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Postal Changeover in Poland After World War II

by R. A. Wilson

(reprinted from STAMPS)

After having suffered under German occupation for six years, the Polish nation was, quite naturally, anxious to obliterate all trace and memory of the German inquisition as soon as liberation took place. The eradication of all things German extended into philatelic fields as well as others. During the occupation, a great many Polish town and city names had been "Germanified." Postal authorities in each town in Poland reverted to the original Polish spellings as soon as the post office was re-opened under Polish auspices. In practically every case, proper cancellers with Polish spellings were not available for quite some time after Polish stamps made their appearance. Hence, a wide variety of temporary cancellers had come into use. There seems to have been no over-all or general instruction from the head of the National Post Office in Lublin or from Warsaw, where it moved on liberation of the latter city. Each provincial town office made out as best as it could. Thus for a period of something over a year, provisional cancellations were the rule, rather than the exception.

These provisional cancellations provide a challenging and interesting field for the collector. In the first place, the covers bearing these are often hard to come by, for at first few if any collectors took notice of the collectibility of such items, and many choice items were destroyed by being soaked off cover (the author himself

is among those guilty in this line, remaining in Poland for well over a year and a half before becoming aware of the existence of such items!). Secondly, dealers in Poland apparently attach no special importance to such items, and it is only by coming across old correspondence that items come to light nowadays. The author was fortunate enough to have the files of the American Embassy available to him, and late in 1948, a search through these files was instituted in order to cull out any covers that may have been inadvertently filed away with incoming correspondence. To prevent bulk, addresses are normally copied onto the original correspondence in such cases, and the envelopes disposed of. Fortunately for me, there must have been a lazy clerk or two in the government's employ, for I found enough covers to make the search interesting and worth while. Although I searched through thousands of folders, I came up with only a very few duplicates. Naturally, there is no way of establishing a checklist of all available items, since there is little or no way of finding out just how many towns employed just what types of provisional cancellers and for how long. A few specimens indicate a shift from one type of provisional to another.

Having found no source material or literature on the subject, I accumulated as many covers as possible, along with what pieces on bits of or-

iginal cover that were given to me by over-zealous friends who tore stamps from their correspondence. These I kept until my departure from Poland, and then, my source having dried up, I sorted these according to a scheme of my own devising, and arrived at six basic types, which I shall describe below.

The first type to be used, according to specimens encountered, and also by virtue of being the most logical, is the manuscript cancellation. This I have classified as Type I. The usual form of this is the town name and date to be written across the stamp either in ink or indelible pencil, although occasionally ordinary pencil is used. The second variety of Type I is for the stamp or stamps to be cancelled by "X's" drawn thru the stamp, and the name and date written in manuscript alongside, or omitted entirely in cases of registered letters, whereby the registry labels give a clue as to origin. Occasionally there is neither label nor town in manuscript, leaving the collector with an "anonymous" cover. Of this type, I have examples from late 1944 up to May 21, 1946, although this latter date is rather unusual, since March, 1946, is the general time when the provisional cancellers seem to give way to regular cancellation devices.

Type II is made up of linear handstamps, which are either double-lined or triple-lined handstamps, reading usually "Agencja Pocztowa, Baranowo," or "Urząd Pocztowo-Telekomunikacji, Biały Kamień," etc. The dates were then either inscribed manually or by handstamp, or more commonly omitted. In some cases there are examples of these succeeding the manuscript varieties from the same towns.

What I have arbitrarily called Type III is a combination canceller. By this I mean that the ordinary circular cancellers of the German period were used with the town name cut out, and a linear handstamp of the town name applied either before or after the use of the circular mark. Thus, movable dates could be employed, liberating the clerks from tedious manuscript work. These types, however, were the

least numerous in the lot I found.

Another arbitrary grouping is my Type IV, consisting of hand-made cancellers, cut from wood or cork, usually in a crude attempt at a duplication of the regular circular marks. In these the date is usually manuscript.

Type V consists of the official seal of the post office being used as a cancellation device. Here again, the date has to be applied separately, either by handstamp or manuscript.

The last group, Type VI, is the last and least interesting, to my own way of thinking. This consists of the normal circular telegraph marker or sometimes regular postal canceller being used, but without dates, which are all applied by manuscript or by another type of date stamper. These are always dated in the latter part of the provisional period, i.e., fall of 1945 through the spring of 1946.

Naturally, many other varieties of cancellations of this period are of interest to the specialist. Quite often stamps ran out of supply, and covers were marked "Opl. Got. 1,50" and the office number, indicating postage paid. These manuscript indications were then cancelled with either the regular stamp or sometimes the provisional cancellations are encountered on these stampless covers, making a dual item. Also, in one case, I have uncovered an envelope where the old German town canceller was used. The example is from the town of Zagorze, called "Gnadenfrei" by the Germans. The cancellation reads "Gnadenfrei," and the registry label is printed "Gnadenfrei," but has been scratched thru and "Zagorze" written in above. This brings to mind another minor variety of cover, and that is the collection of covers showing changes in the registry labels from German to Polish spellings.

In an attempt to make a listing of the various varieties, I append a list of those in my collection now, and would appreciate hearing from other collectors as to what towns that they may have in their collections, so that I may assemble some sort of checklist.

(continued on page 95-c)

POLAND

The Postal Issues During and After the Great War

by the late COL. R. N. W. LARKING, C.B.E., F.R.P.S.L.

In January 1919 the exchange per dollar was 9 Polish marks, whilst at the beginning of January 1924 it reached 9,350,000 Polish marks, and transactions were made at 25 million marks for the end of the month. Thus, in order to stabilise the mark, the Polish Government was faced with an extremely difficult task.

In the beginning of 1924, special emergency powers being granted to the Government by the Sejm, and the passing of three important Acts, enabled the then very able Minister of Finance, M. Grabski, to commence his work of financial reform. By the middle of January the temporary Polish State Loan Bank was liquidated, and a new Bank of issue, the Bank of Poland, was set up. All notes expressed in Polish marks were called in by this Bank, who exchanged them for Zloty notes, the new Polish currency, at the rate of 1,800,000 Polish marks to the zloty.

The new currency consisted of a revival of the old Polish coinage, zloty and grosze, zloty meaning "golden," from the word zloto, "gold," and groszy, formerly equalling $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of a penny. One zloty contains 100 grosze.

In 1921, when the first serious efforts were made to stabilise the currency, the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs had to be prepared with an issue of stamps in the new currency should these efforts prove successful. Accordingly an announcement appeared in the official journal of the General Post Office on the 2nd April, 1921, calling for designs for both postage and postage due (Dopłata) stamps. Certain conditions were laid down, with which however, over 50 per cent of the competitors failed to comply, and their designs were therefore disqualified. Five first prizes of 25,000



marks each were offered, and five second prizes of 15,000 marks each.

The designs submitted by M. Edmund Bartłomiejczk gained most of the prizes. However, the collapse of the Ministry's efforts at stabilization annulled the possible results of this competition, and none of the designs were ever adopted for the new currency stamps.

As soon as the most important part of the financial reform was accomplished, which was in February 1924, the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs hurriedly prepared a set of eleven grosze values which were issued on the 1st May, 1924, namely:

- 1 grosz, yellow-brown, red-brown.
- 2 grosze, dark brown, grey-brown.
- 3 grosze, orange, yellow-orange.
- 5 grosze, sage-green, olive-green.
- 10 grosze, blue-green, from very pale to very deep.
- 15 grosze, scarlet, from very pale to very deep.
- 20 grosze, light blue, from pale to deep.
- 25 grosze, claret, chestnut, red-brown.
- 30 grosze, bright violet, from pale to deep.
- 40 grosze, slate, grey-slate.
- 50 grosze, magenta, from pale to deep.

A few sheets of the 30 gr. were printed in violet-blue—not by accident—and disciplinary action was taken

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Check List of Perforations found in the issue of May 1st, 1924.

Values.	10	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	10	10½	10½	11	11½	11½	12	12	12½	12½	13	13	13
1 gr.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
3 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
5 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
10 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
15 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
20 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
25 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
30 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
40 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
50 "	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

against the printer, but not before he was able to dispose of some of these stamps to dealers and collectors.

The design of these stamps was uniform, showing the Polish Eagle in the centre on a solid background encircled by a wreath of laurels and with an upright Roman fasces on each side, "POCZTA POLSKA" at the top, and the value at the bottom of the stamp, both on a white background.

The stamps were typographed on wove paper, the majority being found on a very thin to almost pelure paper, and a smaller proportion on slightly thicker paper. The 50 gr. is also known on an almost thick wove paper, the surface is very smooth and the gum is white and it is perforated 12x11½ only. This stamp appeared in February 1928.

These grosze were perforated with the same perforation machines as were used for the 10,000 to 500,000 mark stamps, and show the same varieties of perforation. These will be shown in a check list at the end.

Several blemishes may be found on these stamps, but there are no constant plate varieties. The 40 gr. exists imperforate owing to a sheet of these stamps being only partly perforated. This sheet was sold at the Lodz Post Office. Double perforations are known on some values.

Postal obliterations are found in red, carmine, mauve, magenta, blue, and violet, but black is the normal obliteration.



On the 1st October, 1924, a one zloty

value appeared. It bore the portrait of Stanislaw Wojciechowski, who was elected President of the Polish Republic on December 22nd, 1922, and resigned from that office on May 14th, 1926, after the revolt of Marshal Pilsudski. The stamp was printed in red on chalk surface paper and perforated 11½ and 12x11½.

On the 1st January, 1925, the foregoing eleven grosze values were issued with "NA SKARB GR. 50 GR." inscribed in two lines across the stamp in white lettering and figures. These stamps were issued on behalf of the National Treasury — "NA SKARB" meaning "For the Treasury"—the extra 50 gr. going to them. I am told that the issue was not a success, however, as the Polish people had already sacrificed a great deal of their wealth in 1924, in order to help their country's finances. The use of these stamps or those of the current issue was optional.

The stamps were issued on a thin wove paper and perforated 12½. The impressions are much clearer than those of the current issue.



Between the 4th May, 1925, and the end of 1926 a series of pictorial stamps was issued. Four values appeared concurrently on the 4th May, namely:

- 3 grosze, pale to deep blue, showing the Royal Castle with the Monument of King Sigismund III at Warsaw.
- 5 grosze, pale to deep green, showing the Town Hall at Posen.
- 10 grosze, pale to deep violet, same

as the 3 gr.

15 grosze, pale to deep red, showing the Royal Wawel Castle at Cracow.

These stamps were typographed on thin wove paper varying in thickness, but the 5 gr. (perf. 12x11½) may be found on almost a thick wove paper.

The normal perforation is 12x11½ (or 11½x12 in the case of the 15 gr.) but a 10½, 12½, 10½x11, 11½x12, or 12x12½ perforation may be found on some of the values.

I have found no marked plate varieties.



In order to preserve the dates of the various issues in their proper order, I must here mention an issue of the 10th September, 1925. This was a set of Air-post stamps consisting of nine values as follows:

1 grosz, pale blue, blue.

2 grosze, orange, yellow-orange.

3 grosze, yellow-brown, light brown.

5 grosze, brown, dark brown.

10 grosze, blue-green.

15 grosze, bright magenta, lilac.

20 grosze, olive-green.

30 grosze, carmine, deep carmine.

45 grosze, deep blue, grey-violet.

The stamps were intended exclusively for payment of the additional charges for carrying mail by aeroplane. The postage was paid separately by means of the ordinary current stamps.

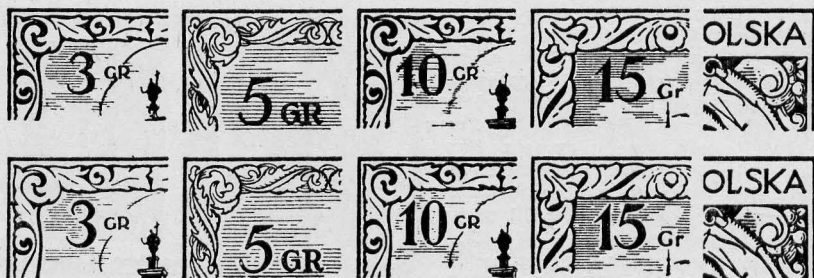
The design, which is uniform on all the values, shows an aeroplane flying over the city of Warsaw, "LOTNICZA" in the lower label meaning "aerial."

The stamps were printed by rotary machine on very thin wove paper and perforated 12½ throughout.

I now return to the pictorial issue of 1925-26.

From October 1925 the four values issued on the 4th May appeared on a very thin wove paper printed by rotary machine, and perforated 12½x13 (or 13x12½ in the case of 15 gr.) throughout.

In January 1926 the same four values appeared redrawn. The chief differences between the two dies are as follows:



Die I of 1925

Die II of 1926

3 gr. The horizontal lines of the clouds touch the figure "3." The top of the curved line of the cloud below "GR" projects beyond the "R."

5 gr. The lines of the clouds are drawn through "5 GR."

3 gr. The lines of the clouds do not touch the figure "3," nor does the curved line touch the "GR."

5 gr. None of the lines touch "5 GR."

10 gr. Same as for the 3 gr.

15 gr. The cloud-lines touch the figure "15," and the curved cloud line above "GR" projects below the "r" and touches the next curved cloud-line below it.

10 gr. Same as for the 3 gr.

15 gr. The cloud-lines do not touch the figure "15," and the cloud-line above "GR" stops short of the top of the "r" and does not project below it.

In general the Die II prints are much clearer and more finely drawn than those of Die I, which usually have a coarse appearance. The paper is thin to very thin wove, and the perforation is always $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13$ (or $13 \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ in the case of the 15 gr.). The colouring is fairly uniform, but the 10 gr. may be found in pale to deep violet. Die II are rotary machine prints.

From now onwards until the end of 1926 various other pictorial stamps were issued, which I will give in the order of their denominations. They were all printed by rotary machine on thin to very thin wove paper and perforated $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13$ (or $13 \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ in the case of the 15 and 40 gr.).

The following are the denominations and designs.:



1 grosz, brown, red-brown, showing the Chapel and Holy Gate at Ostro-Brama, Wilno.

For several months early in 1927, the use of one of these stamps, over and above the proper postal rates was made compulsory on every inland letter and postcard. This tax of 1 gr. was devoted to the Unemployment Fund. Both before, during, and after this compulsory extra charge, these stamps were used for franking both inland and foreign correspondence.

2 grosze, brown-olive, showing the statue of King Jan III Sobieski at Lwow.

20 grosze, carmine-red, red, an old time battleship in full sail.

24 grosze, grey-blue, same design as the 1 gr.

30 grosze, dull blue, blue, same design as the 2 gr.

40 grosze, light blue, same design as the 15 gr.

45 grosze, mauve, same design as the 20 gr.

As far as I know there are no varieties of these stamps. The 20 gr., however, was forged to defraud the revenue. Copies of this forgery are very scarce, as it was quickly discovered by

the authorities, who confiscated the supply.

XVI. 1927-30. SPECIAL ISSUES

The stamps issued between March 1927 and November 1930 may be termed special issues, (i) in honour of distinguished citizens, (ii) Commemorative, (iii) Charity. I shall tabulate them in order of issue.

March 1st, 1927, 40 gr., deep ultramarine, bearing the portrait of Chopin.



Chopin

Frederic Francois Chopin, a celebrated Polish composer and pianist, was born at Zelazowa, Wola, near Warsaw, on March 1st, 1809, and died in Paris on October 17th, 1849. His father was French, his mother a Pole. The stamps were printed on thick chalky paper, and perforated $11\frac{1}{2}$ and $12 \times 11\frac{1}{2}$.



Pilsudski

Moscicki

March 19th, 1927, 20 gr., carmine, bearing the portrait of Marshal Pilsudski. The stamps were printed on thin wove paper, and perforated $12\frac{1}{2}$ and $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13$.

May 1st, 1927, 20 gr., vermilion, bearing the portrait of President Moscicki.

Ignacz Moscicki, a celebrated philosopher, was elected President of the Polish Republic on June 1st, 1926, on Marshal Pilsudski's refusal of this office.

The stamps were printed on thin wove paper, and perforated $12 \times 11\frac{1}{2}$.

(to be continued)

Type I	
Baranowo	Plonaiawy
Biezun	Raciborz
Chelm/Lubelski	Przemet
Czestachowa	Radzanow
Dabrowa	Siemiatkowo
Chelmissnka	Skolszyn
Dabrowice	Sterdyn
Jeleniewo	Szczawne
Hucisko	Stesycza
Kolno	Wesola k. Dyn-
Krasnosielec	owa
Krypno Koscielno	Winnica
Lodz	Zdrojowice
Nasielsk	Zagorz
Nowa Ruda	Ziemice
	Zoraw

Type II	
Baranowo	Miechowice
Barglow	Moderowka
Biebrza	Oleszyce
Bedzin	Lipsk n/ Biebra
Bocki	Myszyniec
Bialy Kamien	Plock-Radziwie
Brzesko	Nowa Wies
Boleslaw	Powidz
Burstynowo	Nowe Miasto
Bryostek	Siniarzewo
Bytom	Piotrolesie
Czerwin	Skoczow
Debnico	Slakow
Deba	Pionka
Debowiec	Stolczyn
Dolina	Swilcza
Dlugosiodlo	Sadlno
Glogow	Szelkow
Gojsk	Milanow
Golotczyna	Siedliska-Bogusz
Grudusk	Tomaszow
Gryfogora	Strzegowo
Owkowka	Trynczas
Jablanka	Swiercze
Jasliska	Turosl
Jablono	Warszawa
Pomorskie	Glowny
Grabow	Wambierzyce
Jedrzejow	Zabrze
Jastkowice	Widelka
Jawornik Polski	Walbrzych
Jedwabne	Zawidz Koscielny
Jelesnia	Witkowo
Kamien k.	Zielun
Rudnika	Wolkowo
Konopki	Zmigrod
Karb	Wola Rzedzinska
Kroszewo	Zoraw
Ksiazki	Zabiny
Lukowica	Zbieczno
Medyn	Zytno

Type III	
Hlondow	Jelsnia
Jawor	Miedzylesie
Jelenia Gora	Slupsk

Sanok	Wojkowice
Swidnica	Zakrze
Type IV	
Domaradz	Siennio
Kadzidlo	Olesnice
Niedzica	Zbiczor
Nowy Dab	Lyse
Opatow	

Type V	
Byton	Nieszawski
Pedzewo	Szerzyny
	Wonotze

Type VI	
Boby k. Urz.	Ostrowiec
Bilgoraj	Piszczac
Bocki	Sandomierz
Bogoria	Swiatniki
Gorzkow	Pulawy
Izbiec	Szastarka
Jakubowice	Sawin
Jozefof	Siedlice
Kazimierz Dolny	Trzydnik Duzy
Krasnik	Turosl
Laszczow	Uhnw
Krynice	Warsaw
Krzywda	Werbkowice
Lublin	Wilkolaz
Lekow	Zamosc
Lubartow	Zbojna
Lipa	Zdlynia

ARTHUR SZYK— STAMP DESIGNER

by Montgomery Mulford
(reprinted from STAMPS)

Arthur Szyk of New Canaan, Conn., the designer of stamps of Liberia, and of a postage series for Israel, had a price on his head during World War II. Nazi Germany's dictator, Adolf Hitler, put a price on his head because Mr. Szyk's cartoons against Nazi and Fascist leaders were so biting.

He is recognized today as one of the foremost painters of miniatures. The son of a wealthy Jewish textile manufacturer, he was born June 3, 1894, in Lodz, Poland. At the age of 15 he went to Paris to study under Bachet and Royer, and soon afterward made up his mind to paint miniatures. It was a good decision.

But Mr. Szyk is also a fighter. In 1920 he joined Pilsudski's Polish Volunteers and assisted in the liberation of Poland. After the war he returned to Paris, and subsequently studied Moslem art in the Middle East.

International recognition came to

him in 1931 when the League of Nations invited Mr. Szyk to join the Polish delegation at an international conference on design. Three years later Poland sent him to America for an exhibition of his works held in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

While in Washington he began a series of thirty-eight paintings of George Washington, which were shown at the 1934 International Exhibition in Paris. President Moscicki of Poland bought them—and sent them as a present to President F. D. Roosevelt! They are now in the Hyde Park Library.

In 1937 Mr. Szyk was in England when Hitler's armies invaded Poland. He at once began cartoons against Hitler and the Nazis.

Mr. Szyk is also the designer of the beautiful Bileski stamp album title pages, produced by K. Bileski, of Winnipeg, Canada.

Many magazines and some newspapers have used Mr. Szyk's illustrations, bringing him world-wide fame.

"But I am still interested in designing governmental postage stamps," he said.

His series of stamps for Israel have proven extremely popular, and are being pointed out as true works of art today.

NEW ISSUES

by Jack Domar

A 45 groszy, green stamp was issued to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the death of General Jaroslaw Dabrowski. The stamp is a large one, 38 mm x 21½ mm. perf. 12. Designed by B. Brandt and engraved by M. R. Polak and Cz. Slania.

The design shows troops on the left side, with the value in the upper left corner. On the right is the portrait of the General. Across the bottom are the words "Poczta Polska."

A 45 groszy red stamp was also issued on March 4th for the Congress of the League of Women held in Warsaw, March 4, 1951. The design shows a woman in the foreground with upraised hands as if she had just released 3 doves hovering over-

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Jack Domar

Montgomery Mulford

head. In the background are factories. Designed by B. Brandt, and engraved by St. Lukaszewski.

The first postage due in groszy value has made its appearance. It is of the same design as the preceding ones, except as noted the value is shown in groszy. This first one is of 30 groszy denomination—there are probably others by now.

—J. Bieniecki.

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