

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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Issue No. 103

March 1952

Poland Provisional Issue of January 1921

(Scott No. 153)

by Myron E. Steczynski



A

Currency in Poland depreciated so much at the end of 1920 that there was practically no demand for the 40 fen. violet stamp issued in April-May of that year. The Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs had some 6,000,000 of these stamps on hand and decided to surcharge this large stock into a 3 mark denomination.

A trial surcharge, as shown at A, was submitted to the Ministry, but was rejected as being too small and not very legible. The figure 3 only was next reset with another style of type twice the original size, as shown at B. The number 3 was half a mm. below the "Mk." at the base. One sheet only was proofed with this setting. This one sheet with the large 3 and the heavy black line reposed at the Polish Philatelic Museum in Warsaw until the Germans "liberated" it

B

in 1939. The sheet was broken up and the stamps found themselves on the philatelic market.

The writer has a block of four of these proofs which is unique in the fact that it includes the only copy of the variety with a comma instead of a period after the "Mk." in position 51. The block includes positions 41, 42, 51 and 52 and is signed by Rachmanov. As will be brought out later, other constant surcharge varieties are noted on earlier and on later printings.

There was a further objection to the sample surcharge shown at B—this time to the heavy black line used to obliterate the original 40 fen. value, so it was replaced by five thin continuous lines, as shown at C. This last form was finally approved and several printings were made to sur-

C

charge the 6,000,000 stamps on hand. The first four rows of each sheet have a space of $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm. between the 3 and "Mk.", while the remaining six rows have a space of $2\frac{3}{4}$ mm. Eleven stamps in the sheet have a round period instead of the rectangular one.

The earlier printings were in dull black ink—the later ones in glossy ink. The dull surcharges have a comma instead of a period in position 51—but this error was corrected on the

glossy surcharges. The characters "3 Mk." are missing from Position 20 in some of the glossy sheets; this omission, however, was soon discovered and corrected.

Besides variations in the surcharge, there also appear variations in the basic stamp, such as shades, gum, plate defects, perforation oddities such as imperf between and double perfs, offset on back, etc. The basic varieties included in the writer's collection are as follows:

VARIETIES IN PERFORATION, ETC.

SPACE Between 3 and Mk.	SURCHARGE	GUM	PERFORATION				
			10	11½ Smooth	11½ Rough	10 x 11½	11½ x 10
Top 4 Rows $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm. Spacing	Matt	White	●	●	●	●	
		Yellow	●	●	●	●	
	Glossy	White	●	●	●	●	
		Yellow	●	●	●	●	
Bottom 6 Rows $2\frac{3}{4}$ mm. Spacing	Matt	White	●	●	●	●	
		Yellow	●	●	●	●	
	Glossy	White	●	●	●	●	
		Yellow	●	●	●	●	

Constant Varieties of the Surcharge (printed in matt and glossy inks)

A. Matt and Glossy Surcharges

1. In the top four horizontal rows of each sheet, the space between "3" and "Mk." measures $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm.
2. In the bottom six horizontal rows of each sheet, the space between "3" and "Mk." measures $2\frac{3}{4}$ mm.
3. There are round instead of square periods after "Mk." in positions 17, 24, 34, 38, 45, 59, 62, 71, 84, 91 and 99.
4. Shifted or misplaced surcharges in any direction.

B. Matt Surcharges Only

1. Inverted
2. Vertical
3. Double
4. Double inverted
5. "3" inverted, "Mk." upright
6. "Mk." omitted
7. Comma after "Mk." (Position 51)
8. No period after "Mk."
9. Left foot of "M" broken (Po-

sition 70)

10. Vertical stroke of "k" broken (Positions 82 and 86)

C. Glossy Surcharges Only

1. Obliterating bars only—"3 Mk." deleted (Position 20 on some sheets only)

Defective Surcharges

Many defective surcharges, such as the "Mk." partly or wholly missing, are to be found, but chiefly on used copies, the reason being that many sheets of the 40 fen. stamp showed traces of gum on the surface. Hence the surcharge was printed over spots of gum, which on being washed, would carry off that portion of the surcharge with it.

The Handbook on the Stamps of Poland lists Stamp No. 153 as existing, among others, imperforate, perf. 9, and perf. $11\frac{1}{2} \times 10$. It also lists this stamp as having a vertical and an inverted surcharge. It is probable that some of these varieties were picked up from Col. Larking's articles in Gibbons Stamp Monthly where this

particular stamp was covered in the July, 1930, issue. Col. Larking also enumerated some of these varieties in the write-up of his collection, but such stamps are not actually included in the collection. Neither are they included in the holdings of the basic stamp (Scott's No. 101). Can any reader offer any help or list other oddities of this issue? Send your remarks to Myron E. Steczynski, 4154 N. Leclair Ave., Chicago 41, Ill.

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

By this time all of you should have received your statements. Many have responded wonderfully. Donations in some cases were magnanimous. To you all, the new Officers extend their appreciation, however, there are many too many who yet have not replied, true, some do not intend to reply. They will continue to accept the Bulletin until the Society places them on the suspended list. Now we know there are just a few in this class, but how can the Treasurer know which of you falls into that group. Won't you write to the Treasurer and let him know what your intentions are?

Below is a Box score since the letter was mailed:

Members who are paid up—144.
62 have not paid for 1951 and 1952—
approximately 60 have not paid for 1952.

You know you can only get one quart of milk out of a quart bottle. If a Bulletin is wanted it must be paid for.

It is intended also to publish in the near future an up-to-date membership list and of course, only those who are paid up will be included.

To the following we express our special appreciation.

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WARNING!

A number of Krakow issues have appeared with Mikstein signatures and even plate positions which have been found to be false. A warning is sent out to members to beware of these stamps. Do not buy Krakow stamps without proper expertizing.

DR. KOZAKIEWICZ TO SPEAK AT NEXT PROGRAM MEETING

Program Chairman John Bobo announces that on the March 28th meeting Dr. L. P. Kozakiewicz will speak on Postal History of Poland Before the Partitions.

NEW ISSUES

By J. J. Domar

The official First Day of Issue of the two values of the Polish-Soviet Friendship set bearing the portraits of Stalin was the 30th of October. Engraving as by St. Lukaszewski.

Also two values were issued on the occasion of the Festival of Polish Music. A black 45 groszy and a red 90 groszy. They were designed and engraved by E. Konecki.

Three new stamps were received, 45 gr. + 15 gr. red, upon which is a portrait of M. Nowotka, a 90 groszy, purple-gray with a portrait of P. Finder and 1.15 zl. orange showing a portrait of M. Fornalska. Across the top of each is the legend "Rocznica Powstania PPR."

The 45 groszy was designed and engraved by C. Z. Slania and E. Konecki.

The 90 groszy was designed and engraved by B. Brandt and the 1.15 by M. R. Polak and St. Lukaszewski.

A correction should be made with regard to the miniature sheet issued November 17. We stated it was issued imperforate. Actually it was issued perforated as the illustration indicates.

Ministry of Posts and Telegraph,
Poland

J. Bieniecki

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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Chicago, Illinois

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Barney Fialkowski, Secretary
2633 N. Emmett St.
Chicago 47, Ill.

J. J. Domar, Treasurer
3715 S. Clinton Ave.
Berwyn, Ill.

Publications Committee

Chester W. Makowski, Chmn.
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Chester A. Schafer, Editor
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We forgot to mention that the translation of the Lublin article was the idea of J. Bieniecki who furnished the copy of Ikaros that was used for the translation. Incidentally, Joe uncovered this issue in complete sheets with the exception of one or two values. These are now the possession of one of our Chicago members.