

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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Lester Jankowski, Editor and Chairman Publications Committee
10 South LaSalle Street, Chicago 3, Ill.

J. J. Donar, Chairman Membership Committee
3715 Clinton Ave., Berwyn, Ill.

Poland's 20th Anniversary of Her Independence Issue

by Clement A. Pulaski

The history of Poland begins in the year 842, when the several Slavonic tribes united and elected Piast as their ruler. Her freedom was lost in 1795, when the immortal hero, Thaddeus Kosciuszko, then Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Revolutionary Army, was finally overcome by the invading Russians. Within that span of nearly one thousand years lies a nation's record of numberless memorable achievements, tragic events, glorious and honorable victories on many fields of battle, catastrophic political strife, magnificent educational advancement, and heroic but futile defense against the Russo-German combination of partitioners.

On November 11, 1918, Poland recovered her lost independence. Twenty years later the Government appropriately decided to commemorate this

historic and joyful event by the issuance of special postage stamps and postal cards.

With centuries of history reposing in the dust of time, rich in national interest, it is understandable that the problem of selecting themes in limited number, proved to be an extremely difficult one. The final selection was made after elimination of competitive drawings which were submitted by many contestants. First honors went to the celebrated artist W. Boratynski, whose set of sketches was acclaimed as most adaptable for the purpose, without regard to historical value. By reason of the nation-wide contest which was sponsored by the Ministry of Posts & Telegraphs, the designs chosen were entirely new and original. In judging the winner, the Minister and his



Romuald Traugutt pictured on the 2z commemorative of 20th anniversary of Poland's independence.



King Casimir III shown on 10 gr. stamp of 20th anniversary series.

staff were assisted by representatives of the University of Warszawa, the Academy of Fine Arts, the Polish Army Museum and other distinguished personalities.

The engraving was shared between M. R. Polak, J. Piwczyk and M. Dutczynski. The spontaneous shower of favorable comment is the finest testimonial for their magnificent work. The printing was done in the Government Printery.

The set consists of thirteen values, all perforated 12½, and placed on sale November 11, 1938. A special cancellation was applied to a limited number of first day covers, only at the main postoffice in Warsaw. It is reported that the special cancellation was in use only two hours; hence, it is reasonable to assume that a comparatively small number of collectors were fortunate enough to get covers with this cancellation. This was in the form of a wreath partly encircling the roman numbers "XX". To the bottom of the wreath is knotted a waving banner with the year dates "1918" to the left, and "1938" on the right.

In the belief that many collectors would be interested in having a complete description of the designs, the following is presented:

5 groszy—This stamp opens the series by presenting at the right King Boleslaw I, at Gniezno, in the year 1000. It was during this period that Poland appears in European history as a great Kingdom and a nation of highly advanced culture. The arrival of Emperor Otto, on a mission of reverence to the martyr St. Wojciech, (Adalbert) is of special significance. The stamp portrays the arrival of Emperor Otto (on left) in Gniezno, being welcomed by King Boleslaw. In the background appears the towering figure of the martyred monk.

10 groszy—Here is presented King Kazimierz the Great, during the famous Political Congress of Krakow in 1364, in which year the University of Krakow was founded. The stamp portrays King Kazimierz (central figure) and his royal guests being greeted traditionally with bread and salt by Wierzynek (kneeling figure on left) from the steps of his home in Krakow. The shaded figure near the King's left shoulder is Prince Ludwig of Hungary. At the King's right stands King Carol IV. At the extreme right edge of the

stamp is King Peter of Cyprus (with cane in hand), who was then conducting a tour of Europe and arrived in Krakow with Emperor Carol. In the distance looms the citadel of old Wawel.

15 groszy—This stamp as originally issued, presents King Jagiello and Queen Jadwiga, standing erect, with faint outline of gothic thrones behind them. The scene depicts the moment when Queen Jadwiga was presenting a chest of jewels and the foundation charter, to the Rector of the Academy of Krakow. Directly behind the Rector, forming a background, is an outline of the modern Jagiellonian Library. At the feet of their Majesties is a white robe, upon which reposes the memorable pair of swords presented to the King by the Order of the Knights of the Teutonic Cross before the famous battle of Grunwald (Tannenberg). At the central point where the swords cross, is added a plumed helmet. The design of this base was intended to symbolize the decisive defeat of the Teutons in the Grunwald battle which took place on July 15, 1410.

After this stamp came to the attention of German authorities, the purport of the subject was obviously recognized very quickly, and an official protest was promptly directed to the Government of Poland, demanding its immediate withdrawal from circulation. The Polish Government already embroiled in diplomatic difficulties with Germany yielded. The objectionable base was replaced with a fantastic design without special meaning, except for the central insertion of the Poland-Lithuania Coat of Arms. All remaining stock of the first stamp was destroyed, and the reconstructed stamp was first placed on sale March 2, 1939.

20 groszy—This stamp is dedicated to the memory of King Kazimierz Jagiellonczyk. He is shown seated on a throne, with a faint outline of the map of Poland forming the background. This symbolizes the power of the dynasty of his time, whose rule extended not only over Poland and Lithuania, but reached the very gates of Moscow, and from the Baltic to the Black Sea, embracing the Kingdoms of Bohemia, Hungary and Bosnia, and the Vassal States of Prussia and Moldavia. The figure of the King and details of dress are based upon the sarcophagus, by the famous sculptor Vit

Stwosz, in the Wawel Museum.

25 groszy—This stamp is designed to commemorate the adoption of the Lublin Union Act in 1569, which resulted in a Commonwealth of neighboring States, voluntarily united to the Crown of Poland. The general design represents the act of administering the oath. The historical document is held by Zygmunt August (center) and at the left a Polish nobleman is seen taking the oath. The kneeling figure on the right is a knight in armor. In the left background a Bishop is reading the oath. To the right of the King stand Cardinal Hozjusz holding a crucifix. In the distant background is the Coat of Arms of united Poland and Lithuania.

30 groszy—This stamp represents the occasion when King Stefan Batory is recognizing the acts of bravery of a common peasant named Wielocha. This peasant distinguished himself during the siege of the fortress Wielkie Luki in Russia, by setting fire to the citadel. For his acts of valor he was knighted by the King, and his name changed to Wielkolucki, as befitted a nobleman. The selection of this event from the reign of Stefan Batory was motivated by the fact that the seizure of the fortress realized the purpose of the campaign. It further glorifies the activities of the common peasant in warfare.

45 groszy—Two great military leaders, Chodkiewicz (left) and Zolkiewski (right) are pictured on this stamp. They are presented with the Coat-of-Arms of the reigning dynasty. In the right background is silhouetted a platoon of charging uhlans, while at the left is seen an enemy camp in flames.

50 groszy—The triumphant entry of King Jan Sobieski into rescued Vienna in 1683, is the theme for this stamp. The scene depicts the populace of the city, joyfully and enthusiastically greeting their liberator. The conqueror of the Turks is seen with his chiefs, as the jubilant townspeople kiss his boots and stirrups.

55 groszy—The adoption of the famous Constitution of May 3, 1791, is glorified by this stamp. The document itself, in huge size, is placed at the bottom of the stamp. The central figure is that of the Marshall of the Congress, Malachowski. On the left is portrayed a common peasant, and on the right a nobleman, all three with joined hands, symbolizing complete

agreement and unity regarding abolition of class distinction.

75 groszy—On this stamp a grouping of persons and events is necessitated. The mere mention of Dabrowski, Kosciuszko and Poniatowski as the horsemen pictured on the stamp, should suffice without detailed description of their many deeds.

1 zloty—This stamp in its golden color, is to serve for the glorification of the November 29, 1830, insurrection. The ensuing battles produced so many heroes, that it was decided to dedicate this stamp, simply to the Polish patriots, for their acts of bravery, but the scene actually represents a section of the famous 4th Brigade on the march.

2 zloty—Romuald Traugutt in action during the 1863 insurrection is pictured on this stamp. He is shown leading his men in a battle in the Pinsk forest.

3 zloty—Closing this historical series is the stamp with the portrait of Joseph Pilsudski, as the central figure in the restoration of a new Poland, which was finally assured by the turn of events in 1918. Behind the old warrior, forming the background very appropriately, is a section of the Polish Army in action. The official flag of re-born Poland proudly waves directly behind the Marshall.

History is now in the making—future events are unpredictable. But it is a certain conclusion that Poland will emerge from the chaos, in its former glory, and will again give the stamp collecting world stamp issues, which in theme and workmanship will surpass anything produced in the past.

STAMPS FOR THE WOUNDED

The Chicago Regional office of Stamps for the Wounded has announced that all contributions from Chicago collectors should be forwarded to:

Stamps for the Wounded

58 West Washington St., Room 205
Chicago 2, Ill.

Alfred E. Diamond, secretary of the Society of Philatelic Americans, has accepted appointment as regional collection director. Anthony C. Russo, president of the Central Federation of Stamp Clubs, has accepted the post of regional distribution director, and

Richard McP. Cabeen, stamps editor of the Chicago Tribune, has accepted appointment as regional lecture director. Major Max G. Johl, the well-known U. S. Twentieth Century authority, is also a member of the Chicago regional committee, and other appointments are being made. David Lidman, stamps editor of the Chicago Sun is regional director.

INTERNATIONAL PHILATELIC WEEK

International Philatelic Week

NOVEMBER 5 TO 11, 1944

"Stamps for the Wounded"



VICTORY

Central Federation of Stamp Clubs

BUY A WAR BOND. 6TH WAR LOAN

Stickers plugging International Philatelic Week, sponsored annually by the Central Federation of Stamp Clubs of Chicago, are now being distributed.

The sticker features a picture of the 1919 Victory Issue stamp of the United States. In three lines over the stamp are: International Philatelic Week/November 5 to 11, 1944/ "Stamps for the Wounded." Below the stamp, also in three lines are: Victory/Central Federation of Stamp Clubs/Buy A War Bond, 6th War Loan.

The sticker is the design of Anthony C. Russo, president of the Federation.

The Federation, in plugging Stamps for the Wounded, feels that it is joining philately's greatest contribution to the war effort. In addition, the Federation has contributed \$100 to be used by the Chicago regional committee.

Collectors desiring copies of the sticker may send a stamped and self-addressed envelope to the Central Federation, Room 205, 58 W. Washington St., Chicago 2, Ill.

MONTE CASSINO VARIETY

We had heard in the past few weeks, rumors to the effect that varieties in the Monte Cassino overprint exist. We hadn't seen any and with this issue of the BULLETIN were going to issue a call or request for our members to be on the look out for these items and to report them to us.

Recently, however, Myron E. Steczynski, President of Polonus, upon his return from a trip to New York, advised that a variety does exist. He has it in his collection, having purchased it in New York!

A missing "dot" after the number "18" in the line 18. V. 1944, on the magenta stamp, surcharged 55 Gr on the 80 Gr (3k6) constitutes the only known variety to this date. It occurs only once in a sheet of 100, in the 30th position, or the 3rd stamp from the top on the right hand margin. As there were only 50,000 stamps or 500 sheets printed only 500 stamps with this variety exist.

Fortunate indeed will be the Polish specialist to have this item in his collection.

The Editor.

NORTH SHORE POLONUS NIGHT

October 9th, Chicago. Edgewater Beach Hotel. Weather — perfect.

The place, the time, the weather and the announcement that Frank Wolosowick would speak on the "Krakow Overprints" should have been inducement enough for our members to come out in droves, but such was not the case. However, North Shore was well represented by a very fine assemblage to do Polonus honor and to hear Frank's talk.

When one considers the highly technical aspect of the subject, it was quite an accomplishment to present it in a manner which the novice could understand and at the same time maintain the interest of the entire audience. All of this Frank did well, and Polonus should feel proud to number him among its members.

Anyway, after the talk, your Secretary felt much less the embarrassment caused by the small Polonus attendance.

Jack Domar

"THE BEEBA"



Note how busy everyone was with the "business" at hand, and was there plenty of business! The grin on the face of Lester Jankowski is indicative of Polonus' hospitality. We don't know if Ben Reeves had overeaten or had too little sleep. Can you find yourself in the picture?—(Cuts courtesy of the S. P. A. Journal)

JAMES SHAVER AND DANZIG

At the October 13th meeting, which was well attended, the Society was for-

tunate to have as its guest speaker Mr. James Shaver, former Vice President of the S. P. A. His subject, as mentioned in a previous Bulletin, was

"The Stamps of Danzig."

In the many years that the writer has devoted to the hobby, both as a collector and a listener to stamp speakers, he has never heard a speaker who had better command of his subject or who presented it in a more clear manner. The talk was given from both a philatelic and a historical point of view. In addition, those in attendance were seated so that each page of Mr. Shaver's collection could be passed to everyone. The pages were very neatly done, well mounted, and finely lettered; and, as Frank Wolosowick said: "You see, Domar, that's what I mean by balance from an aesthetic point of view!"

I am sure that many left the meeting firmly resolved that they, too, would collect Danzig.

That, my friends, is what is known as a successful talk.

Jack Domar

MEET THE NEW MEMBERS

Member No. 230. Anthony Lemanski,
1817 N. Leavitt Street, Chicago
47, Illinois. (US and FD Covers)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Felix J. Polek
624 Washington Avenue
Braddock, Pa.

Pvt. Stanley Falcon, 36840440
Hdqtrs Co. Eng. Tng. Sec.
A. S. F. T. C
Fort Lewis, Wash

Albert Kolaczewski
4857 Roscoe Street
Chicago 41, Ill.

Pvt. Stanley Kucharz, 36779360
Co. A. 131 Bn. 29th M. T. R.
Camp Ellis, Illinois.

C. J. Dabrowski
843 S. Bonnie Brae St.
Los Angeles 5, Calif.

Norbert J. Zielinski, S2/c
Gen Detail, Navy Yard
Philadelphia, Pa.

THIS 'n THAT

Our Los Angeles, California, members are going to hold a stamp exhibition! Stamps of Poland, pictures, books and other items related to Polish

culture will be on display at the Polish American Civic Center, 843 S. Bonnie Brae Street, Los Angeles, California, from December 3 to December 17, 1944. According to information at hand, Casimir Dabrowski, Frank Truskiewicz, Adam Stefanowski, B. A. Zaremba and Frank Prescott will participate. Congratulations boys, and best wishes from all of Polonus for a successful showing.

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Dr. M. E. Uznanski, POLPEX Director for 1945, is really getting to work early. Doc hopes the Associate members will take a greater interest in the exhibit. POLPEX 1945 will be held February 23, 24, and 25, 1945 at the Polish Roman Catholic Union Archives and Museum and will be a competitive exhibition.

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We would like to correct an unfortunate error that was in Bert Powell's otherwise splendid article, entitled, "Paderewski, Philatelic Autographs" appearing in STAMPS of August 26, 1944. Bert said: "In March, 1941, coincident with the opening day of POLPEX 1941, the Chicago Tribune published a very impressive cartoon depicting Paderewski." The cartoon by Parrish appeared January 26, 1940, which was the OPENING day of POLPEX 1940!

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"Thanks for the souvenir of the Beeba, and best wishes and greeting to all the members of Polonus from somewhere in Panama." T/Sgt. Charles Wrobel.

* * *

Father Jerome Holubowicz is now convalescing after a long and serious illness. Just out of the hospital, we understand. Our wish, a speedy return to Good Health!

* * *

"I am receiving the Polonus BULLETIN, and I'm sure happy to get it. It is the only way I am able to obtain information on the Stamps of Poland. I sure would like to hear from some of the boys." Pvt. Stanley Kucharz, Camp Ellis.

* * *

Adam Kloskowski reports the demand for the Beeba-Chipex-S. P. A. souvenir sheets as brisk. If you want an extra copy or copies, send 15 cents per each to Adam Kloskowski, 2528 N. Drake Avenue, Chicago 47, Illinois.