

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



Meets Every Second and Fourth Friday of the Month at Falcons Hall, 1062 N. Ashland Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Issue 254

November-December, 1967

Glory to God in the highest



FROM HERE AND THERE

By ZBIGNIEW MIKULSKI

The subject of Poland's No. 1 stamp is always interesting and intriguing so that a report on my latest observations may be timely. Much is being written on this subject and still more is being said whenever students of Polish stamps get together. There always remain the unanswered questions and the unsolved problems which intrigue serious collectors and specialists in such remote countries as Poland, England, Canada, United States and Australia.

In recent years the thought was promoted in Poland that this first adhesive exists in two sizes and this notation even found its way into the latest Polish catalog of RUCH for 1967. I must confess that this possibility commanded my attention over the past three years, especially during my stay in Switzerland where the largest optical firm, Wild of Heerbrugg, assigned me to develop methods for philatelic inspection by means of newly-developed apparatus featuring infra-red and ultra-violet rays at wave lengths far beyond the range of the bare human eye. Performing assignments for this firm, I had at my command the most highly developed equipment for making longitudinal measurements under favorable laboratory conditions. At that time I had at my disposal about 600 copies of Poland No. 1 of which about 70 were unused and many were on covers. I was fortunate at that time to be studying the No. 1 collection of Myron Steczynski of Chicago. My findings show that there is decidedly only one size of this stamp, varying of course in the plus and minus directions by small amounts due to printing variations, paper differences, effects of gumming, etc. In a few instances the differences in measurements were



Zbigniew Mikulski

more pronounced, but these stamps proved to be repaired and tampered copies.

I was unable to confirm the findings of the two sizes as reported in Poland. Inasmuch as the human error in measuring the size of stamps by means of a scale and magnifying glass may reach 7 or 8 percent, it may be that therein lies the discrepancy. I would also like to add that Mr. Bojanowicz of London, reached precisely the same conclusion in re-examining his tremendous holdings of Poland No. 1 — he finds only one basic size.

Another subject that I would like to bring up is the theory of Mr. Bojanowicz as touched upon in the FILATELISTA of June 15, 1967, according to which the entire issue of 3 million No. 1 stamps was printed in a single run. Considering the limited demand for these stamps (say about 500,000 per year) together with the high face value of these 3 million stamps under prevailing conditions, it appears far-fetched to assume that this issue was printed in one run and

then distributed to the respective post-offices from a single stockpile. If the entire lot were printed in one run, the printery would have supplied itself with one kind of paper and with an adequate quantity of printing inks. The variety of colors in which this stamp occurs and the various papers on which it is printed (a factual study of papers still has not been made) indicate that there were many printings timed to meet current needs throughout its valid life.

Unfortunately no documentary or technical record has survived to this day to give a true account of the actual printing press that was constructed especially for this job by J. Sztaffel. A contemporary account, however, informs us that both the blue and the red colors of the stamp were printed on the same machine without removing the sheet. The absence of noteworthy shifts of one color in relation to the other and the lack of inverts confirm this fact. Most likely each of the plates for their respective colors was pivoted and swung on arms at each side of the machine. After placing the sheet on the bed of the machine first one plate was swung over the sheet for its imprint and swung back, then the other plate was swung into printing position for the second color before the sheet was removed. The marginal plates no doubt received the first and strongest impact, therefore the outer edges of these marginal plates, notably the left edges of the blue form show the greatest wear and flaws.

With eventual wear of the bearings on which the plates were pivoted the registry of the two plates was not exact and we find slight shifts of one color in relation to the other. Here it might be noted that most of the study appears to be confined to the blue plate, whereas the red plates might offer the key to successful plat-

ing, as an individual drawing might have been prepared for each stamp position.

Getting back to the stamp itself, I would like to dwell upon the defects and varieties that occur in Poland No. 1. Above all it should be pointed out that the illustrations of the flaws which have been prepared for W. Polanski's book do not agree with reality. In the interim 40 years all catalogs and other publications have used these very same faulty illustrations as the path of least resistance, thereby misleading collectors as to the true appearance of the actual stamps.

Among these illustrated oddities the only true and repeating varieties are the so called "egg", the broken T, the damaged (not worn) left frame in the blue plate as well as the double (added blue) oval. The other varieties, even if listed in catalogs, cannot be regarded as definite. With today's development in photography and with the availability of choice mint copies in the known collections it is high time that someone would prepare authentic illustrations and put the listing of errors and varieties on a more substantial basis.

In my estimation it is unfair to single out the double oval variety as the choicest morsel in the offering simply because it is the most common one, appearing at least three times in a sheet, whereas other varieties appear but once.

In the collection of Mr. Poulie of Amsterdam this spring, I saw a beautiful cover with a vertical pair of Poland No. 1 where the upper stamp was the "egg" variety and the lower had the distinctly damaged left frame. This pair confirms the theory of Mr. Bojanowicz that the "egg" variety was the No. 1 position in the sheet.

Now in a few words I would like to report some of the rarities of Po-

land that came to my attention lately. In Mr. Poulié's exhibit at the Amsterdam International Show (Amphilex), there was the 10 krone Krakow issue, Scott, No. 55, in the deep violet color with a thin S in the overprint POLSKA — the only such copy hitherto known. This distinguished collector also showed the Gniezno issue, Scott Nos. 77 and 78, with an incomplete sheet of 90 in the 5 fen red overprint and with a full sheet of the 10 fen green overprint, which sheet obviously contains all 100 types of the overprint.

Among the really rare objects which I had the pleasure of seeing lately is an original cover with all the different GRODNO local stamps affixed. This is in the collection of Polonus member, Dr. Fenigstein in Toronto. It most probably is the only known cover with the full series of these truly rare stamps.

In Europe I also saw a most unusual collection of Poland which among other rarities, believe it or not, included 14 copies of the Polish glossy overprints on the definitely ultramarine 20 fen Germania, Scott No. 21A. These included a block of 6 and two pairs. And behold! Among the choicest of the choice objects are the truly unique typographic errors!

This same collection includes perhaps the rarest cover of independent Poland. This original cover is affixed with the rare 25 gr indigo variety of the eagle within a wreath, Scott No. 222, normally red brown, where only a single stamp with this value was mistakenly placed into a sheet of the 40 gr values, Scott No. 224. Besides the cover, this same 25 gr indigo error is included in the collection in a mint strip of 3 with the normal 40 gr values on either side of the error.

Translated by M.E.S.

IN OUR MAIL BOX

Dear Polonus Members:

Just a little note about some dangerous Polish proofs appearing on the philatelic market in auctions all over the country. These are steel engraved cutouts from the book "400 LAT POCZTY POLSKIEJ." There are four full pages of stamp illustrations reproduced in this book. They have wide margins and could be cut out and regummed to look like a proof.

The Polish catalogs RUCH and POLSKIE ZNAKI POCZTOWE Vol. II does not list any proofs in grey-silver-black color.

I first noticed these phoney proofs in an auction catalog of Philatelic Paradise, 100 W. 42nd Street, N.Y., N.Y. listed as #671 and #746 engraved proofs in black. I bid \$5.00 for each and got them for \$4.50 each. Upon checking them out and finding out what they were, I wrote a nice letter to the company and returned the material.

— Emil R. Mrugacz
Polonus #481

"TEMATICA — POZNAN 68"

P.Z.F., the Polish Philatelic Federation, is organizing an International Philatelic Exhibition TEMATICA — POZNAN 68 which will be held July 28 to August 11 in the halls of the Poznan International Fair. Thematic collections will be exhibited. Judging will be by an International Jury in accordance with F.I.P. regulations.

Besides Class Competition (adult, youth exhibitors and thematic literature) Official, Honor and "Hors Concours" Classes are being planned.

The Organizing Committee warmly invites thematic collectors from all over the world to take part in the exhibition. Information may be obtained from the Secretary, Tematica-Poznan 68, Poznan 9, Skrytka pocztowa 6, Poland.

SOME QUESTIONS ON "RED" STAMPS

By RALPH S. WALKER

(Reprinted from "The Philatelic Investor and Market Report", Oct. 1967)

Ask any investor — in fact, just about any collector in this country — which countries are the "dogs" in the philatelic market, and high on his list will be the Communist countries. The profusion of issues (Russia has announced it will issue 130 stamps in 1967) and the flood of canceled-to-order stamps, added to dislike for the politics of these countries and the lack of contact between Iron Curtain philatelists and the rest of the stamp collecting world, make stamps from Communist countries poor investments in the Free World. True.

Or is it? Lately I have begun to wonder.

I have an Esperanto correspondent in Poland, a bookseller who also does experimental bee breeding and stamp collecting. He is trying to acquire a complete collection of the stamps of Poland, including minor varieties, and has pretty well succeeded. He asked me for help in finding some stamps he couldn't locate in Poland. They were #341-43, First Issue of the Polish People's Republic; #568-69, 1953 Karl Marx; the five centenary sheets of four stamps each issued for Polska 60 International Exhibition which contain #909-13.

I found all three. The first set is priced at \$32.00 mint or used in 1967 Scott. I bought it for \$17.50, which

was the price a dealer set before the 1967 catalog appeared, and I was lucky.

The second set is priced at \$5.50 mint in the 1967 catalog, but the \$5.00 for the low value is in italics. I bought the set for \$4.50.



The third set (the sheets) I did not buy, but I located a source — this dealer wanted \$95.00. Apparently only 8,500 sets were printed. My correspondent told me not to buy it, for he had located a European source from which he could buy it for \$58.00.

Let us look at the catalog price history of the first two — I have no knowledge of the third.

#341-43 cataloged: \$18.00 in the 1964 catalog, \$22.00 in 1965, \$25.00 in 1966, and \$32.00 in 1967. That's as sturdy and as steady a price rise as any investor could wish, any sober investor that is.



#568-69 cataloged 70c in 1964, \$1.20 in 1965, \$2.25 in 1966, and \$5.50 in 1967. Not bad, really. Only 100% in a year.

I notice that there are a lot of italicized prices in Scott's Poland listings. This indicates, the publishers say, "infrequent sales, lack of pricing information, that the stamp is not known in the condition indicated, or that the market value is fluctuating excessive-Poland's stamps have been carried by ly." One suspects that the italics for Scott year after year, and have little meaning. But one of these days the italics will be removed and replaced with firmer figures, which will more than likely be substantially higher.

The plain truth is, stamp collectors in Poland, as well as other East European countries, are more affluent now, and are buying their own country's stamps. They have surplus funds they can't spend on consumer goods, which wouldn't fit into their crowded apartments anyway. But they can always find space for a stamp album or two. They have philatelic organizations (of-

ficial, of course, but active and vigorous) and philatelic magazines. And—contrary to popular belief—they do use their own stamps on mail.

Editor's Note: The balance of the article is not reprinted here as it deals with stamps of Russia.

POLONUS REVISES BY-LAWS

Chicagoland members are hereby notified that the By-Laws of the Polonus Philatelic Society will be reviewed at every first meeting of the month starting January 12, 1968. The need for revised By-Laws is urgent and the Honorable Lester Jankowski deserves credit and our support in undertaking this difficult project.

ARE YOUR DUES PAID UP?

The Treasurer reports that many members mistakenly think that their dues are paid for the year when they actually are not.

Polonus was organized in February and consequently our year begins February 1st and ends on January 31st. Check your membership card and you will see.

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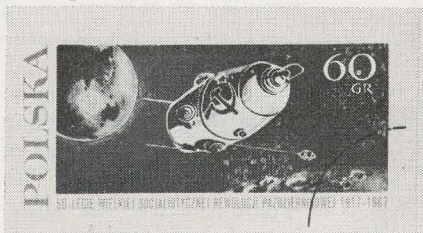
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NEW ISSUES

50th Anniversary of the October Revolution

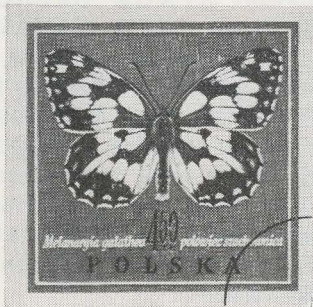
To honor the 50th anniversary of the Great Socialist October Revolution the Polish Post issued three 60 gr. postage stamps on October 9, 1967. All three are red-grey-black in color. One shows the "Aurora" battleship; another the portrait of Lenin on the background of a library; the third—the spacecraft "Luna 10." Printed



by offset in sheets of 20 stamps on common paper of PWPW Warsaw. Designed by Krystyna Tarkowska. The Quantity issued was 5,000,000 sets.

Butterflies

For some time now the Polish Post has been issuing stamps devoted to fauna and flora beauty. On October 14, 1967 a series of nine stamps was issued showing butterflies and moths.



Quantity Issued

10 gr.—Vanessa io	6,000,000
20 gr.—Papilio machaon	5,500,000
40 gr.—Vanessa urticae	6,000,000
60 gr.—Vanessa antiopa	6,000,000
2.00 zł.—Apatura iris	4,100,000
2.50 zł.—Pyrameis atalanta	2,500,000
3.40 zł.—Colias hyale	2,400,000

4.50 zł.—Malanargia galathea	1,300,000
7.90 zł.—Maculinea arion	1,170,000

Offset printed in sheets of 20 on chalky paper by PWPW in Warsaw. Designed by Jerzy Desselberger.

European Paintings

The Polish Post issued a set of stamps showing the works of famous European painters on November 15, 1967. The paintings can be seen in the National Museums in Warsaw and Cracow.



20 gr.—Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Lady with an ermine, Italian, late Renaissance	5,800,000 issued
40 gr.—Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) A Polish woman, French, of late baroque	6,800,000 issued
60 gr.—Abraham Hondius (1639-92) Dog fighting a heron, Dutch baroque	6,300,000 issued
2.00 zł.—Jean Baptiste Greuze (1725-1805) A guitarist or a fowler tuning guitar after a hunt, French, from the turn of baroque and classicism	4,800,000 issued
2.50 zł.—Marinus van Reymerswaele (ca 1495-1566) Tax collector	

tors, Dutch.

4,200,000 issued

3.40 zl.—Fiodor St. Rokotov (1736-1808) Portrait of Dario Fiodorowna, Russian with rococo tendencies

3,300,000 issued

4.50 zl.—Jean de Heem (1606-1684) Still life with a lobster; The Dutch painter of still life of the baroque period

1,970,000 issued

6.60 zl.—Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) Landscape. A parable about the Good Samaritan; Dutch baroque

2,000,000 issued

Rotogravure printed on chalky paper in sheets of five stamps with a tab by PWPW Warsaw. Designed by Jan Samuel Miklaczewski.

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— Annual Dues are \$2.50 —

TID BITS

At the 85th Annual Exhibition of the Chicago Philatelic Society Myron Steczynski showed a historic theme of United States honoring Poland. This display of Polish-American friendship won for him a bronze medal.

Stefan Kochanski acted as judge at the recent MIDPEX show in Chicago.

Congratulations to Stanley Kucharz who won the grand award at Midpex 1967 with his Second Corps Polish Fieldpost Cancellations.

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