

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 201

June, 1962

THE HISTORY OF THE POLISH FIELD POST IN THE EAST DURING WORLD WAR II

by Father K. Kucharski

Translated and condensed by I. Gust

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE:

I came across this interesting document quite by accident. In a conversation with a friend of mine he mentioned an article which was published in 1949 in Beirut (Tekka Bejrucka, Zeszty A) by Father K. Kucharski. After studying carefully the long document, it dawned on me that the findings of our learned friend are of great interest to all those who collect this phase of Polish philately. So let us start from the beginning and follow the author's story.

HIS INTRODUCTION.

"The Field Post of the Polish Army in the East grew out of the tradition of the F.P. regulations of the Polish Army in the Middle East and originally started in the Karpatian Brigade (S.B.S.K.). At the same time in the Soviet Union the newly formed "Polish Armed Forces" also organized their own Field Post. In both cases the Polish Field Post had to work within the foreign systems of Postal Regulations. In the Middle East it was based on the British system and in the U.S.S.R. on the Soviet Postal organization. This is why the history of the Polish Field Post in the East during World War II must describe both these phases of development."



Gen. W. Sikorski, Commander in Chief
of the Polish Army

1. Polish Forces in Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Lybia.

After the defeat of Poland in September 1939, a provisional Government was established in Paris and Gen. W. Sikorski became Commander in Chief of the Polish Army. One of his first orders was given on 4/2/1940 establishing the Karpatian Infantry Brigade (B.S.K. under the Command of Col. St. Kopanski, who immediately left Paris for Beirut. In May, 1940 the officer group of 30 joined him. Syria at that time (August, 1939) was the center of concentration of the French Army under Gen. M. Weygand. By agreement with the French Government, the Karpatian Brigade (B.S.K.) was to be incorporated into the French Army Le-

*Field Post in the Middle East is the history of the Karpatian Brigade (B.S.K.), Independent Karpatian Brigade (S.B.S.K.) and Polish Army Middle East (W.P.S.W.).

vant. The recruits to this brigade were to come from the prisoners of war interned in Hungary and Rumania. The Polish Consular offices in Rumania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey were to help these recruits to reach Beirut. It was expected that this brigade would be 15,000 strong, but unfortunately the two last transports with recruits which left Greece and Yugoslavia never reached Beirut. In April, 1940 the French Government capitulated and the transport ships were redirected to France. All the would be recruits were interned in Spain and France, thus reducing the potential strength of the Brigade. As a result of the French capitulation, the French C.O. in Syria, Gen. Mittlehauser, also laid down his arms. The Polish brigade had to fight its way through to Palestine. Only 3500 officers and men left Holmes, Syria. Some went by train to Latrun, others by trucks to Semakh, on Lake Tiberias, Palestine. Now the Karpatian Brigade (B.S.K.) found itself under British Command. From 7/2/1940, it was stationed in the Latrun-Emmaus area where it underwent extensive training. Haifa was the receiving port of new recruits who managed to reach Palestine via Turkey. Palestine was only a training ground and during September, 1940, the Brigade (B.S.K.) was transferred to Egypt. There it was re-named the "Polish Independent Brigade Group" (S.B.S.K.) Its first military assignment was to defend the line of hills stretching from the sea to the Lake Martuth (20 km. west of Alexandria). The HQ's of the Brigade was located in Dekhel, on the Alexandria-Cairo Road. In the meantime the positions of Yugoslavia and Greece were deteriorating and the British Military Command was contemplating sending an expeditionary force to help those countries. The Polish Brigade underwent difficult mountain training and even embarked with other formations for Greece, but was quickly recalled. Now it was necessary to prepare the men for desert fighting. During May, it first moved to Mersa-Matruh, then, on August, 1941 to Amria, where they stayed till the end of September. The Brigade was shortly called

to participate in the Libyan campaign. (2) After heavy losses the Brigade was relieved on 3/22/1942, and by the end of the month it moved to Qastine, in Palestine. The HQ's of the Brigade, including the auxiliary units were moved to Reckoboth, also in Palestine.

Almost at the same time, April, 1942, the first evacuation of the Polish Forces in the USSR reached Iran and was sent via Iraq, Trans-Jordan, to Palestine. The Karpatian Brigade (S.B.S.K.) was again re-named the 3rd Karpatian Infantry Brigade and was incorporated into the new united Polish Middle East Army (W.P.S.W.).

With this short historic background, we can now describe the activities of the Field Post of the S.B.S.K. and the W.P.S.W. in the Middle East (1940-47).

The beginning of the Field Post was the Postal Agency set up by the Karpatian Brigade at HQMS in Syria on 7/2/1940. It did not have its own date mark but it acted as a liaison between the Brigade and the French "Bureau Militaire" in Beirut. Later it performed the same function with the British Advanced Post Office (A.P.O.) which was located in Latrun, Palestine. This position lasted till 11/1/1940 when the Brigade was transferred to Dekhel in Egypt. Here it received the F. P. 111, and a special handstamp was made at the establishment of A.I. Majgosheh in Alexandria, Catherine Square No. 5. The outside circle was 23 mm., the inside, 17 mm., and inside the two circles the words "Poczta Polowa 111", (F. P. 111). At the same time a registration handstamp was made, 40 x 15 mm., with similar wording. British postage stamps were used on letters addressed to England, the Empire and the U.S.A., and Egyptian stamps on letters addressed to Latin America and on air mail letters to the U.S.A. Private letters were addressed to "Polish Brigade No."

The following code numbers were allotted to individual formations:
 No. 10—to District Command Palestine and to Jerusalem Base Command.
 No. 15—to Tel-Aviv Distr. Command and to the M.P. Unit.
 No. 20—to HQ. Polish Army, Middle East and Base Command, Cairo.

No. 25—to HQ. S.B.S.K.
 No. 26—to 1st Regmt. S.B.S.K.
 No. 27—to 2nd Regmt. S.B.S.K.
 No. 28—to Artillery Unit, S.B.S.K.
 No. 29—to Cavalry Unit, S.B.S.K.
 No. 30—to Engineer Unit, S.B.S.K.
 No. 31—to Signal Unit, S.B.S.K.
 No. 32—to Medical Unit, S.B.S.K.
 No. 33—to Officer cad., S.B.S.K.
 No. 34—to Guard Unit, S.B.S.K.
 No. 35—to Hospital, S.B.S.K.
 No. 46—to Railway Enginners, S.B.S.K.

(According to the author, this list may be incomplete).

The second Field Post 101 was opened on 5/24/41 in Dekhel, Egypt, and served as the main field post office for the H.Q.'s of the now Polish Army Middle East (W.P.S.W.). It had a similar handstamp as the F.P. 111 and it was made at the same place in Alexandria, but inside of the circle it had "Główna Poczta Polowa 101" (Main F.P. 101).



Shortly afterwards, on 8/20/41, F.P. 112 was allotted to the Army Administration of Reserves in Palestine. F.P. 102 was opened on 4/4/42 in Cairo at the Administration Center for the Army in Egypt. This F.P. continued to function till 1/3/47, when it was finally closed down.

F.P. 114 was opened on 8/5/42 in Bey-Girgij, Palestine, serving the central Training School (C.W.B.S.) and also the Military Hospital No. 1. When later the Polish Army (W.P.S.W.) was moved to Iraq, this F.P. number was allotted to the 7th Infantry Division.

F.P. 115 was opened on 9/21/42 to serve the Evacuation Command, Palestine and also served as a contact between the Polish Army in Iraq and the Polish Administration Cairo in Egypt.

The movements of these individual Field Posts are as follows:

F. P. 111—the oldest and is closely linked with the history of the Karpatian Brigade (S.B.S.K.)

From 10/1/40 to 5/22/41 in Dekhel, Egypt.

From 5/24/41 to 7/18/41 in Mersa-Matruh.

From 7/18/41 to 8/24/41 in Sidi Hahish.

From 8/24/41 to 1/8/42 in Tobruk.

From 1/8/42 to 1/28/42 in Giovanni-Berta.

From 1/29/42 to 2/17/42 in Tobruk.

From 2/17/42 to 3/22/42 in El-Gazal.

From 3/23/42 to End of April 42, in El-Maria, near Alexandria.

On May 1, 1942, the Brigade leaves for Iraq and Palestine.

F.P. 101 — From 5/24/41 to end of May, 41 in Sid Bishr, Egypt.

End August, 41, to 4/29/42 in Cairo.

From 4/31/42 to 5/28/42 in Qastine, Palestine.

From 5/29/42 to 10/27/42 in Rechoboth, Palestine.

From 10/30/42 to 8/14/43 in Bagdad, attached to the HQ. Polish Army.

From 8/14/43 to 10/1/43 in Bagdad, divided into parts: 1.) as a liquidation office. 2.) returned to Rechoboth Palestine, as F.P. 101A.

Field Post 112 was organized on January 1st, 1941 in Latrun, Palestine, but received the hand stamp only on August 20th, 1941 while at Sidi-Bishr in Egypt.

From 8/20/41 to 1/14/42 in Sidi-Bishr.
 From 4/2/42 to 8/30/42 in Chedera, Palestine.

From 9/9/42 in Iraq, attached to the 7th Division of the A.P.W. and acts as a liaison post office between the F.P. of the Polish Army and the British Field Post.

Field Post 102, was set up in Cairo, Egypt, attached to the Base Administration till it was closed on January 3, 1947.

Field Post 114, was attached to the C.W.B.S. and the Military Hospital No. 1, from November 5, 1942 in Iraq attached to the 7th Division.

Field Post 115, opened on September 21, 1942 at Rechoboth, Palestine, and acted as a liaison post office between

the Polish Army in Iraq and the Base Administration in Cairo, Egypt.

Besides these postal arrangements, the Karpatian Brigade (B.S.K. and S.B.S.K.) had special Post Office boxes for overseas mail.

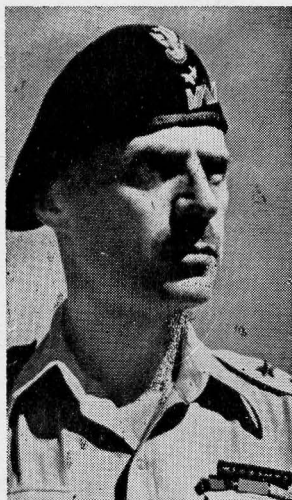
In Syria it was "Postal Sector 612" In Palestine it was "Jerusalem P. O. Box 1666". In Egypt it was "Alexandria P. O. Box 2155" and "Cairo P. O. Box 900."

The postal officer of the Base was collecting the mail and distributed it amongst the various units.

II. Polish Armed Forces in the U.S.S.R.

August, 1941 to August, 1942.

On July 30, 1941, General Sikorski, Prime Minister and C.I.C. of the Polish Army, renewed Diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. A military agreement was signed on August 14th, 1941, establishing a Polish Army to be called "Polish Armed Forces in the U.S.S.R.". The recruits for this Army were to come from the freed P.O.W.'s internees and all those Poles who happened to be in the Soviet Union. The C.I.C. of the Army was Gen. W. Anders



Gen. W. Anders, Commander of the Polish Armed Forces in the U.S.S.R.

and the assembly point was in the near Volga Military District, hence the name "PRYWO", (from the Russian Prywolga). The places were:

Buzuluk—HQ's of the C.I.C. Gen. An-

ders and his S/C. Gen. Szyszko-Bohusz.

Tockoje—6th Infantry Division under Gen. M. Tokarzewski.

Tockoje—Army Organization under Col. Galadyk.

Tatyszczewo—5th Infantry Division under Gen. Boruta-Spiechowicz.

By August, 1942, this Army counted 46,942 officers and men. The war time difficulties were enormous and this Army was short of supplies and equipment. At the insistence of the Polish Army Command, the Soviet Union agreed to the evacuation of the Polish Army to the Middle East. Thus the second phase, the so-called "Sawo", in Russian — the Central Asian Military District, begun. The evacuation to a locality around Tashkent in Central Asia started in January and ended in February, 1942. The dispositions of the Army was as follow:

Yangi-Yul—the HQ's of the Army
Dzalal-Abad—5th Infantry Division.
Schachryziabs—6th Infantry Division
Kermine—7th Infantry Division
Czok-Pak—8th Infantry Division
Gorezakowo-Margelan—9th Infantry Division.

Lugowoje—10th Infantry Division
Guzar—Army Organization

Wrewskoje—Army Training and Officers School.

Karasu—Artillery.

W. Alexejewka - Pogranicznia— Communications

Karabalty—Mechanised Units

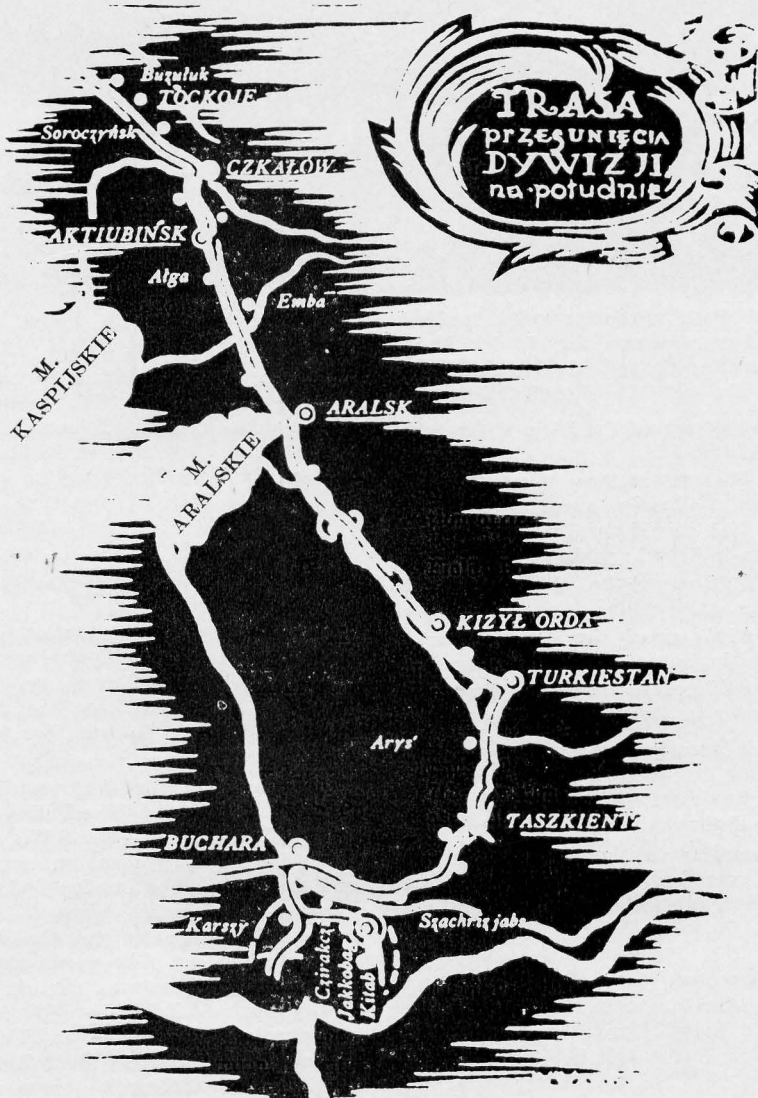
Otar—1st Cavalry Regiment.

The Army did not stay long in those places and one month later in March, 1942, the first group was evacuated to Persia and the last group in August, 1942. All told 120,572 men and women left the Soviet Union for the Middle East.

With this introduction we come now to the Field Post Organizations of this Army. The Author divides this period into two parts: from Sept. 1, 1941 to May 2, 1942 and from May 2, 1942 to August 31, 1942. (In the first period, 9/1/41 to 5/2/42, there was no independent Polish Field Post. Postal Officers of each unit received the mail from the Soviet F. P. and handed to

them the mail for the U.S.S.R.) This arrangement was not working too well and on May 2, 1942 the Chief of Staff O.IV instructs one Zawol August to prepare a Field Post rules. The idea was to simplify the handling of the mail of Polish soldiers, to organize a strict censorship and to be independent of the Soviet Field Post. The first move was to organize the main Field Post in

Yangi-Yul and a hand stamp, without dates, was made. Although this arrangement was contrary to the Soviet Postal regulation, a compromise was found. Letters which went through the Soviet Field Post had to comply with Soviet Postal regulations, but letters which passed between the units and the HQ's of the Polish Army and vice-versa could base themselves as Polish



Route of Movement of the Polish Forces to the South.



Field Post regulations. To facilitate this arrangement the Soviet Postal authorities opened Field Post offices near the main Polish units, thus:

- F.P. 3000 served the HQ's of the Army in Yangi-Yul.
- F.P. 3001 served the 5th Infantry Division in Dzhalal-Abad.
- F.P. 3002 served the 6th Infantry Division in Schachryziabs
- F.P. 3003 served the 7th Infantry Division in Kermine.
- F.P. 3004 served the Army Organization in Guzar
- F.P. 3005 served the Army Training Center in Wreuskoje

This arrangement worked well till 8/9/42. On that day an order was issued to close all F.P. with the exception of the main F.P. in Yangi-Yul.

According to the Author, the main F.P. was busy preparing the stamp "Dojdzieny" which appeared on 8/18/1942. Two days later, on August 20, 1942, this Field Post was closed and all documents, including 3017 stamps were turned over to the Quartermaster of the Postal Armed Forces, Col. Wisniowski. Later, this F. P. organization merged with F.P. 101, which arrived at Baghdad from Palestine.

III. The merger of the Polish Armed Forces and the Field Post.

During the evacuation period, the army used the British F.P. facilities in places like Pahlevi, Teheran, Ahvaz and others. On arriving in Palestine, they met for the first time the regular Polish Field Post. At that time, April, 1942, Field Post 101, was stationed at Rechoboth; Field Post 111 at Gaza; Field Post 114 at Beth-Girgij and Field Post 102 in Cairo.

We mentioned before that in August of 1942, Field Post 112 was moved to Khanaqin (Iraq) to serve the second group of evacuees from the Soviet Union. Field Post 115 was then opened in Rechoboth.

The merger of "Polish Armed Forces in the U.S.S.R." and "The Polish Army in the Middle East" (W.P.S.W.) occurred in Iraq. This was not an easy task and the help of the London Polish Government was needed. Gen. Klimecki arrived from London and the details were worked out. The name given to this combined force was "Polish Army in the East" (A.P.W.) Gen. W. Anders was appointed Commander in Chief and he moved the HQ's to Qizil Ribat in Iraq. Several difficulties arose and a further re-organization became necessary. On March 11, 1943 the set up was

as follows: the A.P.W. was the overall organization of the Polish Army and the IIInd Corps, under Gen. W. Anders, was to be the fighting force.

With this new set up more F. P. offices were needed. As we have mentioned before, the F.P. 112 arrived on September 9, 1942 from Palestine to act as a liaison office between the Polish Army and the British Field Post Administration. The main F.P. 101 (Główna Poczta Polowa) arrived in October, 1942 to Bagdad and Field Post 111 was sent to Jala-Ula, both in Iraq.

Field Post 121 was opened on October 12th, 1942 in Mosul for the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Karpatian Division.

Field Post 122 was opened on October 12th, 1942 in Mosul for the 3rd Brigade of the 3rd Karpatian Division.

The new set of postal rules allotted permanent field post numbers to the various military formations (Nov. 5, 1942.) Shortly after the following new Field Posts were opened.

Field Posts 113, 116, 117 on Nov. 11, 1942.

Field Posts 118, 123 on Nov. 15, 1942.

Field Post 106 on Dec. 24, 1942 in Habanija.

Field Post 124 on Jan. 10, 1943 for the Lwów Independent Brigade.

Field Post 130 on Jan. 18, 1943 for the Evacuation Base, Teheran.

Field Post 141, on March 20, 1943 for the Evacuation Base, Ahvaz in Iran.

On March 15, 1943, the 6th Division was disbanded and Field Post 124 was allotted to the 5th Infantry Division.

Besides these arrangements the Military Administration also gave out on Nov. 5th, 1942, code numbers to the larger military formations:

From 1 to 100—to the advanced units
From 101 to 199—to the 3rd Karpatian Infantry Brigade

From 201 to 299—to the Base units
From 301 to 399—to the 5th Infantry Division

From 401 to 499—to the Motorized units and Artillery.

From 501 to 599—to the Corps formations (Korpuśnie)

From 601 to 699—to the 7th Infantry Division, to C.W.A. and O.Z.A.

The address for private correspon-

dence was "Paiforce Nr." (Palestine & Iraq Forces).

When the final organization of this Army was accomplished it was moved during April, 1943, to Palestine, where it was stationed in the Richon-Rechoboth-Gaza district.

In December, 1943 this Army was moved to Egypt. The HQ's to Cairo and the bulk of officers and men to a temporary camp, Qassasin, from where they shortly embarked for Italy. Several units which were left behind in Palestine were later moved to camp Qassasin and then to Italy.

The 2nd Corps was now in Italy, leaving behind the Administrations of the A.P.W. which now looked after the formations which were left behind, reserves, etc., it too, left Palestine and moved to camp Qassasin in Egypt.

The units which left Egypt for Italy, took with them the Field Posts, leaving behind those which served the rear of the Army. Only Field Post 101 underwent changes. On August 15, 1943, it split into two parts: one, under Cpt. J. Barwinski is moved to Rechoboth, Palestine (now called 101A) and the second, under T. Tausz is left in Bagdad for liquidation of the postal office.

On the same day, Aug. 15, 1943, Field Post 106 (previously in Habanija) began to function in Bagdad. The private correspondence is now addressed to "Polish Forces Nr. ... Middle East."

An additional Main Field Post 104 was opened on Jan. 9, 1944 in Qassasin, Egypt, at the 2nd Corps HQ's, but on Feb. 8, 1944 it was moved to Taranto, Italy, where the HQ's were stationed. By now only the following Field Posts remained behind:

Main Field Post 101, Rechoboth, in 1944 Qassasin, Egypt.

Field Post 102, Cairo

Field Post 112, Jerusalem, till March 1, 1944.

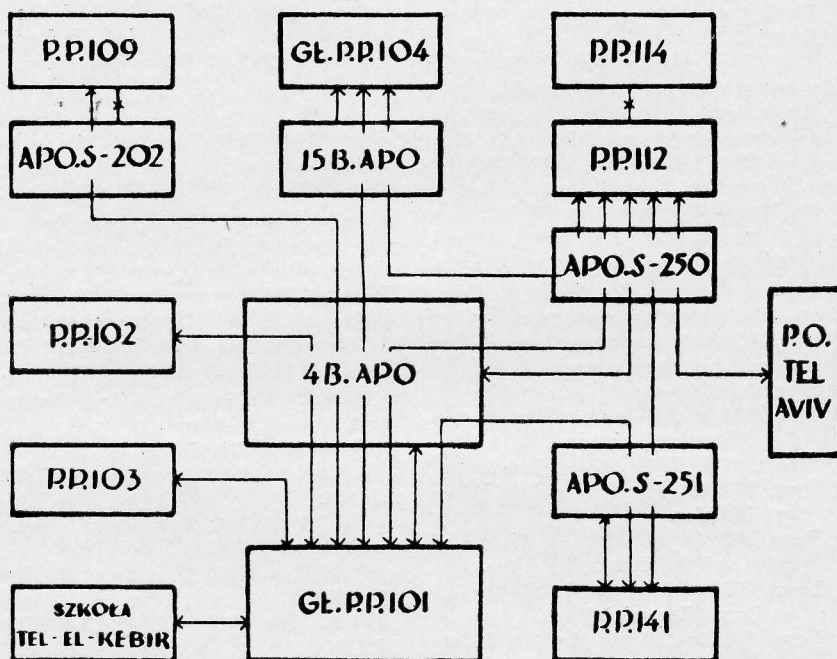
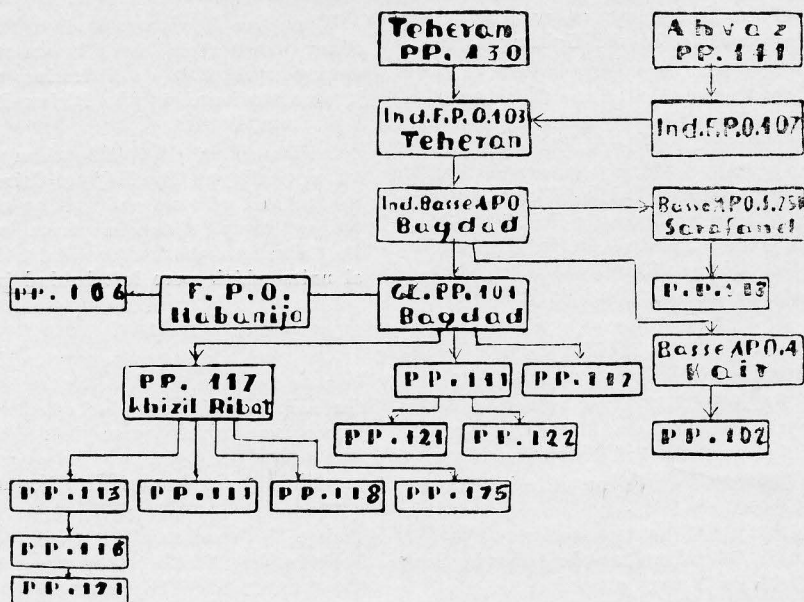
Field Post 106, Bagdad, till Dec. 6, 1943.

Field Post 130, Teheran, till March 15, 1944.

Field Post 141, Ahvaz, till March 17, 1944

Field Post 115, Barbara, till March 10, 1944

Diagrams of the Combined Field Post Offices



Field Post 114, — till Jan. 26, 1944
Some changes occurred in the Field Post movements:

Field Post 106 was reopened on Mar. 3, 1944 at Qassasin, Egypt and on April 20, 1944 left to go to Italy.

Field Post 114 was reopened at El-Kantara to serve the 5th Military Hospital.

Field P. 103 was opened at Qassasin.

Field Post 109 was opened at Qassasin, embarked on Sept. 14, '45 for Italy

Field Post 141 was reopened on Sept 14, 1945 at Nazareth at the School of Young Volunteers (Females.)

As we now see from this list, the movements of some Field Posts are not indicated and we can presume that these had moved to Italy with the bulk of the 2nd Corps.

The following is, as far as this article is concerned, a summary of the main movements of the above mentioned Field Posts.

Field Post 111 on Nov. 1, 1940 in Dekhel, Egypt; May, 1942 at Gaza; Oct. 1942 at Iraq; closed on Dec. 12, 1942 in Palestine.

Main Field Post 101 on May 5, 1941, at Sidi-Bishr, Egypt; May, 1942 at Rechoboth; Oct. 1943, at Iraq; 1944 at Qassasin, Egypt.

Field Post 112 on Dec. 22, 1941 in Sidi-Bishr, Egypt; April 1942, in Jerusalem; Oct., 1942 in Iraq; Mar. 1, 1944 in Jerusalem.

Field Post 192 on April 4, 1942 in Cairo. Closed on Jan. 3, 1947.

Field Post 114 on Aug. 5, 1942 in Bey-Girgij, Palestine; Nov. 5, 1942 in Iraq; closed in Palestine on Dec. 16, 1943; re-opened in 1945 in El-Kantara.

Field Post 115 on Sept. 21, 1942 in Rechoboth; closed March 10, 1944.

Field Post 121 on Oct. 12, 1942 in Mosul, Iraq; Apr. Dec. 16, 1943 in Palestine; moved to Qassasin and Italy.

Field Post 122 on Oct. 12, 1942 in Mosul, Iraq; Apr. Dec. 16, 1943 in Palestine, moved to Qassasin and Italy.

Field Posts 113, 116, 117 on Nov. 10, 1942 in Iraq; Apr. Dec. 16, 1943 Palestine, moved to Qassasin, and Italy.

Field Posts 118, 123 on Nov. 15, 1942

in Iraq; Apr. Dec. 16, 1943 in Palestine, moved to Qassasin and Italy.

Field Post 106 on Nov. 24, 1942 in Habanija, Iraq, reopened on March 16, 1944 in Qassasin; on April 20, 1944 left for Italy.

Field Post 124 on Jan. 10, 1943 in Iraq; On Apr. Dec. 16, 1943 in Palestine, moved to Qassasin and Italy.

Field Post 130 on Jan. 18, 1943 in Teheran, Iran. Closed on March 17, '44.

Field Post 141 on March 20, 1944 in Ahvaz, Iran. Closed March 17, 1944, re-opened on Sept. 14, 1945 at Nazareth.

Main Field Post 104 on Jan. 9, 1944 in Qassasin, Egypt; left on Feb. 8, 1944 for Taranto, Italy.

Field Post 103 on Dec. 4, 1944 in Qassasin, Egypt.

Field Post 109 on Jan. 10, 1945 in Qassasin, Egypt. Left on Sept. 14, 1945 for Italy.

Incomplete as the story may be, it has given us an historic document of great value. It deals with an important phase of Poland's political history during the anti-fascist war and the struggle waged by the Polish people to defeat the common enemy — The Middle East phase was of utmost importance. The Author has done a great service to philately by giving us the facts of the formation of these Field Posts.

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STANISŁAW MONIUSZKO

By Dr. Rayall de Ragan

June 4, 1962 marks the 90th anniversary of the death of Stanisław Moniuszko, the "Father of Polish Opera". This year, it is very likely that a stamp will be issued in the Famous Poles series commemorating Moniuszko's death.

As a Great Pole, Moniuszko was first honored in a series of postal cards, in 1938, on card No. 30. In the post-war period a number of stamps were issued in his honor, Scott's No. 526, 527 and 832. In 1961, during the Musical Festival in Poznań, the Festival Committee also issued a postal card with his portrait.

Stanisław Moniuszko was born on May 5, 1819 in Ubiele, Minsk Territories, the son of a middle class landowner. As a child he revealed his great love for music which was carefully cultivated by his mother Elizabeth, nee Madzarska, who first taught him to play the piano.

He studied under Augustyn Freyer, Dominik Stefanowicz and C. F. Ruengehagen. He married in Wilno in 1840, and became an organist at St. John's Church. While studying in Berlin he composed three songs to words by Mickiewicz which were published, and in 1941 his first operetta "Nocleg w Alpinmach" was performed. His compositions then poured out — overtures, cantatas, songs, operettas . . .

A two-act opera "Halka" appeared in

about 1847. He journeyed to St. Petersburg, Russia, where he was influenced by Glinka and Dargomyrzki. On January 1, 1858 "Halka", now a four-act opera, was presented in Warsaw despite opposition from the ruling authorities. None the less, the success it had caused his opposition to offer him the position of orchestra director in the Warsaw Opera and later as a teacher in the Music Conservatory.

He went to Paris to study and more operas followed — "Flis", "Widma", "Hrabina", "Verbum Nobile" and then "Straszny Dwór" which was played in 1865. On June 4, 1872 Moniuszko died suddenly from a heart attack.

Aside from his operas, Moniuszko left behind numerous songs, seven Masses, two Requiems and four Litanies. He was the first to introduce national and often regional characteristics into Polish operas and is known as the "Father of Polish Opera". He is regarded, next to Frederick Chopin, as the second greatest Polish composer.

— POLAND —

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Scout Balloon Mail — 1959

By Marian Dunski

(Translated by Barbara Strzelecki)

On May 1, 1959, the Post Office under the auspices of the Boy Scouts in the town of Rawicz, arranged the "Great Poland Balloon Games", in which 102 balloons competed. On this occasion Rawicz II, a 100 cubic meter capacity, carried a bag of mail. The letters were cancelled with a dater and canceller of the Boy Scout Post post-office, together with the regular post-office cancellation. This was done with the permission of the District Director of the Post Offices in Poznań.

On the same day the airplane "S.P. — B.H.D.", dropped Boy Scout mail by parachute for the citizens of Rawicz and surrounding cities. These letters had a special cancellation showing a parachute and facsimile of the pilot, Bartkowiak, who made the parachute mail drop. On the "Balloon" mail, there was a seal of "Ballon Rawicz the Second"; a blue label with the inscription: "Wielkopolskie Zawody Balonowe" — (50 groszy). A drawing of a balloon inscribed: "Rawicz", and a green cancellation with the following words:

"Wielkopolskie Zawody Balonowe
Z.H.P. - P.H., Rawicz, 1. V. 1959".

On June 14, 1959, during the ceremony of the assigning of two flags to the two scouting units in Jutrosin, a small balloon with mail was launched. This balloon landed in the village of Borek near Dubian, carrying a back-stamp of Post Office Dubian. This mail was also cancelled with a red stamp as follows:

"Balonem P.L.K. Hynek".

Also a label was used similar to the one used on May 1, 1959, but in a chocolate-brown color on yellow paper. On the balloon mail the 20 and 40 groszy stamps were cancelled with a dater cancellation "Jutrosin 14. 6. 59", and the scout labels were cancelled with a round cancellation in the green color with the following words:

"Boy Scout Post, 14. 6. 59, Rawicz".

The back stamp of the balloon mail from the landing place had the follow-

ing postmark: "U.P. Dubian, 14. 6. 59 — 20 plus 3 stars". There were about 400 pieces of mail in each of the balloon races. The activities of the Scout Post are under sponsorship of the local authorities as well as the P.O. and the ministry of Communications.

And now a few words about the scout mail. The abbreviation "P.H." stands for "Poczta Harcerska." The P.H. was organized in 1956 as: "Poczta Parkowa", then in 1957 it was named Scout Mail. It has its own postal organization which issues stamps, cancels and delivers the mail. The pattern of such an organization was the tradition of the scouting service as "gońce" or messengers in the Warsaw Uprising.

The design and art work of the scout labels are made by the scouts themselves under guidance of their leaders. The printing plates are made of linoleum and the impressions are made on a handpress. The scouting mail unit in "Rawicz" is being serviced by the scouts themselves, and they are particularly active during all types of Scout gatherings or scout affairs, which do not have regular postal units. The scout mail labels were used on local and national mail and on ordinary or registered and special delivery mail.

Mr. Jan Bonikowski, the manager of the scout mail, supplied the writer with the information for this article.

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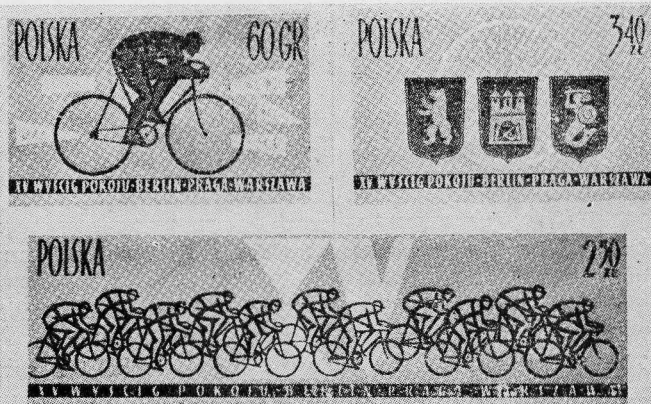
NEW ISSUES

By J. J. Domar

On the occasion of the 15th Bicycle Race of Peace, the Polish Post issued three postage stamps. The 60 gr. represents a single competitor surrounded by inscriptions of the word "Peace" in various languages, this word being representative of the Race idea.

On the stamp of 2.50 zł. face value a long row of cyclists is represented, i.e. a peleton, of the background of a stylized Roman fifteen.

The stamp bearing 3.40 zł. face value shows the badge of the Race, i.e. coats-of-arms of the three cities — Berlin, Praha, Warsaw — on the background of a bicycle wheel.



First day of issue: April 27, 1962.

Three values were issued on the 50th Anniversary of Lenin's Visit to Poland.
First day of issue: May 25, 1962.

40 gr. — pale green and dark green
designed by E. Tirdiszek

60 gr. — pale red and dark red
designed by A. Sklarczyk

2.50 zł. — yellow and brown
designed by B. Kowalska

Quantities: 2 million each of the 40 and 60 gr., and 800,000 of the 2.50 zł.
Printed by P.W.P.W.

In connection with the Millenium of the Polish State six stamps of Famous Poles were issued on June 20, 1962. All stamps are of 60 gr. value.

Romuald Traugutt — olive and black
Juljusz Slowacki — brown and black
Frederyk Chopin — blue and black

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— Annual Dues are \$2.50 —

Maria Komopnicka—green and black
Jarosław Dąbrowski—purple & black
Adam Mickiewicz — green and black

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 13, 1962 — Business Meeting

Members' Bourse. Bring your duplicates of your good material. Share your philatelic good fortune with your fellow members.

July 27, 1962 — Program Meeting

A Bert Powell Airmail Auction will be held. Items on covers and off covers, first flights, forged stamps, fake cancellations, L.O.P.P., etc.

August 10, 1962 — Business Meeting

Another Members' Bourse — where stamps will be bought and sold.

August 24, 1962 — Program Meeting

Another Auction of material from the extensive Bert Powell Collection.