

BULLETIN OF THE

POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY



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Polish Philately*

by John Adamson

There is a certain amount of apathy regarding the stamp issues of any country except amongst collectors. Very few pause to think of the thought behind the design—it is simply a receipt for postage paid, and there the matter ends. I agree with non-collectors that it is simply boring to look at rows of stamps, or even to read a stamp article unless one is in some way interested in philately.

An article on stamps has never before been published in this paper, but such a one is certainly not out of place. I am very conscious that many of my readers will not be collectors and I want to interest them in the subject and through it to promote an understanding of Polish culture, literature, and history as well as popularise the postal issues of Poland. If I can do this I shall further one of the objects of a Society devoted to the study

of Polish stamps.

Instituted in Poland in 1931, for the purpose of collecting and making known by all means, including the study of postage stamps to foreign countries, with their collaboration, the true facts about Poland, Poland is temporarily under the heel of the invader but still the Poles are using their own adhesive postage stamps.

In times of peace Poland fully realised the propaganda value of philately, and without being aware of the dark days ahead of her she laid the foundation of an understanding with the nationals of other countries, through her stamp issues. The designs of their stamps seem to me to indicate a feeling which may be summed up in General Haller's words: "... In the high places of the friendship of free men and free nations."

It is, of course, impossible for me to give in this article details of every Polish issue of stamps and my readers will I am sure, forgive me if I omit particulars which would be of interest only to collectors.

I have often been asked why I collect Polish stamps, and my answer has always been that Poland, being a country whose greatest development belongs to the post war period, interested me. I was a general collector until I read the lengthy, but most fascinating serial on Polish stamps by Col. R. N. W. Larking, C. B. E., in Gibbons Stamp Monthly. That was twelve years ago and Polish stamps still fascinate me. If I possessed the

* (Editor's Note. This article originally appeared in "The Voice of Poland" Vol. 1, No. 19 (280) 12th December 1942, published by Mrs. Jadwiga Harasowska, 242 Hope Street, Glasgow, C. 2.

The Voice of Poland is not a philatelic magazine and the article, obviously is not intended for stamp collectors. John Adamson is a member of Polonus, residing in England and we are proud of his association with our Society and very happy to present his interesting observations. The illustrations are not the ones used in the original article.)



Col. R. N. W. Larking, C. B. E.
(deceased)

technique demonstrated by Col. Larking in that article I might induce others to join the "Family Circle."

My collection, not by any means the largest, begins with the "concession" stamps in 1860. At that time a part of the Polish Republic was subject to Russian rule under Tsar Alexander who, in a feeble effort to buy over the Poles authorised the issue of a Polish stamp. It was intended to be a symbol of Nationhood, but that was not sufficient to satisfy an oppressed nation. It certainly did not satisfy Romald Traugutt who led an insurrection in 1863. This displeased the Tsar, who withdrew the concession. This stamp is described as "Poland No. 1," and is similar in design to the then current Russian stamp. Its value was 10 kopecs.

From the Partioning Periods, 1772-1794, Poland was divided between Russia, Germany and Austria, and in order to connect the link between 1860 and the Republic, I naturally sought stamps of the three nations bearing the post marks of Polish towns. I say Polish towns because they were definitely Polish and derived from Slav words, and of philatelic interest.

During the Gerat War of 1914-18 the

German and Austrian military authorities controlled the Post Offices. A considerate body of Poles in Warsaw ventured to approach the German Authorities and petitioned them to issue a Municipal Stamp that could be affixed, in addition to the postage, whereby letters could be delivered. It was so suggested that the fee paid for the Municipal Stamp would enable the Municipal Authorities to maintain the service of a courier. Wonder of wonders, the request was granted. The next step was to prepare the designs. Two denominations were to be issued. The first, a 5 gr., showed the City Arms of Warsaw—the Capital. What pleasure it must have been to the Poles to be able to show on their stamps the arms of their capital! The second was of a 10 gr. denomination and the design chosen was the Polish National Emblem—The White Eagle. I don't think either could have been chosen at random. They would obviously arouse national fervour.

Early in 1916 the Warsaw citizens wished to issue a set of four stamps to be known as the Warsaw Citizen's Post for the delivery of their correspondence in Warsaw and the suburbs. The designs were prepared, and were the Statue of Sigismund III, the City Arms, the Polish Eagle and the Statue of Sobieski. These were presented to Von Beseler, who was the German Governor, for his sanction. Whether the designs offended him or whether he had expected the stamps to consist of his own profile, I cannot say, but in any case he forbade their circulation. About the same time some towns in the Austrian area sought permission to issue Municipal Stamps. These were Zawiercie, Sosnowiec, Zarki, Przedborz and others. Rather later in their applications were Luboml and Checiny. Some of these Municipal Stamps are difficult to get hold of since the numbers printed did not allow of extensive circulation.

At last came the day when neither Von Beseler or Von Kuk had any say in the matter. With remarkable speed the Polish Postal Authorities organized a postal service. The first stamps to be issued by the new Republic was the set of the Warsaw Citizens' Post. These were overprinted "Poczta Polska" and surcharged in new values (fennigs). Stocks of German stamps already overprinted "Gen. Gouv. Warschau" and others were collected and further overprinted "Poczta Polska"

and used in Northern Poland, the area previously served. In the Southern area where Austrian stamps had been in use without any occupation overprint, these were similarly overprinted "Poczta Polska." This was necessary owing to the currency then circulating in the Northern and Southern parts.

The first distinctive issue appeared in February 1919, of which there were two sets in the same designs, one for Northern Poland and later one for Southern Poland. The designs for these stamps were adapted from the selection submitted to the German Military Authorities in 1917 by the Members of the Society of Arts, who had, at the request of the Germans, prepared designs for the ultimate Kingdom of Poland. In every case the stamps bore the words "Krolestwo Polskie." Events in 1917 determined that Poland should not yet become a kingdom and the designs never got beyond a trial stage. In this adaption "Poczta Polska" was substituted for "Krolestwo Polskie."

In June 1919 a set of stamps was issued to commemorate the opening of the first Polish National Assembly. The political significance attending this issue would occupy considerable space, but is outwith the scope of this article. Most of my readers are doubt-

less acquainted with the history of this period and therefore I concern myself solely with the designs. Again the Polish Eagle takes first place and is followed by designs bearing the images of Paderewski, Trampeczynski and Pilsudski. One other design shows the Polish Eagle watching a ship struggling in a storm, and bears some resemblance to the notable picture by the painter Ferdinand Ruszczyc called "Nec Mergitur," which hangs in the Wilno Museum. The mark value showing a Gryphon—a legendary creature with the body and legs of a lion, the head and wings of an eagle, and listening ears, emblematic of strength, agility and watchfulness.

In 1920, to commemorate "The Treaty of Riga," a design symbolic of Peace was chosen, that of a sower with a Rainbow in the background. Another commemorative stamp depicts the triptych of the Church of St. Marie, Krakow, by Wit Stwosz, the greatest master of the painted sculpture, an art that during the 15th century was considered superior to that of painted pictures. The triptych, magnificently carved in wood and painted, is the chief treasure of the Church. Since Nazi occupation this great Masterpiece has been looted and removed to Nuremberg.

Jan Sobieski is the subject of another design which is based on the painting "The Liberation of Vienna" by J. Matejko. It was Sobieski who saved Western Europe from a Turcs invasion in 1683. Incidentally, it was Sobieski's granddaughter Clementina who married James Stuart, the Old Pretender, and who was the mother of Bonnie Prince Charlie.

Jan Matejko was Poland's greatest Master Painter and has 240 canvases



National Assembly Issue



Nicolas Copernicus

and thousands of sketches and drawings to his credit. He was inspired by the great and glorious past and, as a true patriot desired to draw there from lessons for the future. Among his many portraits is one of Nicolas Kopernik, the famous Astronomer, who discovered that the world revolved round the sun and is known as inventor of the Principles of the circulation of money, popularised by Gresham (Gresham's Law).

Other stamp designs depict Julius Slowacki, writer and poet, the creator of Poland's National Drama, famous General Josef Bem, Frederic Francois Chopin, the celebrated composer and pianist, and Dr. Karol Kaczkowski who was Chief of the Polish Army Medical Service in 1831. This last mentioned stamp was issued on the occasion of the Fourth Army Medical and Pharmaceutical International Congress held in Warsaw, 1927.

Pilsudski, the Founder of Modern Poland figures on many issues, whereas Paderewski appears on one only. Theodore Steinway of piano fame, himself a collector, requested Paderewski to autograph a copy of this stamp. The original autographed stamp hangs in the Steinway Music Salon, New York. I have in my collection a facsimile of the signature on the stamp in colour, combined with a drawing by Parrish, the Chicago Tribune's famous Cartoonist, showing Paderewski instructing a waif, representing Poland, to play the Polish National Anthem. This cartoon appeared on the front page of the "Chicago Tri-

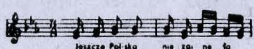
bune" on the opening day of the Polonus Philatelic Society's first Exhibition, 26th January, 1940. If a newspaper of the calibre of the Chicago Tribune gives front page publicity in the interest of philately, there is a reason for it, they know its value.

Many other eminent Poles are portrayed on stamp issues, but these I must leave. I hope that some day my collection will include portraits of Mr. Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz and General Wladyslaw Sikorski.

The pictorial views shown on many stamps give one an idea of Poland's geography and industry, and shows many of her fine buildings. The historical issue of November, 1938 gives a record of events from the year 1000 A. D. to a scene of the Battle in the Marshes of Pinsk in 1863.

The last stamp printed in Poland was issued on 6th August, 1939, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the formation of the Polish Legion. The design shows Marshall Pilsudski standing in the centre with the "Sons of 1914" on his right and following on the "Sons of to-day" on the left. This depicts a nation's gratitude.

Poland's remaining sovereign territory consists of the decks of her Naval and Mercantile vessels. The Polish Government in London took advantage of its rights under the Universal Postal Convention held in Buenos Aires in May, 1939, and on 14th December issued a set of eight stamps. Four of these show the ruins of Warsaw taken from actual photographs. The others



POLONUS PHILATELIC SOCIETY
POLPEX, 1941
MARCH 6-7-8 CHICAGO, ILL.

POLPEX Souvenir 1941



Submarine Orzel

show branches of the Polish Forces in Britain. The issues are primarily intended for use on letters posted on Polish vessels, but in agreement with the British Government letters bearing them may be posted in Polish Camps on certain days.

I consider a British-Polish stamp would meet with considerable success. There are precedents for the idiom. Poland honoured Washington and the United States of America similarly honoured Kosciuszko and Pulaski. France issued a stamp to commemorate the visit of the British King and Queen, and just before the fall of France there was a proposal to issue an Anglo-French stamp to be used in both countries.

Yes, philately can play its part in promoting understanding between peoples. I have not, by any means, exhausted all that can be said concerning Polish Philately, but perhaps sufficient to create some interest in the subject. If it is that I have bridged the gulf between collectors and non-collectors I shall feel that I have achieved something worth while. To my British readers who have their snapshots of happy memories in the company of Polish folk I suggest that you give yourselves the additional pleasure of collecting Polish stamps.

WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY

Andrew McKie, London correspondent, writing in the Weekly Philatelic Gossip for August 26, 1944, says:

"The Polish Government in London have applied the special overprint Monte Cassino, 18-V-1944, to four stamps of the 1941 pictorial series. This issue is to honor the victory of the Polish Army, who captured the town of Monte Cassino. The face value of the four stamps is 2/6 and they are being offered by London dealers at 3/6 per set. A total of 50,000 sets were placed on sale June 30th. You will perhaps recall that in October 1943, the Polish Government in London issued a new series of 8 stamps to take the place of the first issue of 1941, which they stated had been exhausted. And now we have four values of this 1941 issue with the special Monte Cassino overprint. It would appear that the first issue was not exhausted, or that fresh supplies have been printed and issued with the sole object of imposing on stamp collectors."

The OLD SLEUTH of STAMPS recently made this observation:

"The Polonus Philatelic Society is acquiring life membership in the Polish Roman Catholic Museum of Chicago. Their last exhibit was held there and they are taking this means to show their appreciation. Nice going boys! And, while on the subject, perhaps this aggressive group could interest the museum authorities in allotting space for a permanent exhibit which would really be something!"

MEET THE NEW MEMBERS

Member No. 227. Bronislaus A. Zar-emba, 240 East Sixty-second Street, Los Angeles 3, Calif. (EPP, US and F. D. Covers of US)

Member No. 228. Floyd T. Lewand, 5334 S. Bishop Street, Chicago 9, Illinois. (Specialized mint US and Gen.)

Member No. 229. Walter S. Kolankowski, 6081 St. Aubin Street, Detroit, Mich. (Gen.)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

A. J. Ochab, 2824 N. Menard Ave. Chicago 34, Ill.

Pvt. Stanley C. Kucharz, 3 6779360, Q. M. C.-ASFTC, % Camp Ellis, Ill.

THIS 'n THAT

Polonus Night at the North Shore Philatelic Society will be the meeting of October 9, 1944. John Gapinski and Frank Wolosewick, the "Krakow issue" experts will be the guest speakers. The meeting will be held at the Edgewater Beach Hotel and all members of Polonus are invited to attend.

* * *

James Shaver, former Vice-president of the S. P. A., will be the guest speaker at the October 13, 1944, meeting of the Polonus Philatelic Society. Jim is a dynamic speaker and a collector of note. His topic will be "Danzig and Port Gdansk." All members are urged to attend this meeting to hear Mr. Shaver and see his extensive collection. We understand Jim has a terrific collection of Port Gdansk.

* * *

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

Donation Auction

Date: October 27, 1944
Place: Polonus Club Room, 1062 No.
Ashland Ave., Chicago, Ill.
Time: 9:00 p.m.

TERMS OF SALE

1. Terms of sale are STRICTLY CASH to the highest bidder. Lots will be cleared immediately after the sale.

2. Auction Manager reserves the right to reject bids or withdraw from sale any lot.

3. All stamps are sold as genuine unless otherwise noted, and all claims must be made within 10 days of receipt of lots.

4. All lots must be taken up immediately after sale in person, excepting mail bids, and in this case successful bidders will be notified of the amount secured for them and they must send remittance plus postage and registration fee immediately before lots are sent.

MAIL BIDDERS NOTE: Mail bids to Roman Reinowski, 1939 South Highland Avenue, Berwyn, Illinois. Please use LOT number and not catalog number when making up bid sheet.

Scott's 1944 catalog numbers are used unless otherwise noted.

* means unused • means used

Lot No.	United States	Cat. value
1 *	#424 Good mint	\$1.20
2 *	#424 Good mint	1.20
3 *	#632-634-637 Plate Blks Good mint	.72
4 *	#638-639 Plate Blks Good mint	1.16
5 *	#640-641 Plate Blks Good mint	1.36
6 *	#642 Plate Blk Good mint ..	.80
7 *	#653-684-685-720 Plate Blks Good mint	.96
8 *	#692 Plate Blk Good mint ..	.88
9 *	#693 Plate Blk Good mint ..	.92
10 *	#694 Plate Blk Good mint ..	1.04
11 *	#695 Plate Blk Good mint ..	1.12
12 *	#696 Plate Blk Good mint ..	1.20
13 *	#697 Plate Blk Good mint ..	1.36
14 *	#698 Plate Blk V. F. mint ..	1.60
15 *	#701 Plate Blk Good mint ..	5.00

U. S. Commemoratives

16 •	#620-621 Very fine used..	2.15
17 *	#611-690-703 Blks of 4 Good mint	.96
18 *	#704-710 Blks of 4 Fine mint	.56
19 *	#712 Plate Blk Fine mint ..	.64
20 *	#717-724-725 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	.88
21 *	#726-728-729-732 Blks of 4 Fine mint	.88
22 *	#733-734-736 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	1.04
23 *	#737-738-739 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	.78
24 *	#727 Plate Blk and #741 Two Plate blks of 6 F. mint	.84

25 *	#740 to 749 singles Good mint	1.23
26 *	#740-743-744-746-747-748- 749 Blks of 4, V. F. mint ..	3.96
27 *	#772-773-775 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	.76
28 *	#772-776-777-782 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	.96
29 *	#778 two sheets Very fine mint	.48
30 *	#782-783-784 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	.72
31 *	#785 to 789 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	1.20
32 *	#790 to 794 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	1.20
33 *	#795-802-858 Plate Blks Very fine mint	.72
34 *	#796 Blk of 4 Very fine mint	.40
35 *	#797 Three sheets Very fine mint	.60
36 *	#784-798-799-800 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	.96
37 *	#799-800-801 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	.72
38 *	#801-802-855 Blks of 4 Very fine mint	.72
39 *	#66 Canal Zone Blk of 4 Good mint	.40

Foreign Lots

40 *	Luxembourg #199 F. mint	2.00
41 *	Romania #429 to 432 Fine mint	.95
42 *	Canada #66 Blk of 8 Mint, no gum, Good	.96
43 *	Kedah, Strait Settlement #16 Good mint	1.25
44 *	China #288 to 290 Blks of 4 mint, not complete set	1.72
45 •	Mixed Foreign 22 stamps, mint and used	2.95

Poland

46	#11 to 14 on registered cover Very fine	
47	#3K14 on postal card, registra- tion mark, cancellation Polska Marynarka Handlowa	
48	2 Sheets of Warsaw Locals in full sheets of 40, 1 red sheet No. 11 and 1 green sheet No. 14 as described in April, 1944 BUL- LETIN, all errors included	
49	Skarb Narodowy — Na Zakup Zlota i Srebra, Blks of 4 and singles, 4 values complete..	
50	Skarb Barodowy—same as above End of Auction	

Mrs. Anne Mikucki, efficient Honorary Chairman of the recent Beeba, was surprised and quite thrilled at the action of the Society. She was presented with a lovely handbag as an expression of the Society's appreciation of her splendid efforts to make the Beeba the success it was.