

The Polish postal service had a long history dating to 1558. Poland ceased to exist as a nation following successive partitions by Russia, Austria and Prussia from 1772-1795. Following the Congress of Vienna at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, a much reduced "Congress Poland" was established in 1815 and placed under Russian dominion. The first postage stamp for the Congress Kingdom was issued on 1/1/1860. The stamp 10 kopeck stamp was based on the Russian imperial design, with text in both Russian and Polish, for mail delivery only within Poland and Russia. This singular stamp was in use from 1860-1865, after which time only Russian stamps were permitted.

During World War I, both Austria and Germany occupied parts of Poland and took over postal services. German stamps were overprinted Russisch-Polen (1915) and Gen.-Gouv. Warschau (1916-17). Because of the wartime disruptions of the civilian post and cessation of delivery outside of central post offices, numerous local delivery services were permitted by the German authorities, which led to both sanctioned and non-sanctioned local stamps - collectively referred to as the 1918 Locals (see below.)

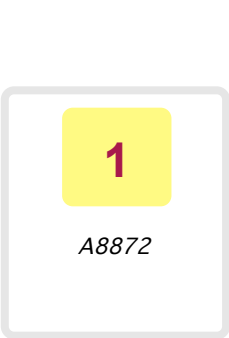
The Republic of Poland was created on the Armistice Day, Nov. 11, 1918. Prior to the first printings of regular stamps, numerous post offices locally overprinted their existing stocks with overprints - generally "Poczta Polska" or "Na Skarb Narodowy" (for the national treasury). I have called these Postmaster Provisionals, as they are not locals in the traditional sense. For National Stamps, both stocks of Warsaw local stamps, and German and Austrian stamps were overprinted in several major cities (POL-B, below).

The first new designs for a national stamps came out in early 1919, with separate printings for Northern Poland and Southern Poland, due to the local use of both German and Austrian currencies. Later in 1919 the use of Austrian currency phased out, and Poland adopted it's own currency in 1924. Germany occupied Poland from 1939-1945, while the government-in-exile issued its own stamps from wartime London.

A608
\$\$\$

A8872









01. Poland, Russian Dominion

Russia Colony
1860 – 1865

02. Russian-Poland, German Occupation

Germany Occupation
1915 –
on cover

03. General Government Warsaw, German Occupation

Germany Occupation
1916 – 1917

04. Poland, Northern

Poland Independent
1919 –

05. Poland, Southern

Poland Independent
1919 –











06. Poland

Poland Independent
1919 – 1939

07. Poland, German General-gouvernement

Germany Occupation
1940 – 1944

08. Poland, Exile Govt in G.B.

Poland Govt in Exile
1941 – 1945

09. Poland, People's Republic

Poland Independent
1944 – 1989

10. Poland

Poland Independent
1989 – Present

6520POL-BPOLAND, 1918 GENERAL GOVERNMENT5

From the establishment of the Republic of Poland in November 1918 to the establishment of a national post office with new stamp designs in 1919, various national stamps were produced locally and/or overprinted in at least Warsaw, Poznan, Lublin and Krakow. These are treated in Scott as early National issues, although they would have seen limited distribution. The Gniezno provisional stamps were overprints of "5" and "10" on Germania stamps for local use.

A7415
\$\$\$

A7415











Poland, Cracow Issue

Independent
1919 –

Poland, Gniezno Provisional

Independent
1919 –

Poland, Lublin Issue

Independent
1918 – 1919

Poland, Poznan Issue

Independent
1919 –

Poland, Warsaw Issue

Independent
1918 – 1919

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6520POL-KPOLAND, OFFICES ABROAD3

Poland maintained post offices in the Free City of Danzig (1925-1938) and in Constantinople (1919-1921) during the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. During the Russian Civil War, Polish stamps in five denominations were overprinted "Odesa" for use by the consulate in Odessa for a period of two months. The Odesa overprints are rare, and forgeries abound. (Michel Europa-Ost)



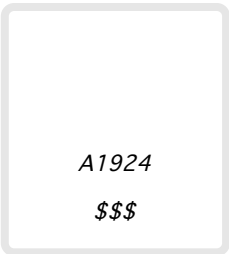
Danzig, Poland Offices in

Poland Post Office Abroad
1925 – 1938



Polish Consular Post in Levant

Poland Post Office Abroad
1919 – 1921



Polish Consular Post in Odessa

Poland Post Office Abroad
1919 – 1920

6520POL-MPOLAND, FIELD POSTS3

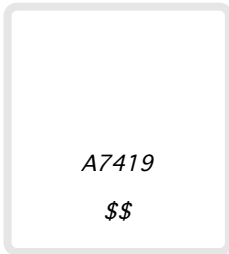
The Polish 1st Corps under General Dowbor-Musnicki established a field post in 1917-18 which handled both military and civilian mail. The 1st Corps was comprised of former Russian soldiers who joined the fight for Polish independence, with German support, after the 1917 February revolution. The territory held was along the Eastern front in modern-day Belarus.

The Polish Army in the Soviet Union was formed by freed Polish POWs who trained deep in the Soviet Union, in Uzbekistan, to fight in Italy. Polish Corps in Italy stamps are considered to be private (speculative) issues and are not cataloged in Michel (p. 589).



Polish 1st Corps in Russia

Poland Field Post
1917 – 1918



Polish Army in the Soviet Union

Poland Field Post
1942 –



Polish Corps in Italy

Poland Field Post
1944 –

6520POL-NPOLAND, OFFICIAL2



1. Poland, Official

Poland Official
1920 – 1954
first issue



2. Poland - German Occupation, Official

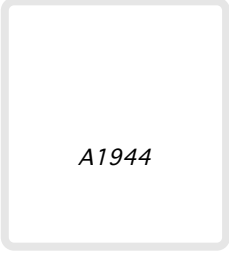
Poland Official
1940 – 1943

I treat the Poland 1918 locals in three categories. First are the Municipal Posts (including fantasies) established during the war up through Polish independence (1915-18), generally in cooperation with the occupying German or Austrian authorities. Second are the locally overprinted "liberation" overprints on German stamps, promoting the birth of the Polish state (1918-1919) which can rightly be considered Postmaster Provisionals, and third are the similar Postmaster Provisional stamps from the Austrian zone.

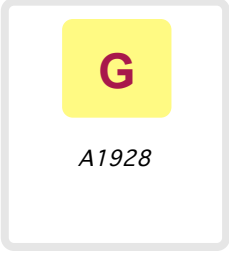
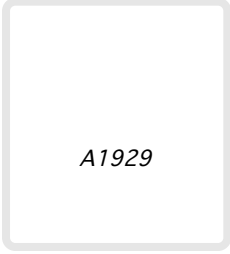
The occupying military posts would only deliver civilian mail to the main post offices in a few large cities. During the occupation a number of local organizations proposed delivery services to homes and businesses. These services were approved by the German authorities whom generally forbade the printing of local stamps that could compete with the military post. Most local delivery services complied, however in some localities the use of stamps was tolerated. In my treatment, I only list the towns that produced actual postage stamps - ignoring the numerous towns that franked mail with a hand-stamp.

Polish locals were popular with collectors leading to some bogus (speculative) issues that flooded the market. Chechiny was a fantasy creation, probably printed after national independence as there is no record of a local delivery service there. Luboml (Lyuboml) was a town in Volynia that ordered stamps from a Prague printer in 1918. Notably the inscriptions are in Polish, Ukrainian, German and Yiddish. The stamps were never delivered, and the printer sold the stamps into the philatelic market. The Przedborz post was legitimate and supported by Austrian authorities. Warsaw was a very active local post for the duration of the war, whose "local" stamps were eventually overprinted for use as the first national Polish stamps. Zarki may have been a legitimate post, but virtually all stamps today are from extensive printings done for collectors. For the local stamp of Posen (Poznan) please refer to 19th century German locals.

Ref Cit: Michel Europa-Ost (1994). Poland 1918 Locals, J Barefoot (1999)

				
Chechiny	Luboml	Opatow	Przedbórz	Sosnowice
Poland Fantasy 1919 -	Poland Local 1918 -	Poland Local 1918 -	Poland Local 1917 - 1918	Poland Local 1916 -
				
Warsaw	Zarki	Zawiercie		
Poland Local 1915 - 1918	Poland Local 1918 -	Poland Local 1916 -		

Upon the achievement of Polish independence, post offices were instructed to overprint existing stocks of German occupation stamps with the name of the new nation. Various designs were employed including Polska-Poczta, bards, and sometimes the use of town names or the Polish crest. All of the overprints were on the Germania Generalgouvernement overprint series, except for Kowel, which was overprinted on Ukrainian stamps, and Grodno, which was a special case. Grodno (Hrodna) was a 1919 overprint on Russian and Ukrainian stamps produced by the Germans to resume mail delivery, but rejected by the Polish postmaster, thus used only in military mail.

				
Alexandrow	Blonie	Brzeziny	Ciechocinek	Grodno
Poland Local 1918 -	Poland Local 1918 -	Poland Local 1918 -	Poland Local 1918 -	Germany Local 1919 -



A1932

Grodzisk

Poland Local
1918 –



A1933

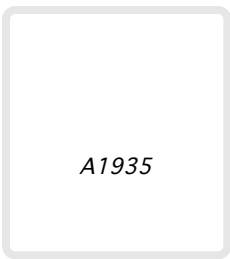
Izbica

Poland Local
1918 –



Kalisz

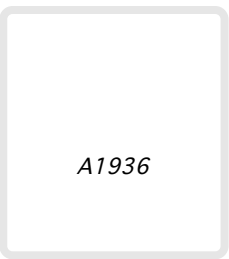
Poland Local
1918 –



A1935

Kolo

Poland Local
1918 –



A1936

Konin

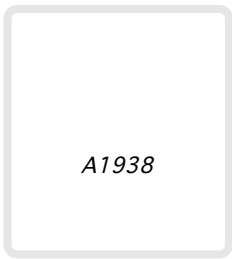
Poland Local
1918 –



A1937

Kowel

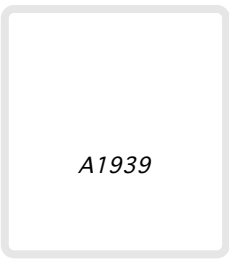
Poland Local
1919 –



A1938

Leczyca

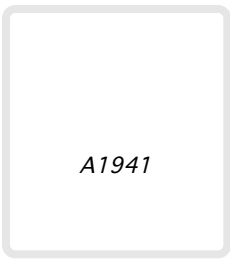
Poland Local
1918 –



A1939

Lowicz

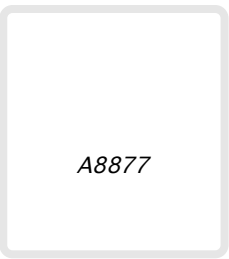
Poland Local
1918 –



A1941

Luków

Poland Local
1918 –



A8877

Makow

Poland Local
1918 –



Ostroleka

Poland Local
1918 –



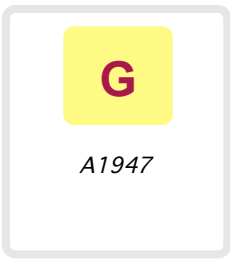
Ostrów

Poland Local
1918 –



Otwock

Poland Local
1918 –



Ozorków

Poland Local
1918 –



Plonsk

Poland Local
1918 –



A1949

Poddebice

Poland Local
1918 –



Pultusk

Poland Local
1918 –



Sieradz

Poland Local
1918 –



Skierniewice

Poland Local
1918 –



Wloclawek

Poland Local
1918 –



A1964

Zdunska Wola

Poland Local
1918 –

Per the organization of the Barefoot catalog, I am treating the so-called 1918 locals in three categories. First are Polish Municipal Posts (including fantasies) established during the first war, often with the cooperation of occupying German authorities, in the period before Polish independence and the creation of the national postal system (1915-1918). Second are the locally overprinted "liberation" overprints of German stamps, promoting the birth of the Polish state (1918-1919) which can rightly be called Postmaster Provisionals, and third are similar overprints from the Austrian zone.

The German and Austrian military postal services only delivered civilian mail to main post offices in a few counties. During the occupation a number of local organizations proposed delivery services to homes and businesses, which were allowed by the German authorities, but whom generally forbade the printing of local stamps that could compete with the military posts. Most delivery services complied, however in some localities the use of stamps was tolerated. In my treatment, I only include the towns below that produced (original or overprinted) postage stamps - ignoring towns that franked mail with a unique handstamp. Stamps were popular with collectors leading to some bogus (speculative) issues that flooded the market, particularly with Checiny.

Ref Cit: Michel Europa-Ost (1994). Poland 1918 Locals, J Barefoot (1999)

A1926	A8873	A1930	A1931	
Baranów	Bochnia	Czermin	Dziedzice	Jędrzejów
Poland Local 1918 –	Poland Local 1918 –	Poland Local 1918 –	Poland Local 1918 –	Poland Local 1918 – on cover
A8874	A8875	A1942		
Klimkowka	Krosno	Mielec	Myslenice	Olkusz
Poland Local 1918 – \$\$\$	Poland Local 1918 – \$\$\$	Poland Local 1918 –	Poland Local 1918 – expertised	Poland Local 1918 – on cover
A1951			A1958	
Przemysl	Rozwadow	Skalat	Swiatniki Górne	Tarnow
Poland Local 1918 –	Poland Local 1918 – signed	Poland Local 1918 –	Poland Local 1918 –	Poland Local 1918 –
A8876				
Wegierska Gorka				
Poland Local 1918 – \$\$\$				

6520

POL-R

POLAND, WWII LOCAL POSTS

12

With the retreat of German forces, various postmasters overprinted existing stocks of stamps with a combination of designs including variously Polska/Poczta, the coat of arms, the date of liberation, and town name, all with the intention of covering Hitler's ugly head. These town names are from the Michel Europa-Ost catalog (1994) except Sulejow which for which I do not have a catalogue reference. I keep seeing other town names pop up on line and I suspect there is a more recent expanded reference work, or perhaps these are all modern frauds.

A1967	A1968	A1969	A1970	A1971
Brwinów Poland Local 1944 – 1945	Bystzyca Kłodzka (Habelschwerdt) Poland Local 1944 – 1945	Kónskie Poland Local 1944 – 1945	Koszyce Poland Local 1944 – 1945	Kraków Poland Local 1944 – 1945
 Lezajsk Poland Local 1944 – 1945 expertised	1 A1973 Niezabitow Poland Local 1944 – 1945	 Rudnik Poland Local 1944 – 1945	 Sulejow Poland Local 1944 – 1945	A1975 Warsaw Poland Local 1944 – 1945
A1976 Wawolnica Poland Local 1944 – 1945	A1977 Zamosc Poland Local 1944 –			

6520

POL-T

POLAND, MODERN PRIVATE POSTS

1

This is the only modern private post I have found on line, a current reference work would be appreciated.



InPost

Poland Private Post

-

6520POL-WPOLAND, P.O.W. CAMP POSTS4

During the second World War, four Officerlager (officer camps, usually abbreviated to Oflag) created a postage system for the prisoners, Polish officers being held in Germany. Stamps were mostly made from woodcut dies with available paper, but some of the later stamps were well made with materials donated by the ICRC. Some of the camps were quite large, requiring an internal mail system, other letters were posted outside the camp. While approved by the German authorities, the ultimate purpose of these posts was to raise money for widows and orphans of fellow officers. All told, as many as 1 million stamps were produced by the prisoners. Woldenberg was the first camp to adopt the post, and was the most prolific issuer of (43) stamps.

Woldenberg (Woldenberczyków) and Grossborn (Borne Sulinowo) were camps in East Prussia that are now memorial sites in Northwestern Poland. Neubrandenburg is a city in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, and Murnau is in Bavaria south of Munich.

re: Autolycus, The Polish Prisoner of War Posts



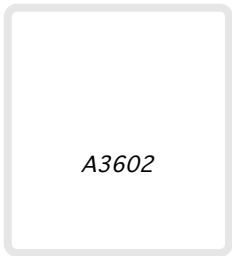
Oflag IIC Woldenberg

Poland Camp
1942 – 1945



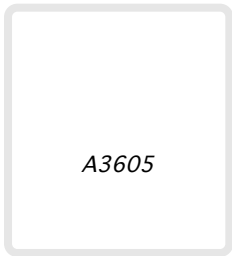
Oflag IID Grossborn

Poland Camp
1943 – 1945



Oflag IIE Neubrandenburg

Poland Camp
1944 – 1944



Oflag VIIA Murnau

Poland Camp
1942 – 1944

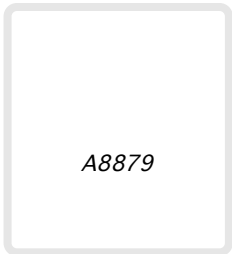
6520POL-XPOLAND, GHETTO POSTS2

Postal delivery inside the Jewish ghettos were strictly controlled by the Germans, with authority managed through the Judenrat. The Lodz Ghetto Post had a particularly extensive postal system, with stamps professionally produced for mail both within and outside the Ghetto. The Warsaw Ghetto also had an extensive post office, but not with its own stamps. The Warsaw Ghetto Post was issued by the Warsaw Ghetto Resistance Organization in an effort to established an underground mail service. There is no evidence that the stamps were used, and all of the surviving residents of the ghetto were murdered in 1943. The image is from the U.S. Holocaust museum.



Lodz (Litzmannstadt) Ghetto Post

Germany Occupation
1944 –



Warsaw Ghetto Post

Germany Occupation
1941 – 1943