

# *Yesterday in STAMPS:* **The Tourist Issues of Poland**

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(From *STAMPS Magazine*, May 31, 1952, with images added)



Little effort was made to attract tourists to Poland before 1930 due to limited hotel facilities, lack of improvements at resorts, and inadequate communication in the newly organized country. By 1935 great strides were made in economic and internal conditions so that the attractions of Poland began to be publicized abroad. Several organizations and clubs prepared and distributed views and maps of Poland. Booklets, posters and photos were widely circulated and a set of postage stamps was issued between August 5, 1935 and January 15, 1936 to attract tourists, both from Poland and abroad.

The 15 groszy was the first value to be issued (August 5, 1935) showing that a trip by sea could be made in a Polish boat. The lower values portray beauty spots—the higher values show buildings. A portrait of the President of the Polish Republic on the highest value (3 zloty)

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completes the issue. Because of the natural wonders portrayed on the 5, 10 and 20 gr. stamps, this series is sometimes referred to as the National Parks of Poland.

The four lower values were typographed, while the seven higher values were steel engraved. All stamps were printed on wove paper without watermark at the P.W.P.W., (Polska Wytwornia Papierow Wartosciowych), Polish Printery of Valuable Papers.

After the initial issue of this set of eleven stamps, the P.W.P.W. procured a new Goebel rotary machine for printing engraved stamps. The steel cylinder was made up of two sectors of 100 impressions each and the machine also perforated the stamps, trimmed the sheets and numbered them at the bottom margin under the 95th and 96th positions.

In order to capitalize on the huge capacity of this new machine, the problem was to convert the above tourist issue to cylindrical, steel-engraved forms. The lower four values of the original set, which were typographed, would require entirely new dies and plates. It was, therefore, decided to create new designs with architectural subjects, which would supplement the higher values (with buildings) of the original tourist set. The four stamps of the 1937 series were thus created, and the flat-engraved plates of the 25, 45, 50 and 55 gr. stamps of the 1935 series were curved to fit the new cylindrical press, thereby producing the required stamps of the higher values. Further quantities of the 30 gr., 1 zloty and 3 z. stamps apparently were not needed.

It should be noted that the 25 gr. value was printed from two different cylindrical plates which were somewhat larger than the original flatplate issue, and which differ somewhat in size from each other. The 45, 50, and 55 gr. rotary stamps are likewise larger (especially higher) than the flat-plate stamps of corresponding values, so that these four rotary stamps are in a way the continuation of the lower four architectural stamps of 1937.

There were 250,000 each of the 30 gr. and of the flat-

plate 55 gr. imprinted in 1936 for the Gordon Bennett air races (Sc. 306 and 307). These overprints have been counterfeited, some better than others, but the 55 gr. counterfeits are usually on the rotary stamp and not on the flat-plate.

A total of 250,000 of the original 5 gr., 363,000 of the 15 gr. and 619,000 of the flat 25 gr. (Type I) were imprinted in October, 1936 for use in Port Gdansk (see Sc. 1K28 to 1K30).

There were 367,000 of the new 5 gr., 150,000 of the new 15 gr., and 350,000 of the rotary (Type IIA) 25 gr. imprinted in June, 1937 for similar use in Port Gdansk (Sc. 1K31 and 1K32).

Limited quantities of Sc. 295, 296, 298, 308, 309 and 310 of these series were bound in booklet form by taking the left-hand margin and the first two columns of stamps from full sheets, separating them into blocks of four and stapling them at the marginal stubs between glassine interleaves and suitable covers.

**Scott 294: Pieskowa Skala (Dog Cliff)**

This natural tourist attraction is located near Olkusz, about 15 miles northwest of Krakow. It is in the northern part of the Ojcow Valley, formed by the Jura-Krakow mountains. The farthest of the two rocks which rises skyward is called "Hercules Mace". The mediaeval castle in the far distance is still inhabited.



**Scott 295: Morskie Oko (Eye of the Sea)**

This picturesque lake is located in the Polish Carpathians along the Czechoslovak border, known as the Tatras, and is reached by a beautiful highway from

*See page 12 for sources for images and additional information*

Poland's most famous winter resort Zakopane. Numerous lakes such as Morskie Oko are situated deep in the valleys directly below the high rugged mountains. This deep blue lake is

at the foot of Mount Rysy (8,200 feet) and is a fore-



most tourist attraction.

**Scott 296: the M.S. Pilsudski**

This modern motorship with Gydnia in the background was one of the several vessels of the proud Polish merchant fleet. The 14,294 ton M.S. *Pilsudski* and its sister ship the M.S. *Batory* were built in Italy for Poland in ex-



change for Silesian coal and were put into successful tourist service with America until the outbreak of World War II. The M.S. *Pilsudski* was sunk by a German mine in the North Sea on November 27, 1939.

**Scott 297: Pieniny National Park**

This tourist attraction consists of comparatively small wooded mountains and rugged terrain (not over 3,300 feet high) set aside as a national park to preserve its natural beauty. The particular view on the stamp shows Czorstyn, a health re-





sort. It is near here that the Dunajec River flows through a deep winding ravine for about eight miles and tourists are taken for a trip down the river on a raft along the steep rocky walls.

**Scott 298: Belvedere Palace, Warsaw**

Belvedere, erected in 1818-1822, is typical of classical treatment of traditional design of a Polish country mansion and is a tourist attraction for its historical background. It is known first of all as the scene of the beginning of the famed Polish national



insurrection of 1830. The Russian governor of Poland lived here and on the night of November 29th, 1830, it was taken by patriotic cadets struggling to regain freedom for Poland. Secondly, it is known as the residence of the first two presidents (Gabriel Narutowicz and Stanislaus Wojciechowski) as well as of Marshal Pilsudski who lived and died here in 1935.



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**Scott 299: Zamek W Mirze**  
**(The Castle at Mir)**



Mir is way up in northeastern Poland near the old Russian border. The mediaeval castle was built as a stronghold by George Illinicz, Marshal of the Lithuanian Court and Starost of Brzesc, in the 15th century. It was later acquired by the Radziwill family. Tourists visiting Mir are impressed by the heavy construction of the brick walls with decorative use of plaster, and by the imposing towers, which are an impressive sight on the shore of the adjoining lake.

**Scott 300: The Castle at Podhorce**



This magnificent castle at Podhorce, a village east of Lwow, was designed by a Venetian architect, Andrea del Aqua, and built about 1630-40 by the Polish Hetman Stanislaus Koniecpolski, who beat the Swedes and Turks in their invasions of Poland. The castle

later was acquired by King John Sobieski, who appointed it most elegantly. Tourists are attracted not only to this splendid castle itself, but to the rich collection of art objects and to the various relics relating to King John Sobieski.

**Scott 301: Sukiennice (The Cloth Hall), Krakow**



Right in the center of Krakow's fine and large market square stands the mediaeval



Cloth Hall with its market stalls within and high class shops along the outside. Here tourists have a golden harvest in their quest for Polish handicraft and souvenirs. The hall was built in the 14th century to house the shops of cloth merchants and was reconstructed in the 16th century according to a design by Gian Mario Padovano.

**Scott 302: The Raczynski Library, Posnan**



The building shown here, characterized by 24





huge, cast-iron Corinthian columns along the front, was erected in 1829 and presented with a magnificent book collection to the city of Poznań in 1845 by Count Edward Raczyński (left), a patron of the arts and sciences. This cultural institution was completely absorbed by the Germans in the later years of the partition of Poland and most of the treasures faded away. After the independence of Poland, the library was restocked with many collections of books, manuscripts, documents, and the like, dealing mainly with Polish literature and history, and numbering about 90,000 volumes. Tourists are impressed with the elegance of the building itself and with the treasures that it holds.

### **Scott 303: The Cathedral at Wilno**

The classical cathedral shown on this stamp is the work of Lawrence Gucewicz (1753-1798), who gave a new and uniform appearance (starting in 1777) to an old structure having walls of different epochs. He left untouched though, the harmonizing royal chapel of St. Casimir, erected in 1636 by Constantine Tencella.



Tourists find unusual interest in the tombs of Polish kings and in the old pagan altar, located at the back and under the high altar, at which Perkun, the god of light, was worshipped until 1283.



### **Scott 304: President Ignacy Moscicki**

Ignacy Moscicki was born on December 1, 1867 in Poland, where he was educated as a scientist. In 1892 he left for London where he remained for five years before going to Switzerland as an assistant at Friburg University. He returned as professor to Lwow in 1912 and by this time distinguished himself as an inventor in the field of electrochemistry. He



was elected the third president of the Polish Republic in 1926 and was re-elected ten years later. His administration was both constructive and progressive. At the outbreak of World War II, he escaped through Romania to Switzerland, where he died on October 22, 1946.

### **Scott 308: The Church at Czestochowa**

Czestochowa is the holy place of Poland, northwest of Krakow, where pilgrimages of the faithful are made the year round reaching a climax on August 15 and on September 8 when over 100,000 worshippers wend their



way up the hill of Jasna Gora. Tourists are attracted not only by the church and monastery, but also by the colorful costumes from all parts of Poland. The faithful pray before the miraculous image of the Virgin Mary, Holy Queen of Poland. Legend has it that this painting is by St. Luke. The church, the monastery and the fortifica-

tions date from the 14th century. The Pauline Fathers under Prior Kordecki defended themselves here in 1655 against the Swedish invasion. The old gothic church burned in 1690, but was rebuilt in highly decorative style and it was not until 1901 that it was crowned by the highest steeple of any church in Poland.

**Scott 309: The Maritime Terminal, Gdynia**



Until after World War I, this location was merely an uninhabited and sandy



coast. The Poles relied on Gdansk as its outlet to the seven seas, but the Free City imposed such hardship on Polish transports, that Poland was forced to develop its own port along the limited coastline. Today the facilities at Gdynia are among the most efficient in the world and the city itself is laid out and built up along the modern and impressive lines. Passengers and light cargo dock at the terminal depicted on the stamp which shows the M.S. *Batory* at the left and huge cranes at the right. Entire cars of coal are lifted at nearby yards to permit direct loading of their contents into the ships. Within a few years Gdynia became the largest port on the Baltic, the most modern one in Europe and the 9th in the world.

**Scott 310: Lwow University**

The University of Lwow was founded in 1661 but was closed as such by the Austrians with the partition of Poland. In 1877 a polytechnic was founded in Lwow and expanded with the years, leaving the need for a general



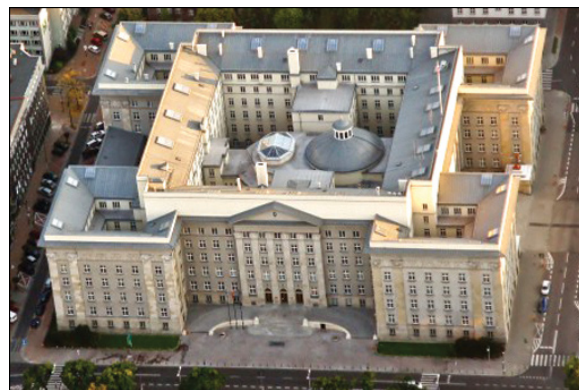
university less pronounced. The building shown on the stamp

was erected as the seat of the old Chamber of Deputies of Austrian Poland (Sejm Galicyjski) and served as such from 1881 to 1914. The political territory of Galicia ceased to exist with the independence of Poland after World War I and the building was ultimately converted to house a portion of the revived University of Lwow, named in honor of King Jan Casimir.

**Scott 311: The Provincial Building, Katowice**



The great industrial and mining region of Silesia developed many-fold after World War I—furthermore some territory was added after the plebiscite. This expansion required additional handling and management, so that a modern Administration Building was



erected in Katowice, the capital of Silesia, to handle the specific affairs of the Silesian region or province (it is not a municipal building). The edifice will be remembered by philatelists as the locale of the Pan-Slav Exhibition at Katowice from May 5 to 13, 1934, for which stamps 280 and 281 were issued. Note the flag at half mast on the building. The stamp was designed from a photograph taken while the nation was in mourning for Marshal Pilsudski (died May 12, 1935).

**Sources for image & additional information (by stamp Scott #):**

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