

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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CZESŁAW SŁANIA . . . THE WORLD'S FOREMOST STAMP ENGRAVER

This fall Czesław Słania will celebrate his 75th birthday! Polonus will honor him with a cancellation to be used at the Pre-Fall POLPEX September 6-8 at the House of the White Eagle in Niles, IL. Designed by artist Leon S. Kawecki of California, it is but a small tribute on behalf of Polonus.



On November 18, 1980, Słania celebrated an impressive anniversary, the Swedish Post Office issued his 500th stamp!!! Now, 500 stamp engravings is really an achievement and Słania has been called "The best stamp engraver in the world," — "A magician with the graving tool," — "A unique artist" — the superlatives vie with each other. In addition, one of his stamps was chosen as the most beautiful in the world.

Czesław Słania was born on October 22, 1921 in Czeladź, a little village near Będzin in Polish Silesia, as a son of a miner Ignacy Słania and his wife, Józefa. At the outbreak of World War II, his secondary education was interrupted and Słania joined the underground movement against the Nazis and produced false documents with extreme accuracy for the Polish Command.

After the war, he entered the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków and graduated "summa cum laude" for his master-work after Matejko's battle painting, "Grunwald." His first postage stamp for Poland was issued on March 24, 1951. Słania had succeeded in engraving twen-



ty stamps for the Polish government printing works.

In 1956, Słania moved to Sweden, partly attracted by the high artistic and technical standards of the Swedish Post Office's postage stamp production. After a few years of diverse work, he began work engraving stamps for the Swedish Post Office in the autumn of 1959.

It is usually best to start at the beginning, to learn the fundamentals. Like most children, Słania liked to draw. He drew horses mostly but also members of his family and his friends. All were drawn lifelike, with almost photographic accuracy. His drawings were often of miniature size, which might be considered a clue to his future medium of expression.

He continued to draw all through his years at school until engraving took over his interest completely. Słania still felt strongly attracted to drawing. At the same time, he knew that continuous training was necessary to achieve results as in any other occupation.

At home in Lublin, his interest in music was also much in evidence. He liked to play both the violin and the concertina at dances. As he grew older he still played at times, but his musical interests turned in another direction. He became fond of listening to operas, chiefly works of the greats of the 18th and 19th centuries. Music relieved his tensions and inspired him in his work.

Słania's interest in practically the whole of the 19th century covered a wide field — music, the fine arts and literature, primarily historical literature. Thoughts of romanticism and its emphasis on mysticism and excitement, emotions and imagination, dreams and fantastic achievements were not far removed.

A fantastic achievement — key word in describing his work. It is achievement that constantly drives him on to break new ground, to aim for new goals. He set extremely high standards for himself. Artistic expression must harmonize with technical craftsmanship. The overall effect was important.

The concept and sentiment are to be transferred via engraving to the finished postage stamp and the observer — in the best case with good results. Słania is himself satisfied with about 100 of his stamps, chiefly Swedish ones. As previously mentioned, he sets high standards.

There is also something of a challenge in tackling a complicated task and solving the problem it poses, often by a new technique, sometimes under pressure of an early deadline. Słania always worked quickly. Furthermore, he always had his work with him, at home or when traveling. He engraved many of his Swedish stamps at different places in Europe. He often said that "Engraving gives him satisfaction and recreation." To date Słania has engraved 900 stamps. His life goal is to make 1000 stamps.

The above is from an article "Engraved In History" by Edward Wilczynski which appeared in "The Post Eagle."



JAN WITKOWSKI

1907 - 1996

By RYSZARD ASZNOWICZ



A great philatelist with multifaceted interests has departed from us.

The range of his activities covered everything that has anything to do with philately. Namely, popularizing our hobby with the young, organizational work from club level to activities in the international arena. He was a respected juror, exhibitor, organizer of exhibitions on the highest level, editor, researcher, philatelic author, a dealer with the highest professional ethics, etc. Just last year he celebrated the rare jubilee of 75 years of his activities. Writing of him, he was often designated "Ambassador of Polish Philately." Unfortunately, the diplomatic corps does not provide for this type of function with reference to philately. Nevertheless, precisely on this position, he gave invaluable services to Poland. During the so called Cold War, when anything that came out of the Iron Curtain was regarded distrustfully and that came out of the Iron Curtain was regarded distrustfully and lacking reliability.

"Polska '73" exhibition, in spite of the passing of years, is still remembered by many as the model of the ideal organization. Not wishing to take anything away from the large number of people who worked under the direction of Mr. Witkowski, it must be emphasized that such a great result is the contribution of his conscientiousness, experience, but most of all, intensive work of which he did not stint together with his wife Czechna.

It must be remembered in this time, Poland was still experiencing many problems, both political and economical. In spite of this, thousands of international guests who came to the exhibition were spared

any unpleasantness, thanks to the efforts and foresight of Mr. Witkowski. I was given the opportunity to learn of these affairs from his personal stories "on the quiet." Trivial matters, often humorous and grotesque demanded intervention at the highest levels.

We met for the last time during the World Exhibition "Polska '93." He had had a stroke before the exhibition and was partially paralyzed. The doctor's prognosis was not good and nobody expected him to walk. Against all odds, his great strength of will-power once again showed the superiority of mind over matter. Janek, to the amazement of everyone, didn't forsake even one of the days of the duration of the exhibition taking part in many conferences and concurrent events. Unfortunately in the function of the president of the jury which was entrusted to him, he could only perform on an honorary basis.

An outstanding philatelist and a magnificent person has departed from us. We will miss him greatly.

NOTE: Above are excerpts from a very extensive article on J. WITKOWSKI, published by Polonus friend R. Aszniewicz of the Polish Philatelic Society of Australia in their last bulletin. J. Witkowski visited Chicago many times and was presented with Honorary Polonus Membership together with CZESŁAW SŁANIA.

—Fred Szebel



DR. EDWARD C. ROZANSKI

1915 - 1996

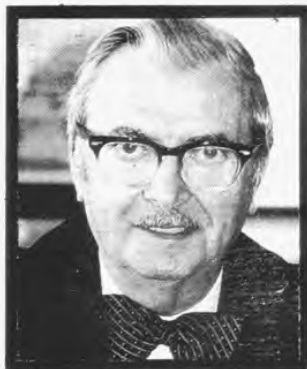
On July 22, 1996, after a long and serious illness, Dr. Edward C. Rózański died in Chicago. He was the first Honorary Member to be so acclaimed by

Polonus. We respected him as a historian. Dr. Rózański combined careers in optometry, printing, and photography with an avid interest in furthering Polish American causes in serving society. His accomplishments include: President of the Polish American Immigration Relief Committee; Civil War Centennial Commission of Illinois; and President of the Illinois Division, Polish American Congress.

As an author, Dr. Rózański has published a brochure, "100 Years of the Polish Press in America", the American-Polish Civil War Centennial Report, and poetry under the pen name of J. Ker.

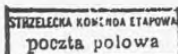
As a National Director of the Polish National Alliance he became manager of the PNA newspaper in 1975. He was editor of the Alliance

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 448-8)



POSTAL HISTORY OF KRAKÓW 1846-1918

(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS ISSUE)



Wilhelmina Pani 17.8.9/14.

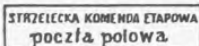
Lucea Kulisicki

Krakow

Brinnier 3

In addition to the commander named above, the storage of the Main Riflemen Field Post was manned by six postal officials, two servant soldiers and two couriers. The storage in Kraków collected letters for the riflemen on the front line and expedited them by means of their couriers to auxiliary storage places of the field post in Miechów and in Jędrzejów. The mail of the riflemen field post was imprinted with a rubber stamp (there were two rubber stamps with the same text and format which can be distinguished by the shape of the lettering), which gave them a military character and thus made them free of postage. Outside of Kraków, rubber stamps of the field post were used also in Jędrzejów and in Kielce. The Main Storage in Kraków distributed also postcards and other postal forms of the field post as well as charity stamps and labels.

On August 16th, 1914, the Supreme National Committee (NKN) was formed, which was the political representation of the Polish Legions.



STAMPS OF THE SUPREME NATIONAL COMMITTEE ISSUED IN KRAKÓW

In this place one should consider stamps of the Supreme National Committee, which were issued in Kraków. Since they were issued, their philatelic status is under debate. Some philatelists question their postal character or deny it; while others consider them to be the first two Polish postage stamps, basing this opinion on the assumption that the stamp issued in 1860 for the Kingdom of Poland, which in the history of Poland is considered to be the Russian partition, is not a Polish stamp.

The stamps under discussion were printed in the Graphics Shop of

the Jagiellonian University. It is most probable that their initiator was the commander of the Field Post of the Polish Legions, W. Dzwonkowski who for this reason underwent a disciplinary investigation and as a result was relieved from his position. Since the Supreme National Committee did not issue an order concerning the introduction of these stamps, one cannot determine the exact date of their issuance, although it is assumed that this happened in August, 1914.

Similarly, it is not known accurately how many of these stamps were issued, and even more important, how many of them were sold before being confiscated by the Austrians. Concerning the stamps, it is known that they were printed in sheets of 32 stamps, where the left half contained 5 halercy stamps and the right half, 10 halercy stamps. These stamps were line perforated 11½. Imperforate stamps are apparently from a part of the edition which was not yet perforated before the confiscation.

Stamps issued by the Supreme National Committee for the purpose of postal service which was delivered by the field post of the Polish Legions which were not formally under the Austrian mail, were considered by the Austrian Government as violating the state monopoly on the issuance of stamps. As a result, the Austrians, after a search of the seat of the field post office of the Polish Legions in Kraków, confiscated all stamps and then destroyed them. To this date, no documentation has become known, which would state how many stamps were confiscated and then destroyed. The stand and actions of Austrian officials on this matter, according to some philatelists, deprive these stamps of postal validity.

Even if the stamps of NKN, issued in Kraków, violated Austrian regulations, their use in terrains of the Kingdom of Poland liberated by the units of the Polish Legions from the Russian rule was morally and situation-wise justified while not quite legal toward the end. For this opinion speaks first of all the fact that on the lands taken over by the Polish units, no mail was functioning at that time, neither Russian nor Austrian, and in this situation the responsibility of mail service was carried out by the field post of the Polish Legions. There comes up the question of the reason for the issuance of stamps for the field post, because the mail for soldiers was free. In answer to this question one can state that all additional services as for example registration or mailing of money in a letter were subject of franking as were private persons living in the Kingdom of Poland, who used the service of the field post of the Legions. (This did not violate the censorship of correspondence which was introduced by Austria, because the censorship was accomplished by the Legions).

The above statements are not the result of purely theoretical contemplations but are based on the fact (preserved in stamp collections) of the existence of mail transported by the Legions' field post which are prepaid with these stamps. Thus one must recognize that these stamps were in fact in postal use even if in a restricted manner.

Under the circumstances of the ongoing war in enemy territory, this use did not violate Austrian regulations and the fact that the Austrians did not like it, is quite apparent because the regaining of independence by the Poles was not in the interest of that country.

On November 11th, 1918, Poland regained its independence. The mail service in Kraków after that date continued to use Austrian stamps. To prevent this while not having the technical means to produce a quick production of Polish stamps, it was decided in Kraków to overprint



These stamps for the territory of the former Austrian partition are commonly called according to the place of their origin, "The Kraków Issue". They were issued on January 10, 1919 and were used until their supply became exhausted.



The moment of the regaining of independence by Poland in 1918 determines the end of this monograph which describes the postal history of Kraków from 1846 to 1918.



Nadawca:

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Legionów
Kwatera Legionowa
w szkie*



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Józef Grackowski
Kraków
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THE END

DR. ROZANSKI (continued from page 448-4)

Almanac and co-editor of the PNA organ until 1985 when he retired.

For the past thirty years Dr. Rózański has worked at safeguarding books, newspapers and memorabilia that otherwise might be lost to posterity. With the help of his wife Loda, who catalogs and helps disseminate the material, he has sent over 200,000 boxes to libraries and museums in the U.S., London, Paris, Rapperswil and Rome. In Poland the National Library in Warsaw, the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, the Catholic University in Lublin, and the Pulaski Museum in Warka have all been recipients of his generosity.

A permanent deacon, Dr. Rózański was very active in his Chicago parish. He also was a special advisor to Cardinal Bernardin concerning Polonia in the U.S. His work for the Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Chicago was as special advisor on marriage.

In 1991, the Rózański Collection was established in Orchard Lake, Michigan, devoted to tracing the history of Polonia in the United States and over the world.

POLONUS MEMBERS UPHOLD POLAND'S HONOR AT CAPEX '96



Fred Szebel at the entrance to CAPEX '96.



Fred Szebel (left) and Dr. James Mazepa (3rd from left) and other U.S. collectors at CAPEX '96.



Dr. M. Kamienski at the U.S.P.O. Reception CAPEX '96.



Medals and other awards for CAPEX '96.



Some of Polonus members at CAPEX '96. From left: W. Dziemianczuk, F. Szebel, J. Podejko and J. Danielski.

The International Stamp Exhibition CAPEX '96 in Toronto, Canada, was well attended. Metro-Toronto Convention Centre was well lit but the frames had a lot to be desired. They were old and poor quality for exhibition purposes. Setting up the show was well organized but the dismantling at the end of the ten days was disappointing. Dealer booths were full but the material was expensive since the cost of renting the booths was very high. The Canadian Post Office, like most enterprises today, was very commercialized and set up to please the visitor.

Polonus member. James Mazepa, was one of the three USA Commissioners. The only Polonus Jury member, Dr. Miet A. Kamiński of Toronto, had no influence on decisions of the Jury. Polonus members made a Polish showing. M. L. Malendowicz of Poland did not show any Poland exhibits. The Polish exhibits listed below were badly judged and awarded since there were no Jury members knowledgeable in Central Europe material. Most of the Polish exhibits were 1—3 grades lower than at other shows. Treated badly was the excellent collection of Dr. J. Kuderewicz which at POLSKA '93 received a gold medal and was considered for a National Award. Much local politics were played in the judging.

For the duration of the show, each evening some reception was held. Worth mentioning are the Canadian and U.S. Post Offices receptions, the Italia '98, Moscow '97, Isapex '98 of South Africa, and the Collectors Club of New York 100th Birthday Party.

An innovation worth mentioning: Before the Palmares a special CAPEX '96 Award Ceremony took place and at the Saturday evening Palmares Banquet, only the top awards were given.

The next International Exhibition will be the PACIFIC '97 in San Francisco.

During the ten days I had opportunities to visit with Polonus members W. Dziemianczuk and W. Gruszczyk at their homes. Also ran into J. Podejko, R. Poddubiuk, C. Cwiakala, Jr. and A. Walinski.

There were a few literature entries from Poland which received various medals.

My collection "400 Years of Warsaw", was invited for a special exhibit in Warsaw, Poland. The invitation was mailed in January as registered mail (not airmail) and was received by me in March, 1996, too late for the April exhibition. The exhibit was already entered in CAPEX '96.

—Fred Szebel

CAPEX '96 POLONUS EXHIBITORS

Poland Postal History Pre-Stamp Period - 8 frames,

Dr. J. Kuderewicz - Large Vermeil Medal

Postal History of Katowice to 1939 - 5 frames,

P. Madej - Large Vermeil Medal

Internment of Polish Servicemen During WW-II - 8 frames,

J. Danielski - Large Vermeil Medal

400 Years of Warsaw - 8 frames, F. Szebel - Large Vermeil Medal.

Mexico Issue of 1856-61, Dr. J. Mazepa - Gold Medal.

Olympic Games 1896-1932, M. Rosen - Vermeil Medal.

Danzig - 1730-1994, W. Dziemianczuk - Silver Medal.



HUNTING FOR POST CARDS IN POLAND

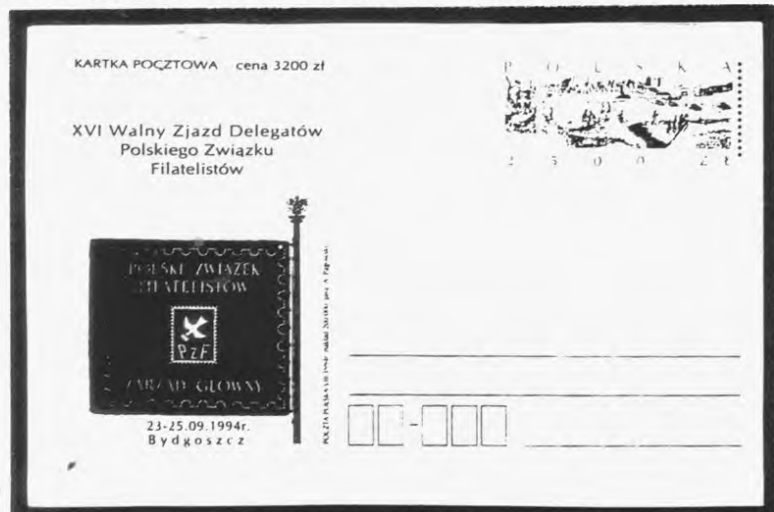
By EDWARD D. WOLSKI

Last summer, during my visit to Poland, I followed my philatelic routine of stopping at every post office that I could spot. The reason is the need to hunt for postal issues. One post office may have several sales windows, and each postal clerk has his/her own stock. One does not know what the other has!

The following post cards are different in type and origin. I suspect that the entires issued for philatelic events get priority treatment in design and printing.



1. The first entire was issued in honor of L. Zmidzinski, founder of the Silesian Philatelic Society (June, 1994, 200,000). The dots to the right of the stamp spell: "Poczta Polska 94". They serve as a security device.



gates (PZF: "Polski Związek Filatelistów" which is "The Polish Society of Philatelists), issued in August, 1994, 200,000. The dots to the right of the stamp are same as on the previous card.



3. This card is an example of advertising on p.c. The cachet, called "Summer with Radio" promotes the use of radios for which you pay a yearly fee per radio. It was issued in June, 1995, 2nd printing 500,000.
(To be continued)

POLONUS PRE-FALL STAMP SHOW

SEPT. 6-7-8, 1996 **30 DEALERS**
FRIDAY 10-6 SATURDAY 10-6 SUNDAY 10-4
HOUSE OF THE WHITE EAGLE
6839 N. Milwaukee Ave., Niles, IL
GUARANTEED PLENTY OF FREE PARKING

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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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 Polonus Treasurer, Stefan Czarniecki, 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.