issue #3 Oct. 1942 to #12 July-Aug. 1943 at .20 per copy.

#13 Sept. 1943 up to last 12 issues at .15 per copy.

Last 12 current issues at .10 per copy.

When ordering any issue beyond the last 12 current issues, add .05 for that number.

POLPEX COVERS CANCELLED ON OPENING DAY OF POLPEX

Feb. 26, 1942 Chicago, Ill. at	.15
Mar. 12, 1943 Chicago, Ill. at	.15
Feb. 22, 1945 Chicago, Ill. at	.15
Feb. 9, 1946 Chicago, Ill. at	.15
Feb. 12, 1946 Kosciuszko, Miss. at	.50

Any information wanted on Polpex items, please communicate with Seal Director Adam Kloskowski, 2528 N. Drake Ave., Chicago 47, Ill.

Please include postage for all orders.

THIS 'N THAT

As a result of "We're Being Robbed" which appeared in the March BULLETIN, Clement A. Pulaski sent Polonus a list of his contacts in Poland. At his own expense he prepared and sent the Society 300 mimeographed postal cards with a dealer's name and address in Poland who could supply us with new issues of stamps. The members were glad to secure this contact, and are of the general opinion that Clem is all right.

Myron Steczynski visited him recently and we hope this will lead to

the opportunity which will enable members to fill up their collections with the missing stamps since the war.

At the Jack Knight 1946 Airpex, Bert Powell won a special award consisting of a ribbon and the Fairchild Aeronautical Trophy for his Polish Airmail exhibit.

Member Ben Reeves won an award with his exhibit at this show also.

It should have been mentioned here before that member M. J. Huss, Box 693, Evanston, Ill., had put out a set of Polish Patriotic Covers. Among his designs was a cover with a portrait of Radio Technician Felix Pientka, Polonus member who was killed in action. This picture really is Felix as Mr. Huss made it from a photo loaned to him by Felix's mother.

NEW MEMBERS

- 284 Veineid A. Niewrzal
3951 Cambridge
Kansas City 3, Kansas
(Poland, U. S., Canada, Newfoundland, and Vatican)
- 285 Andrzej Jezierski
Pl. Kopernika 11 m 3
Leborg (Pomorze) Poland
(Poland)
- 286 A. A. Mazewski
1608 Milwaukee Ave.
Chicago 47, Illinois
(Poland and U. S.)
- 287 William E. Solomon
320 Highview Place
Silver Springs, Maryland
(Poland since 1939 and Rocket Covers)
- 288 Edward Karpinski
369 Park Street
New Britain, Connecticut
(Poland and U. S.)
- 289 Rev. Gerard Wieprecht
Mission House
Ellicott City, Maryland
(Poland mint)
- 290 Thaddeus A. Wnek
1802 Mullins Street
Montreal 22, Quebec, Canada
(Poland, U. S., Canada, and General)

LIFE MEMBER #4

Edward Skupniewicz

THAT POLISH STAMP BOOKLET!* by Bert Powell

One of the mysteries of Polish philately which has challenged the interest of Polonus students from time to time has been the suspected existence of a Polish stamp booklet. As far as can be determined at this time, mention was first made of this item

in the may 1944 issue of the Polonus Bulletin.

Facts at hand were evidently very meager, because the article in question contented itself with merely a bare announcement concerning the possibility of the existence of the booklet in question. The news article solicited information about the booklet, but evidently none came to light

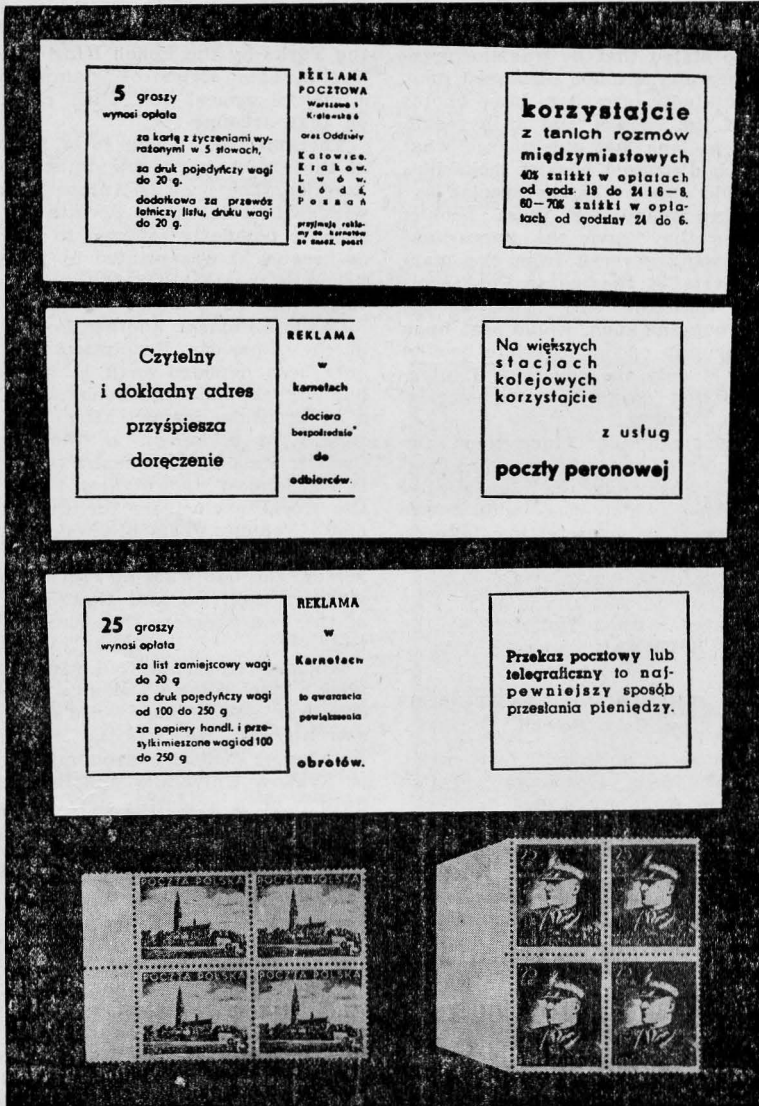


Sections are—top to bottom—left to right—page 12 and 1 of the Booklet; page 4 and 9; page 6 and 7; stamps—lower left attached to page 7; stamps—lower right attached to page 5.

for there was quite an interval of time before further references to the "mystery item" appeared in the Polonus Bulletin.

However, in the April 1945 issue further light was shed on the mysterious stranger. Editor Domar made mention of the Polish Booklet pane in the "This n' That" column of that organ, advising that Polonus member Vincent J.

Domanski of Philadelphia had purchased the booklet at auction. The trail was getting warm! The keen interest of Polonus members can be understood when it is considered that no news concerning such an item ever came through official Polish channels. It was later learned that several Polonus members among others were bidding in the same auction for this



Sections are—top to bottom—left to right—page 2 and 11 of the Booklet; page 10 and 3; page 8 and 5; stamps—lower left attached to page 3; stamps—lower right attached to page 9.

unique item—but the genial S. P. A. prexy was the successful bidder and thus became the owner of one of the most unusual items in modern Polish philately.

Vince visited Chicago last November to attend the C. P. S. Show and the Saul Newbury dinner. The subject of the Polish booklet was brought up at the lunch table at Central 'Y' where some S. P. A.ers get together every noon. The S. P. A. prexy smilingly confirmed the existence of the booklet and also stated that he was the present owner of the much discussed item. He very kindly offered to have photos made of the booklet and as a result, we are, at long last able to see what the much discussed booklet looks like.

It would appear that no special layouts were made for these booklet panes as they have the appearance of just being severed from the marginal sheets of the stamps. It seems obvious that the only proof of the booklet pane as such, would rest upon the ownership of the complete booklet since it is only the covers and interleaves which prove the existence of the item as such.

We congratulated Vince upon the possession of his unique item and thank him sincerely for his splendid co-operation, which has enabled the real facts of this interesting item to be added to the Polish philatelic record.

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POLISH THUMBNAIL SKETCHES* by Bert Powell

The house in Solthurn, Switzerland, where Thaddeus Kosciuszko, Polish hero of the Revolution, died, is a museum. He died there October 17, 1817. The general appeared, you will recall, on a U. S. 5c stamp of 1933.

The 1919 Polish semi-postals issued to commemorate the first philatelic exhibition are nearly always cancelled in indelible ink (apparently to order) which runs when wet and badly stains them. Floating any waste paper off the backs of such stamps is to be preferred over the customary procedure of soaking. This at least minimizes the staining. Some fastidious collectors use a "wet-box" which consists of several dampened blotters in a shallow tin box—that is if you can still obtain a tin one!

A relic of a vanished postal service is shown in the November, 1939, "National Geographic Magazine": it's a picture of one of the colorful boxes for mail bearing the Port Gdansk Polish stamps sold in Danzig prior to the war.

One of the very few women to design a stamp was Countess Maria Viktoria Attems of Groz who in 1833 planned a set of six Austrian Commemoratives for the 250th Anniversary of the liberation of Vienna from the Turks by the Polish King Jan Sobieski. This series of stamps holds a special appeal to Polish collectors on that account.

There are only about 10 to 20 copies of the Polish handbook on stamps in America. The book is Antoni Laszkiewicz's "Polskie Znaki Poczttowe," but is more popularly referred to as Ikaros because it was printed by the publisher of the IKAROS Philatelic Monthly.

Casimir Pulaski, another Polish hero of the American Revolution, has not only been depicted on a U. S. stamp, but has also had the honor of having a great bridge named after him. Officially, it is known as the General Casimir Pulaski Memorial Skyway and is the longest and highest viaduct in the world exclusively for the use of motor vehicles. This highway traverses Hudson and Essex Counties in New Jersey, the bailiwick of Steve Rich of whom it may be said that he is one of the best boosters that locality ever had!

Nicholas Kopernik (Nikolaus Copernicus), depicted on Poland's type No. A33 was one of the world's greatest astronomers. He was an economist, founder of modern astronomy, scholar of Krakow University and in 1543 the author of a scientific treatise proving that the earth revolves around the sun. The Polish stamp on which he is depicted was issued on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of his birth. Copernicus is also portrayed on one or two very recent Nazi stamps for use in occupied Poland.

Friar Stanislaw Konarski, pictured on the stamp of Poland, type A34, was a great educator and leader of a political reform movement in that country during the 17th century. Educational reform instituted by Konarski was generally accepted soon afterwards.

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