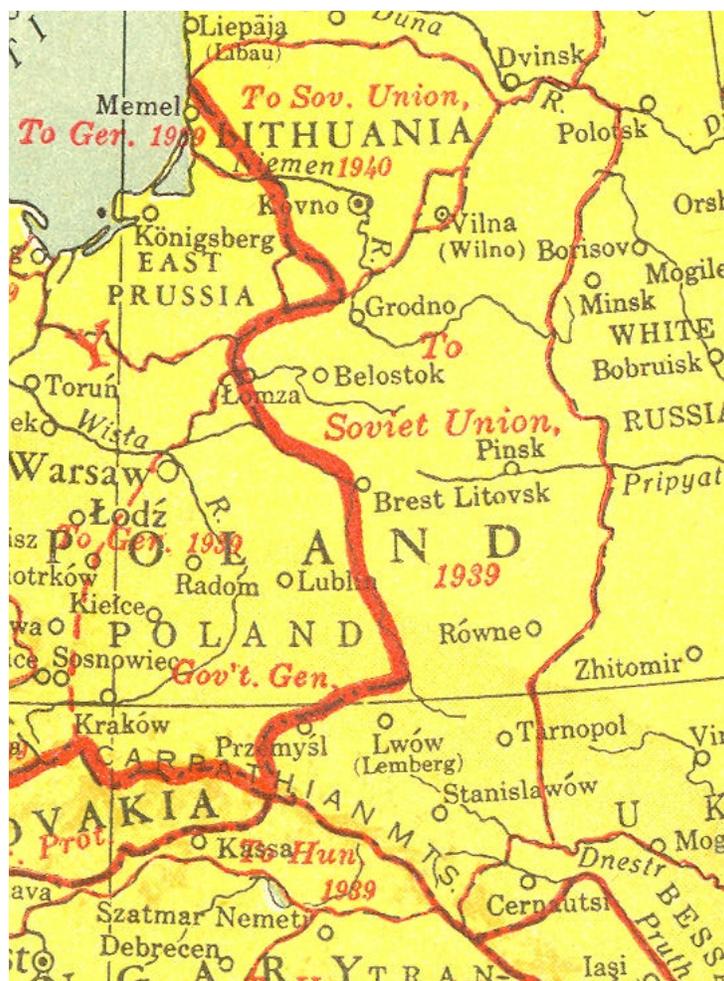


SOVIET OCCUPATION OF POLAND 1939/41

A Postal History



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PREFACE

No English-language study of this obscure area of Polish philately could have been written without the groundbreaking work of Witold Zurawski.

In his 2005 work, *Sowieckie Znacki Pocztowe na Okupowanych Ziemiach Poliskich w Latach 1939-1941*, Zurawski notes that there are no existing official records regarding the postal procedures, rate changes, or the invalidation of existing Polish stamps and postal stationery during the transition from Polish to Soviet stamps and cancellations. Accepted opinion is that these records were destroyed during the Russian retreat from the sudden and unexpected invasion by the Germans on June 22, 1941. The Russian occupation itself lasted a scant 21 months.

Zurawski's interpretations and conclusions regarding these events are based on his study and inspection of numerous collections, including thousands of covers, as well as detective work based on the discovery of obscure references and personal narratives.

With his permission, I have freely drawn on this expertise, and have used several of his maps and illustrations. All black and white scans have been taken from his book and reproduced here because of their uniqueness. I have also utilized new material provided by J. Tokar.

Needless to say, these covers are scarce. Although covers are occasionally found in Polish auctions, they are, as a whole elusive. As word spreads of Zurawski's work, prices will almost certainly escalate, and sources for material may even evaporate entirely.

My goal, with Zurawski's blessing, is to spread the information to English-speaking collectors of Polish material who might otherwise have had no access to it. Obviously, neither this work nor Zurawski's is complete, as covers from many areas have not been seen, exact dates of initial usage are not always known, and a good deal of the information is speculation based on limited sources and therefore subject to revision if and when new data should be found.

I would also like to thank Richard Ogar for his editing help. It was invaluable.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, observations, new sources of information, or examples of undocumented items.

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July, 2006

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although Poland was a major European power in the 15th and 16th centuries, the partitions of 1772, 1793 and 1795, in which Austria, Prussia and Russia helped themselves to ever-larger slices of the pie, removed it from the map entirely. It reappeared briefly as the truncated Kingdom of Poland after the Congress of Vienna in 1815, but faded away again until 1918.

Poland's borders were not finally established until the 1920s, after skirmishes with the fledgling Lithuania (for the Wilno region) and Lenin's Red Army (for the eastern frontier), as well as a series of plebiscites (Allenstein, Marienwerder, Eastern and Upper Silesia) which parceled territory to Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia.

In 1938, the same year that Poland celebrated its 20th year of independence, Hitler engineered the March 13th *Anschluss* (annexation) of Austria. Six months later, on September 29th, the notorious Munich Agreement ceded the Czechoslovakian Sudetenland to Germany.

Blind to the possibility of its own extinction, the Polish government capitalized on the Nazi land grabs by annexing a disputed bit of Czechoslovakian territory that had once been part of Upper Silesia, but—following three insurrections and a plebiscite—had been ceded to the Czechs in 1921. This territory lay west of the Olza River, and was known as Zaolzie (“across the Olza”); within a year, Zaolzie was part of the German Reich.

On September 1, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland, which held out until the fall of Warsaw on September 27, 1939. (Unlike the rest of Hitler's victims, Poland never formally surrendered, and never formed a puppet government.) Much of western Poland was annexed by Germany and incorporated into the Reich as a quintessentially “German” territory called the Wartheland (after the Warta River); the balance became in essence a Polish ghetto and source of forced labor known as the General Gouvernement, administered by Nazi Gauleiter Hans Frank.

On September 17, 1939, the Soviet government formally informed the Polish Ambassador in Moscow that in view of the “disappearance of the Polish State,” the Soviet government considered the Polish-Soviet non-aggression treaty null and void. This opened the way for the Soviet advance into Poland in accord with a secret protocol of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed on August 23, 1939. This protocol spelled out the details of a new partition of Poland between Germany and Russia.

As the Soviet troops moved east (and soon dispelled the Polish hope that the Red Army was coming to its aid), the Nazis retreated to the previously agreed upon border between Germany and Russia. Known as the Brest-Litovsk line, the border was fixed along the Pisa, Narew, Bug, and San Rivers. Once again, Poland had been removed from the map of Europe.

The San River divided the town of Przemysl. The western bank was occupied by the Russians, while the eastern bank by the Germans.

While Germany was consolidating its spoils in the west by outright occupation and annexation, the Soviets were taking a different tack in the east. Following procedures well developed within the Soviet Union itself, Stalin and the NKVD immediately purged the occupied territory of “political undesirables” (for the most part, military officers and members of the Polish intelligentsia). Many thousands were summarily executed, while tens of thousands more were condemned to near-certain death in the gulags.

Having thus dealt with the Polish “oppressors,” the Soviet Union began the process of “repatriation” and “reunification.” On October 10, 1939 the Wilno Voivodship (Wilno, or Vilnius, and its surrounding area), seized in 1920 by General Zeligowski and known as Central Lithuania before being incorporated into Poland on March 24, 1922, was “returned” to Lithuania. The Suwalki region was annexed by Germany.

In the remaining territory, portions of Byelorussia and Ukraine seized by Poland after battles with the Red Army and Ukrainian nationalists, the NKVD staged elections for Western Ukrainian and Western Byelorussian National Assemblies, to be centered in Lwów and Bialystok respectively. In the October 22nd vote, a supposed 90% of the electorate approved the Soviet slate of candidates. On October 27th, the Western Ukrainian Assembly voted to petition the Soviet Union for reunification, and was accepted on November 1st; on the 15th, the Ukrainian parliament formally annexed the region. The Byelorussian puppets followed suit on October 29th, were “accepted” on November 2nd, and became part of Byelorussia on November 12th.

Most of this annexed land remained part of the Soviet Union after World War II, with Poland being “compensated” for the loss by the annexation of formerly German territory in the west.

As in any wartime situation, “normal life” became impossible. (This, along with the general disarray of the postal system, is one likely explanation for the absence and scarcity of postal material from the last three months of 1939.) But life under Soviet occupation soon fell prey as well to the norms of Stalinism: appropriation of assets from church and state, forced agricultural collectivization, and mass deportations to Kazakhstan and Siberia. There were large deportations in February, April and June of 1940; the last occurred shortly before the Nazi invasion in June 1941.

A brief time line may be helpful

1939 - August 23	Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of non-aggression
September 1	Germany invades Poland
September 17	Russia invades Poland from the East
September 22	Red Army occupies Lwów
September 23	Red Army occupies Bialystok
September 27	Warsaw falls
September 28	German troops withdraw to the Brest-Litovsk line
October 10,	Wilno district ceded to Lithuania
October 28	Occupation of Wilno by Lithuania
November 1	Byelorussia annexes northeastern occupied territory
November 2	Ukraine annexes southeastern occupied territory
1941 - June 22	Germany attacks Russia

POSTAL HISTORY

Restoring such essential services as banking and communications (which included the postal service) was an obvious Russian priority. Immediately after the invasion, the zloty was put on par with the ruble, although in fact nearly all monetary transactions were in zlotys. However, on December 21, 1939, without prior notice, the zloty was withdrawn from circulation, and all bank accounts over 300 zlotys were seized (thus wiping out many people's life savings). The ruble was now the currency of the land, and no replacement or exchange for the zloty ever materialized.

By the end of September 1939, most post offices were operating, but mail was only permitted within areas occupied by Soviet forces. The post offices were staffed with Polish workers, who, like most government officials and employees, had been given three months salary prior to the departure of Polish troops, but they worked under Soviet supervision. After the three months, most of the Polish employees were fired.

Mail to Moscow was permitted beginning in early October. Some writers have suggested that, with the exception of Red Cross and POW correspondence, mail service to the General Government was not instituted until March 1940. However, the present work contains evidence to contradict that assertion. Presently, we do not know how the Red Cross and POW mail were handled; however, this mail did go through some sort of postal system as is evidenced by the postal markings.

The postal services in Byelorussia were generally quicker than those in Western Ukraine to adopt the use of Russian stamps and cards because of their proximity to Minsk, the capitol of Byelorussia. Polish stamps and cards were quickly declared invalid for use in Byelorussia; although Polish cancellers continued to be used until Soviet-style replacements were obtained. Other than this, there are no philatelic differences between the Ukrainian and Byelorussian postal systems. The postal rates were as follows until December 21, 1939, after which Russian rates were used exclusively:

Postal services continued with Polish personnel in place but with Soviet supervision. The zloty was placed on par with the rouble and in fact all transactions used the zloty. Life continued on a greatly disrupted basis.

There was great disruption to normal living as people were subjected to marauding troops, lack of food and other necessities and worst off all – deportations. A great number of people, especially educated people, were deported to Siberia and Kazakhstan. The first large deportations began in January of 1940.

Philatelically, there is nothing different between the two areas. Both had the same rate structures. Polish stamps and cancels, however, were quickly removed from circulation in Byelorussia, though covers very likely do exist.

The rate structure was as follows until December 21, 1939, when Russian rates were used exclusively.

Class of Mail	Polish Rate	Russian Rate
Printed Matter	5 gr.	5 kop.
Local letters	15 gr.	15 kop.
Local post cards	10 gr.	10 kop.
Intercity letters	25 gr.	30 kop.
Intercity post cards	15 gr.	20 kop.
Foreign letters	55 gr.	50 kop.
Foreign post cards	30 gr.	30 kop.
Local and intercity registration rate	30 gr.	30 kop.
Foreign registration rate	45 gr.	80 kop.

One important note to remember is that the Soviet occupation lasted a relatively short period of time—September 17, 1939 to June 22, 1941. When checking cancellation dates, it is imperative to remember that Polish cancellers used Roman numerals to signify the month (i.e. II equals February), while the Russians used the Arabic system (February would be 2). Be careful not to read a 26.11.40 (November 26, 1940) Soviet cancel as February 26th, 1940



Polish style date
November 30, 1939



Russian style date
November 22, 1939

There are, nevertheless, some Russian cancellers that use the Polish-style Roman month designations.



1.



2.

At the present time, we do not know where the cancellers were made; however, they differ from the normal Russian cancellations

- ? The month is Roman style and inconsistent with the Russian Arabic style
- ? Date is contained in a rectangular box, as opposed to the normal style Russian box with curved sides

Cancel #1 A railroad postal agency cancel on a postcard from Bialystok in Byelorussia to Tarnopol in Western Ukraine.

Cancel #2 A receiving cancel on a parcel notification card sent from Lwów to Kostopol, both in the Western Ukraine.

Both of these items are further referenced within this work

To commemorate the “incorporation of the repatriated Eastern Lands,” lands that had been part of the Imperial Russian Empire prior to World War I, the Soviets issued a set of 4 stamps. These stamps are difficult to find on covers from the annexed Polish lands.



‘Incorporation of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia – 17.IX.1939
Issued in April, 1940



Cover showing a pair of 60 kop. stamps of the “Incorporation of Western Lands” series

Registered cover from Nadvrova, Western Ukraine to Chicago, IL and dated January 11, 1941. The 1.30 rubles paid the international registered rate for letters. Cover is franked with Russian stamps, registration mark and cancellation.

PHILATELIC COVERS

It is important to realize that many, if not most, surviving covers are philatelic in nature. Covers that are incorrectly franked (overpaid, especially with “appropriate” stamps; or underpaid without any postage due markings), display illogical mixed frankings, or lack a receiving cancel are generally cancelled-to-order philatelic novelties. They are not, however, uncollectible. Unlike genuine covers, which were usually discarded without any thought to their future historical value, philatelic covers were purposely created to be kept. In many cases, philatelic covers are the only evidence we have of important transition dates.

Polish post cards invalidated with such markings as “X”, “NIEWAZNY” and “UNIEWAZNIONO” are suspected to be philatelic. Postcards where the Polish stamp is covered with a Russian stamp are valid.



This “X” invalidation mark was used in Równe Wolynskie, Western Ukraine on Polish postcards issued in 1938, along with a Russian stamp which is tied to the cover with a Polish Rowne Wolynskie cancel. Many of these covers are actually in otherwise mint condition, unaddressed, and therefore purely philatelic.

In fact, many of these invalidated cards were supposedly cancelled at a time when Polish stamps were still valid in the Western Ukraine (i.e., October and November, 1939).

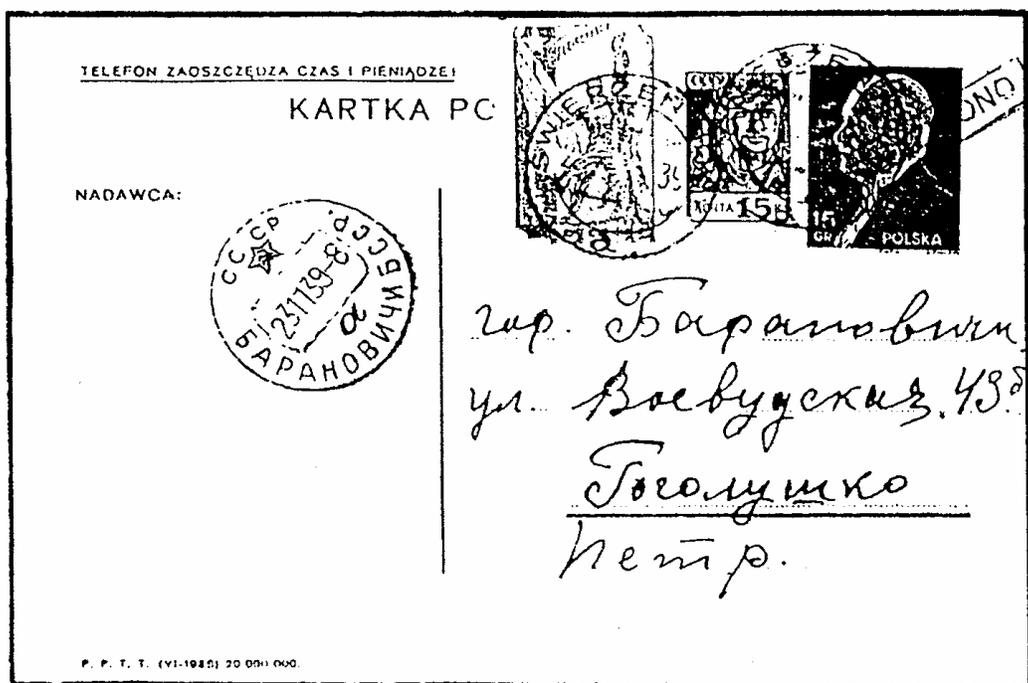


This cover appears to be postally used and may have gone through the mails, but there is no receiving mark. In addition, it is franked beyond the 30 kopeck foreign post card rate.

Close examination will reveal that the word “Allemagne” (French for “Germany”) was written *on top of* the cancellation, indicating that the card was *purchased pre-cancelled and addressed later*. There are numerous otherwise mint cards found with this cancellation and it would appear that this card is philatelic if it were not for the message on the back “..... yesterday I sent you a registered letter, today one to Halinka. If you can, please send the money to Lwów.”



Boxed **UNIEWAZNIONO** (Polish for “invalidated”) on a cover from Swierzen Nowy to Baranowicz , both in Byelorussia, with a Polish cancellation dated November 22, 1939.



Baranowicz receiving cancel dated November 23, 1939.

The 20 kopek paid the Russian rate for intercity postcards.

There was no need to invalidate the Polish stamp, as it was already barred from use in Byelorussia. Accepted practice would have been to place a Russian stamp over the Polish one. According to Zurawski, the boxed cancellation may have been applied after the fact.

It is important to realize that a good number of the covers that survive are philatelic in nature. Covers from this area and time period in the majority of cases have a receiving mark. Philatelic covers usually do not have a receiving mark. Many covers with mixed franking are of this variety. They were cancelled to order.

All covers in this work, which I consider as philatelic are marked as such.

There is mention of other philatelic manipulation in other sections of this work.

POLISH LANDS ANNEXED TO BYELORUSSIA



Area annexed to Byelorussia USSR

Lands to the north of the Pripyat River were annexed to Byelorussia USSR and include the city of Bialystok, Pinsk and Grodno.

Covers from this area are more difficult to obtain than from the area annexed to the Ukraine for several reasons. One was a smaller population and the other was a lower literacy rate and therefore less written communication. This was especially true in the eastern portion of the area.

Necessary services were re-instituted by the end of September. Banks, post offices, and telecommunications were of primary importance. The Soviets moved quickly and effectively. Thanks to the proximity of Minsk, the capital of Byelorussia, supplies including stamps and postcards quickly flowed into the area. As of October 1, 1939, Polish stamps and cards were invalid and town cancellers were replaced on a gradual basis though the old rate structure remained the same for several months.

Covers with Polish stamps and/or cancellations are extremely scarce from lands annexed to Byelorussia. Those few that do exist are from smaller postal agencies, where change came a little slower. Larger post offices, obviously, had their cancellers replaced first.

As efficient as the Russians were, there was chaos and uncertainty. Below is a cover trapped in that brief moment when everything stopped functioning. Written on the 16th of September, 1939, the card lay either in a postal box or at the post office until the post office again began to function. The card is dated September 26th, 3 days after the area was occupied by the Russians.

16/IX 1939

Sonczko Moje najukochańsze!
Telefonowałam ci dzisiaj, żebyś mi przysłał listy.



Cancelled with a Polish canceller –
 Slonim, 26.IX.39

CHRONICIE LINIE TELEFONICZNE OD USZKODZEN

KARTKA POCZTOWA

Kocham Ciebie i mam nadzieję, że Ty też kochasz mnie. Jestem w Warszawie i mam nadzieję, że Ty też jesteś w Warszawie. Jestem w Warszawie i mam nadzieję, że Ty też jesteś w Warszawie. Jestem w Warszawie i mam nadzieję, że Ty też jesteś w Warszawie.

*Milosna Pani
 Sofia Skłodowska
 Szczuczyn k. Lidy
 Gimnazjum
 Janina*

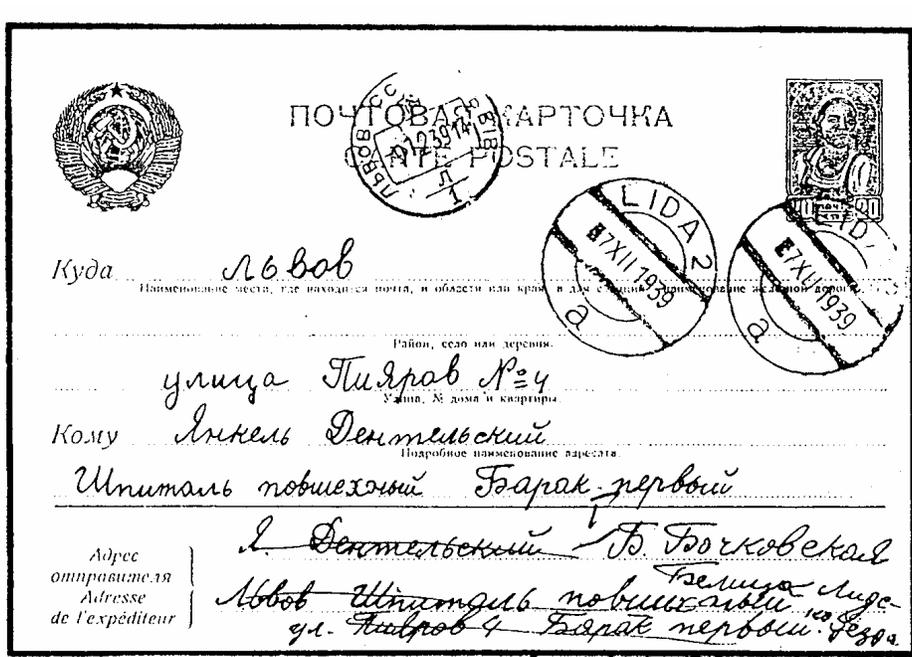
Z

Slonim to Szczuczyn, near Lida; September 26, 1939
 Both towns are now part of Byelorussia

The card is under-franked because the Polish rate for inter-city postcards was 15 grosze



Cover originating in Stolpce with mixed Polish/Russian franking to Lida. The zloty and the ruble were on par and the 25 gr./kop franking paid the Polish rate for intercity mail. A rare Polish cancellation dated October 17, 1939



Cover from Lida to Lwów in the Western Ukraine. Pre-war Polish cancel dated December 7, 1939 with a Lwów receiving cancel

It is amazing that mail abroad was re-established so quickly. Many sources state that mail to German Occupied Poland did not begin until March, 1940.



Card from Bransk, Byelorussia to Warsaw. Russian cancellation dated January 17, 1940.

Berlin transit machine cancel dated February 5, 1940.

50 kopeck overpaid the 30 kopeck international postcard rate.

German occupied Poland was considered a foreign country



Minsk transit mark dated March 2, 1940

Registered cover from Pinsk to Hempstead, NY, dated February 9, 1940 with a New York receiving mark – April 6, 1940.

The 1.30 rubles paid the Russian registration fee of 80 kop. and the 50 kop foreign letter rate

PROVISIONAL CANCELLATIONS FROM BYELORUSSIA

The only known provisional cancellations from this region are shown below. Both are one of a kind.



**Agencja
Pocztowo-Telekomunikacyjna
HRYCEWICZE
Nr.....**

Both stamps front and back, are canceled in dark violet with the hand stamp shown above. The boxed “R” registration with the town name in manuscript is Polish with the town name spelled in Russian. The polish spelling was Hrycewicze. The pen manuscript registration marking is in Russian and dated with pen at the upper right – 26 II 40. Note the “26” numeral on both.

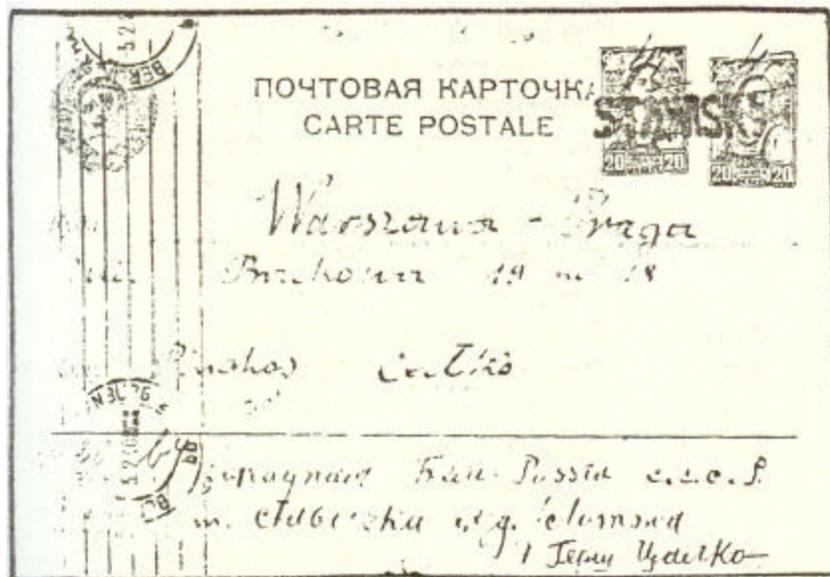
There is an additional Russian 30 kop. stamp on the reverse for a total of 60 kop. which paid the Russian 30 kopeck intercity letter rate and the Russian 30 kopeck registration fee, however, the letter is posted to a “foreign” country; German occupied Kraków. It is therefore under franked; however, it did reach Krakow, as it is duly noted on the reverse with a Krakow receiving cancel.

The town today is part of Byelorussia and there have been several spellings of the name.

- a. Polish – **Hrycewicze**
- b. Russian – spelled **Gritsevichi** or **Grytseviche**



Moscow Transit mark – May 21, 1940
 Kraków receiving mark – May 31, 1940



A 3rd generation copy of a scan from Post-Rider, #14, June, 1984



Stawiski – only known copy

Provisional cancellation on a card to Praga section of Warsaw with a script “4. I”; **January 4, 1940**. There is a Berlin machine cancel to the left of the card. Size and color of the one line cancellation is not documented.



A Russian **Postage Paid** handstamp with a script 45 gr. in pencil. Rate was the Polish rate of 30gr. for registration and 15gr. for an intercity postcard. Only know cover of its type.

Registered and dated October 3, 1939 with a very rare Polish language date cancel from Pinsk to Lwów. Polish language Lwów receiving mark – October 6, 1939

Handstamp was applied because there were no Russian stamps on hand. Polish stamps were not permitted.



Unknown town of origin, but with a Bialystok transit mark on the reverse, dated December 21, 1940.

Cover is to Brooklyn, NY with a blue pencil cancel.

The 50 kop rate pays the Russian rate for foreign mail. Since the cover is not registered, there is no receiving mark on the back.

Genuine postally used covers from Byelorussia with Polish stamps are unknown, but might exist. In addition, Polish cancellations were also used only for a short while. In most cases, both were replaced by the beginning of October, when postal and telephone systems were re-activated.

CANCELLERS

Early Minsk Cancellers



As was the case throughout Byelorussia, the first cancellers for the Bialystok region were made in Minsk and issued prior to January 15, 1940. The 29mm circle contained three major elements: a large **СССР** surrounding a Soviet star with hammer and sickle; a central date lozenge with curved sides; and the town name followed by **БССР** (the abbreviation for Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic). The cancel illustrated reads **БЕЛОСТОК БССР** (Belostok [i.e. Bialystok] BSSR).

Interim Cancellers



Cancellers used after January 15, 1940 omitted the **БССР**, but added the name of the Oblast (province). The diameter remained 29mm, but the **СССР** and star motif is smaller. The cancel shown reads **КЛЕЦК БАРАНОВ. ОБЛ.** (Kletsk, Baranov Oblast).

Soviet Cancellers



In April, 1940, all cancellers were produced in Moscow and conformed to those used throughout the Soviet Union. The diameter has been reduced to 24mm, and the hammer and sickle motif is now superimposed on a black star. This cancel is from **ТОМШОВКА БРЕСТ. ОБЛ.** (Tomashovka, Brest Oblast).

Byelorussian Registration Marks

Like Polish stamps and cancellations, Polish registration marks were NEVER replaced. UPU regulations state that all registered international Russian mail had to be registered with a "Latin" alphabet registration mark. Russian style registration marks were used only on domestic mail.

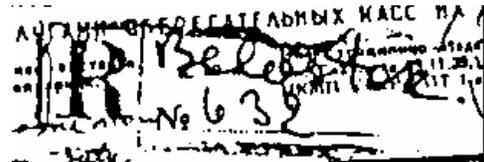
Polish registration marks have a large "R" at the left; the equivalent Russian looks like "Р."



Russian style Cyrillic registration mark



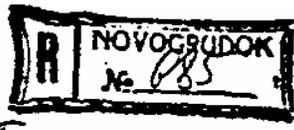
Polish BIALYSTOK registration mark on cover dated March 19, 1941.



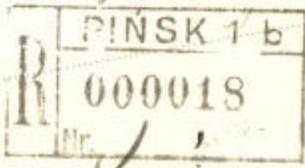
A provisional Polish registration mark appears at the bottom center of this postcard sent to Colorado on September 29, 1940. A Russian registration mark is found at upper left.



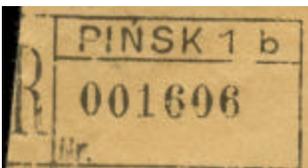
Polish LUBOTYN registration mark on a cover dated March 19, 1941



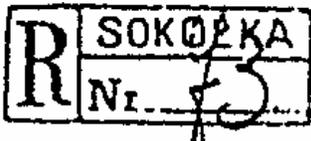
Polish NOVOGRUDOK registration mark on a cover dated May 9, 1940



Polish PINSK registration mark on a cover dated October 3, 1939. A Polish cancellation also appears on this cover.



Polish PINSK registration mark found on a cover dated February 9, 1940.

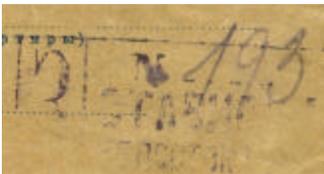


Polish SOKÓLKA registration mark found on cover dated November 16, 1939.

Below is a registered cover with both Polish and Russian registration markings from Stawisk. Cyrillic registration marks were forbidden by the UPU on international mail. In this case, the Cyrillic style mark was applied in error, than over-stamped with the Latin style mark



Polish registration mark from Stawisk on cover dated November 13, 1940.



Russian registration mark from STAWISK, dated November 13, 1940



Registered cover with both Polish and Russian registration markings on a cover mailed from Stawisk on November 13, 1940. The Russian registration mark was applied on both the left and right sides of the cover, but in each case is virtually illegible. The Polish registration mark may have been applied over the Russian one at left in an effort to gain a clear impression.

INTERESTING COVERS FROM THE BYELORUSSIAN AREA



Russian stamped envelope mailed from ? ? ? ? ? ? ? /Olkowicze to Wilejska on June 23, 1941, one day after the German invasion on June 22nd. While bearing a Russian registration mark, the 30-kopeck franking would only have covered the domestic letter rate. Wilejska receiving stamp for June 25, 1941 on the reverse.



Cover sent from ? ? ? ? ? /Tykocin in the Lomza region of Bialystok Oblast to Brooklyn, NY on November 20, 1940. Fifty kopeks paid the international ground rate.



General Government postcard sent from a hospital in Warsaw to Rubiezewice in Byelorussia on February 13, 1941. Note the bilingual Polish/Russian address.

German machine censor cancel applied in Königsberg with a Russian Rubiezewice receiving mark.



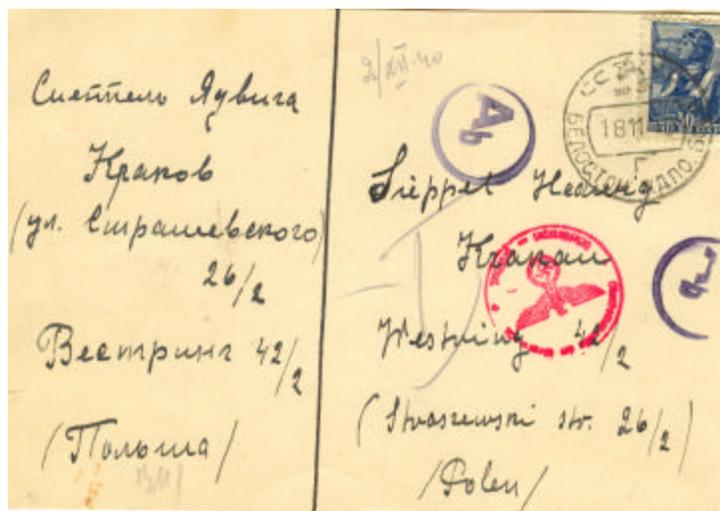
Russian stamped envelope sent registered from Pinsk to Hempstead, NY on February 9, 1940. The 30-kopecks covered the domestic letter rate. An additional 1-ruble stamp paid for registration and international mail. Latin style registration mark for international mail.



Polish Style Postage Due Marking

Postcard sent from ???????/Przemysl in the Western Ukraine to Tarnopol in Byelorussia on January 13, 1940. Prior to the occupation, both cities were in Poland and the intercity rate of 15 grosze would have been sufficient. The amount of postage due is not indicated, but if this were treated as international mail, the correct rate would have been 50 kopeks; the amount collected, therefore, would have been 70 kopeks (twice the underpaid amount).

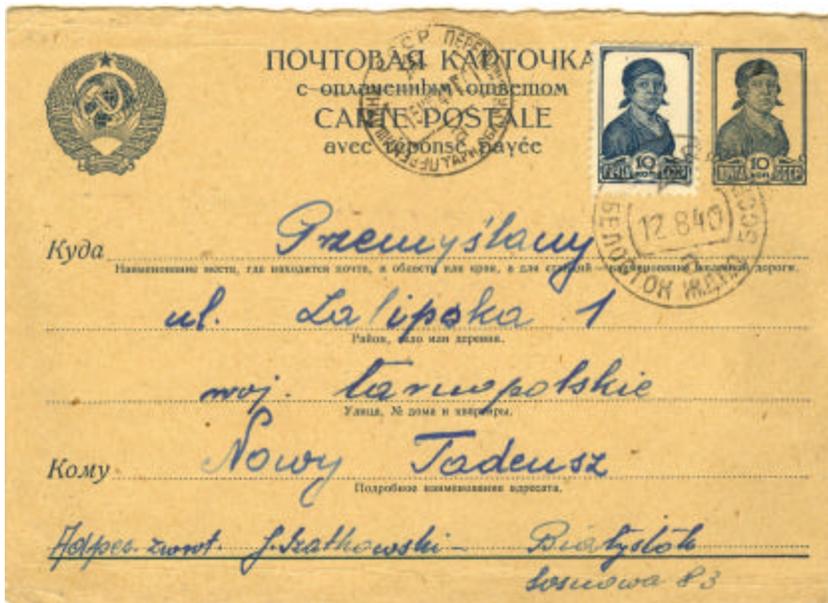
Przemysl is divided by the San River, which was the part of the border between German and Russian occupied Poland. The Germans administered the western portion of the town, while the Russians the eastern.



Postcard from ???????/Byelostok to Krakow, November 18, 1940, with a German Königsberg (Ab) transit/censor marking.



Oddly enough, many cards from Russian-occupied Poland to the General Government - like this example mailed from ??? ? ? /Bransk in Byelorussia to Warsaw on January 11, 1940—were *not* censored. The German machine railroad cancel is barely legible, but the date is February 5, 1940.



Bialystok to Tarnopol with a scarce railroad mark. Bialystok CDS reads Aug. 12, 1940



The railroad date is a Polish style (month) reading August 15, 1940



Formular P.O.W. envelope from ? ? ? ? /Lomza to Stalag 1A dated December 26, 1940 using an early “Minsk” canceller (with ???). (All P.O.W mail in and out of Byelorussia went through Minsk). A Russian Minsk transit mark for January 9, 1941 appears on the reverse.



Formular P.O.W. postcard to Stalag VD [i.e. 5D] from ? ? ? ? ? ? ? /Tomaszówka [Brzesc] and canceled with a Moscow produced CDS

POLISH LANDS ANNEXED TO LITHUANIA (WILNO DISTRICT)



Wilno District - The original Polish-Lithuanian boundary is to the left of Wilno.

The Soviets ceded the Wilno District to Lithuania on October 10, 1939, ostensibly in return for its having signed a mutual defense pact. But this “gift” was simply a mask for the Soviet intent—implicit in secret clauses of the Nazi-Soviet pacts of August 23, and September 28, 1939—to annex Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia as member republics of the USSR. (The original “suggestion” was made by the Germans, who had their own plans for Lithuania and wanted Wilno as part of the eventual package.)

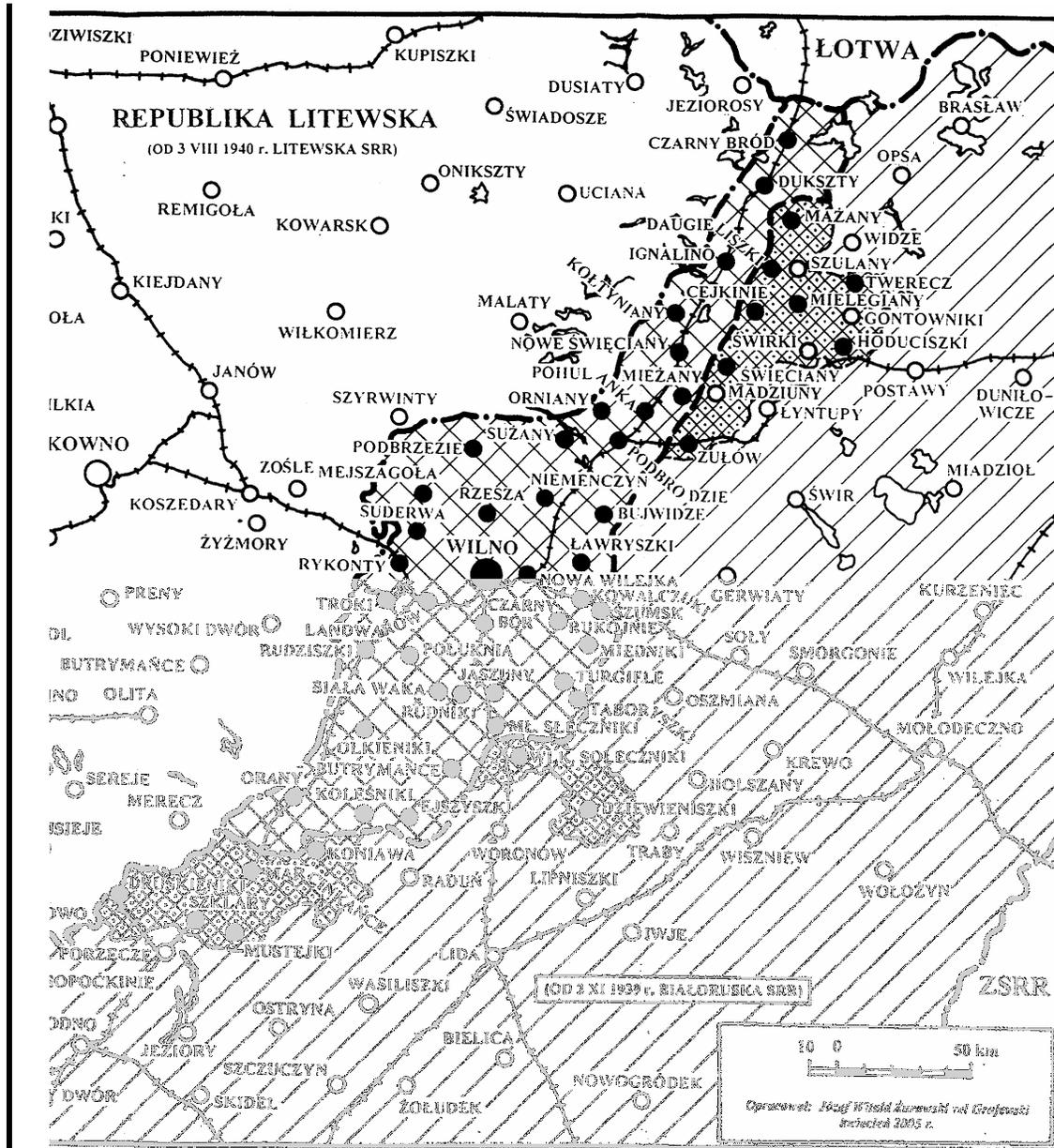
What makes this area so philatelically interesting is that it was in a state of limbo for several weeks prior to annexation. The area was

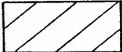
- ? under Polish control until September 21, 1939;
- ? under Russian control from September 24th until October 10th;
- ? theoretically under Lithuanian control from October 10th to the 28th, although there was no actual Lithuanian authority present during this period; and
- ? under actual Lithuanian control from October 28, 1939 until June 22, 1941.

As is evident from the map above the territory ceded to Lithuania from Byelorussian on November 6, 1940 offers a similarly complex history, as it was:

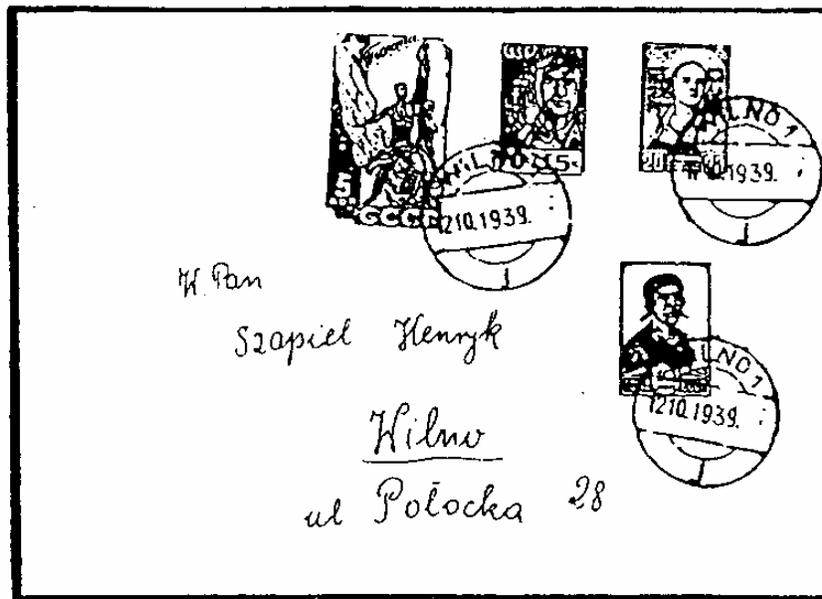
- ? in Polish hands until September 21, 1939;
- ? in Russian hands until November 5, 1940;
- ? in Lithuanian hands from November 6, 1940 to June 22, 1941; and
- ? in German hands after June 22nd.

TERRITORY CEDED TO LITHUANIA



- Polish boundaries on September 1, 1939
- Soviet-Lithuanian boundary from October 27.1939 to June 15.1940
-  Area occupied Russia on September 17, 1939 and subsequently annexed to Byelorussia
-  Area ceded to the Republic of Lithuania on October 10, 1939
-  Polish lands ceded from Byelorussia USSR to Lithuania USSR on November 6, 1940
- Towns that had Polish post offices prior to September 17, 1939
- Other important towns
- Railroad lines

Covers from the period prior to annexation to Lithuania bear Polish, Russian or mixed frankings, with Polish cancellations and registration marks.



Letter with Polish WILNO 1 cancellation dated October 12, 1939, shortly after it was ceded to Lithuania, but before the assumption of actual Lithuanian control. Russian stamps were used because the area had been under Soviet control since September 21st. Fifty kopecks was twice the normal 25 kopeck rate, suggesting that the letter weighed more than 20 grams.

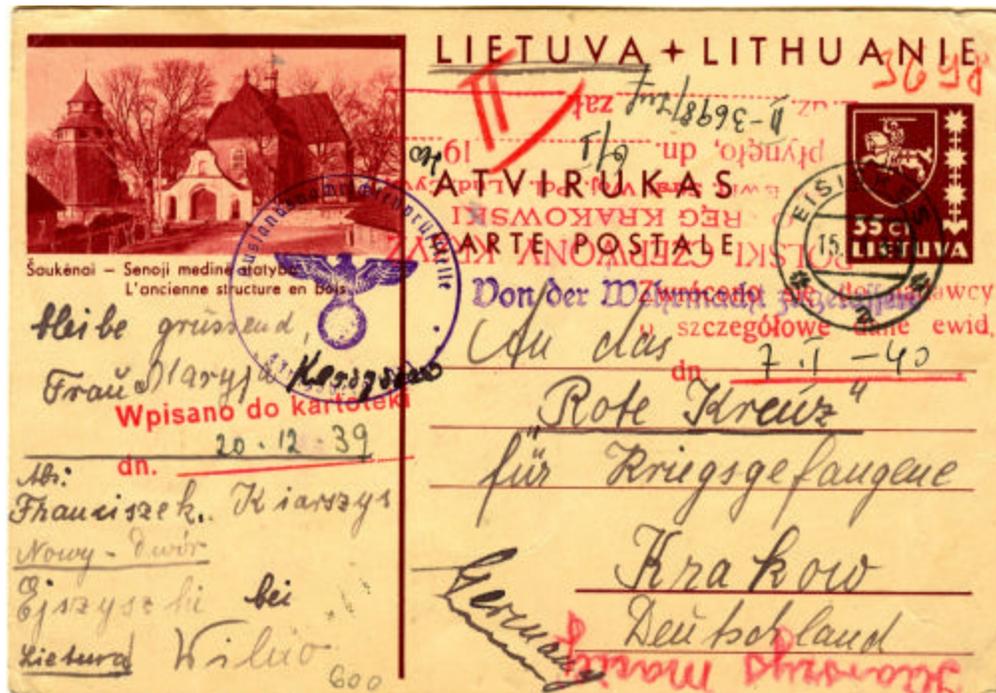


Mixed franking on a cover postmarked WILNO 1 to Grodno in Byelorussia, dated October 14, 1939, also during the period between cession and occupation. The 25 groszy/kopecks paid the Polish intercity rate for letters.



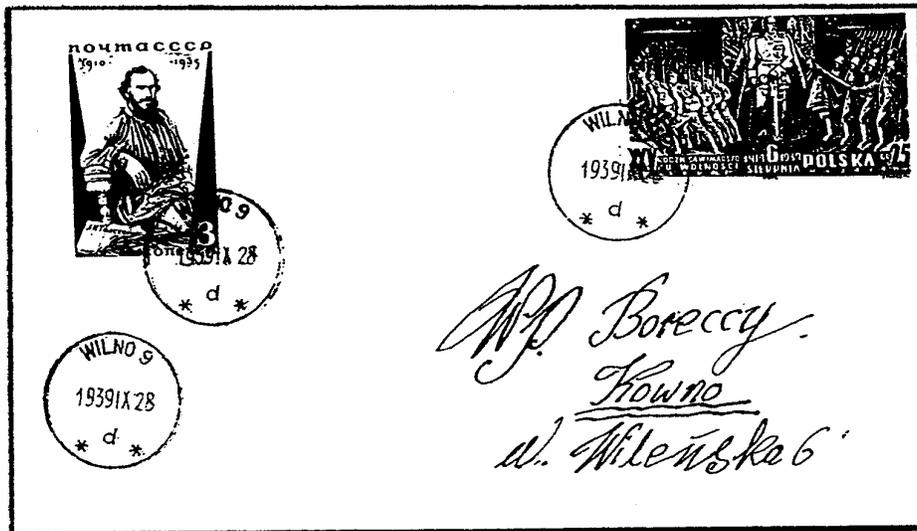
Mixed franking on a cover postmarked WILNO 3 on October 28, 1939. This would appear to be a philatelic cover designed to commemorate the actual Lithuanian occupation of the city. The first line of the address reads ????? (“here,” or “in this place”), meaning it was intercity, as the 15 groszy/kopeck franking implies.

From this day forth, Polish stamps were invalid and Lithuanian stamps were used until Lithuania became a USSR republic.



Pre-war Lithuanian postcard mailed from the Wilno suburb of **EJSZYCKI**, as noted in Polish in the return address. The cancellation, however, is Lithuanian – **EISESKES**. Dated November 15, 1939 to Kraków

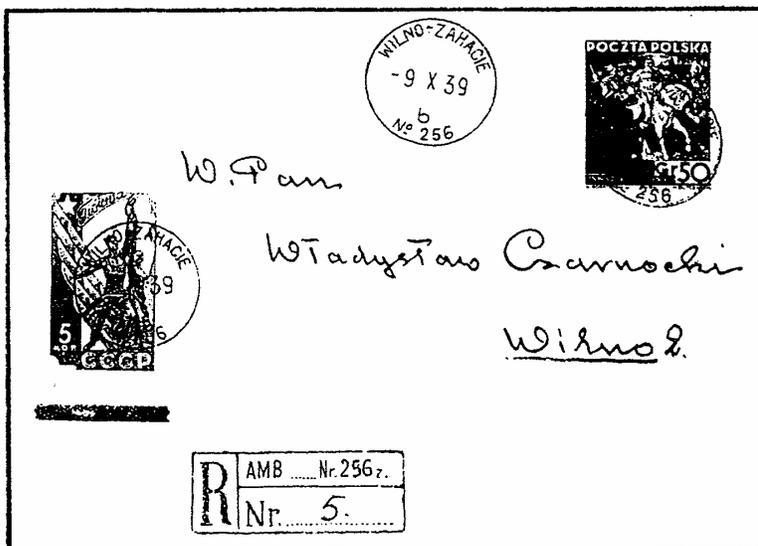
PHILATELIC FRAUDS



This cover with mixed franking was ostensibly mailed from WILNO 9 to Kowno (Kaunas) on September 28, 1939, but there are a number of things wrong with it. To begin with, Wilno was still under Soviet control at this time, yet the canceller follows the Lithuanian style (year/month/date). Secondly, the 25-groszy Polish stamp would have paid the intercity rate, but Kowno was not only another city, but one in a foreign country. The correct franking for foreign mail would have been 55 groszy. Lastly, the 3 ruble Russian stamp seems to serve no postal function.

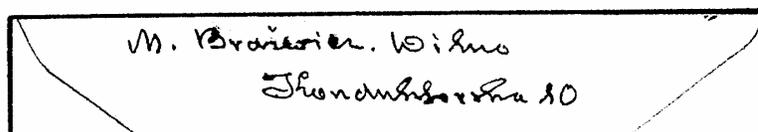
The Czarnocki – Brazewicz Covers

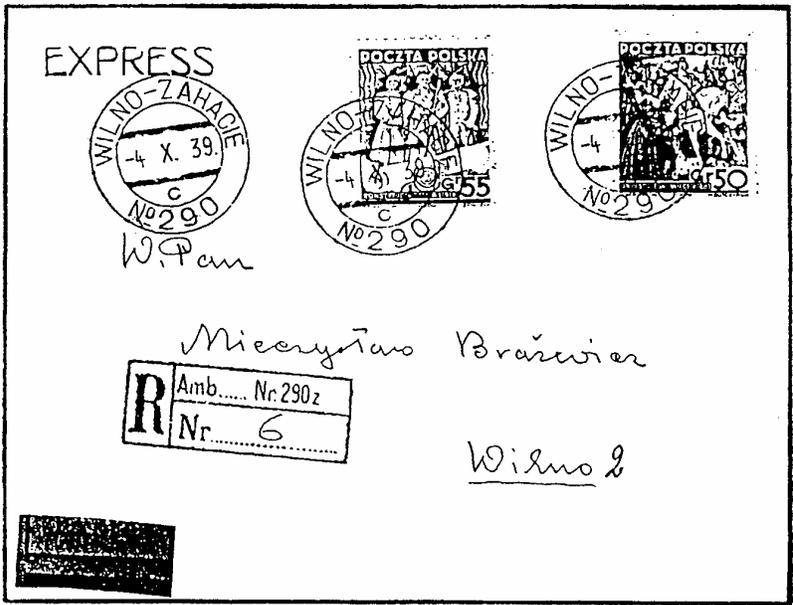
There are a number of purely philatelic covers, many of them registered with apparent railroad cancellations, that were created by two men, Wladyslaw Czarnocki and Mieczyslaw Brazewicz. Four examples follow.



Registered local cover with mixed Polish and Russian franking sent by Barzewicz to Czarnocki, canceled at WILNO-ZAHACIE [railroad postal agency] #256 on October 9, 1939.

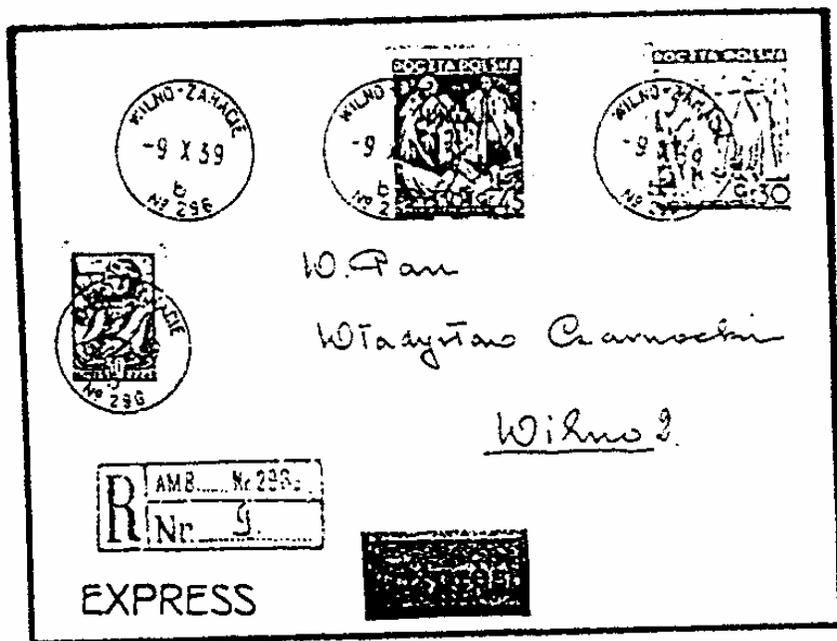
Aside from the fact that it would be difficult to deliver this letter without a street address, research has shown that this line was disrupted and not operating during this time period!



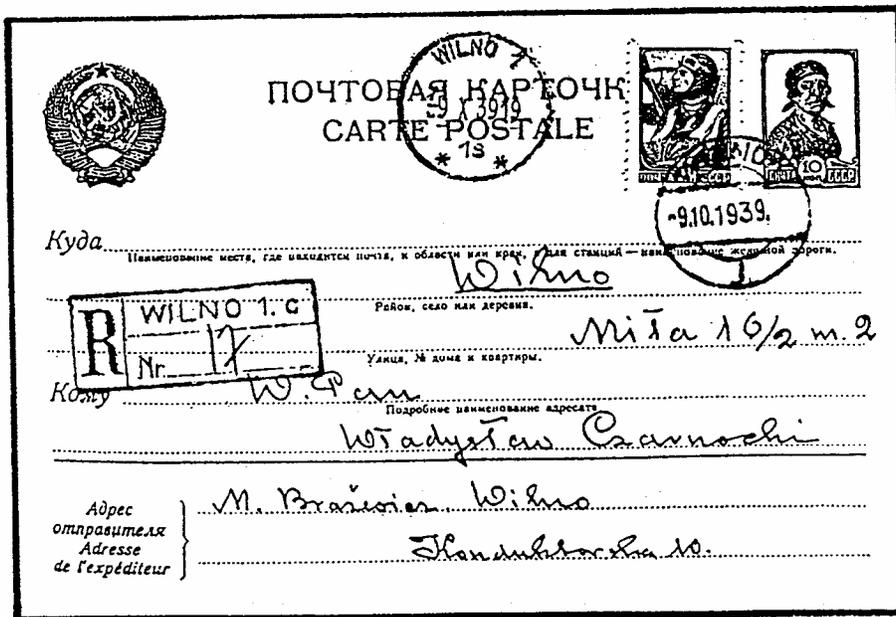


Express registered cover with Polish franking sent to Barzewicz and canceled at WILNO-ZAHACIE #290 on October 4, 1939.

Again, the railroad was out of service, and Mr. Barzewicz has no street address either.



Express registered cover with mixed Polish and Russian franking sent to Czarnocki and canceled at the out-of-service WILNO-ZAHACIE #296.



Registered postcard with Russian franking sent from WILNO 1 to Czarnocki—who finally has a street address!—by Brazewicz on October 9, 1939. Notice the misdated receiving cancellation: 9.X.3919.

VILNIUS OVERPRINTS

On October 28, 1939, the Lithuanian government overprinted its 20th anniversary of (soon-to-be-lost) independence issue of January 15th to commemorate the formal return of Wilno (Vilnius). The stamps were withdrawn on August 3, 1940, shortly after Lithuania became a Soviet republic.



These stamps were valid for less than 10 months; till August 3, 1940. They were withdrawn shortly after Lithuania became a Soviet Republic in July, 1940.

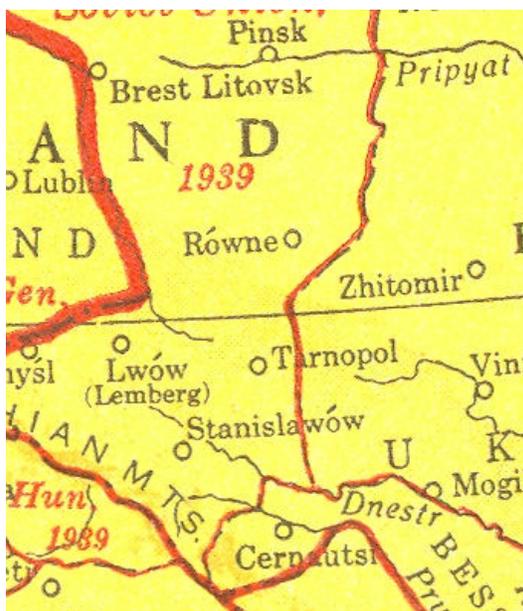


A Vilnius to Kaunas cover dated October 30, 1939; two days after Lithuanian occupation and the issuance of the overprint series.



Registered letter from Vilnius to Angers, France. The date of cancellation is illegible, but the receiving stamp of the Bureau of the (Polish) National Council is hand dated April 24, 1940.

POLISH LANDS ANNEXED TO THE WESTERN UKRAINE



Area annexed to the Ukraine as Western Ukraine

Territory in the south, including the major cities of Lwów, Tarnopol, Równe and Stanisławów and extending north to the Pripjat River, was annexed by the Ukrainian SSR as the Western Ukraine. (Poles were a minority in the region, and the Ukrainian population tended to identify more with Soviet Ukraine than with Poland.)

Because the area had a larger, more diverse and literate population, and because changes came about more slowly, covers from this area are much richer in variety and complexity than those of Byelorussia or the Wilno District.

Replacement of Polish stamps and cancellers began in early October. While Polish stamps and cards remained valid for internal use, foreign mail had to be franked with Russian stamps. On December 21, 1939, most of the Polish postal employees (who had been paid in advance, as mentioned above) were removed from their jobs, which undoubtedly led to several months of chaos. At the same time, the dual rate system was abolished in favor of Soviet rates, the use of Polish zlotys was prohibited, and Polish stamps and postal cards became invalid even for domestic mail.

This does not mean that no cards or letters with Polish stamps exist after that date: examples have been found dated as late as May and June 1940. The use of Polish stamps and postal stationery was permitted if the items were already in the hands of the sender, but they could not be purchased at the post office. Due to the lack of cards, however, some Polish postal cards were sold after the imprinted stamp was either obliterated or a Russian stamp placed over it.

Before December 21st, however, there were either no rigid standards or regulations, or such rules and regulations were not enforced; quite possibly they were not even effectively communicated. Covers exist with both Polish and Russian stamps, with Polish stamps covered with a Russian stamp or stamps, or with a Russian stamp adjacent to the Polish stamp which may or may not have been factored into the franking.

Covers franked only with Polish stamps are rare and limited to the last few months of 1939.



This cover, marked “Druk” (printed matter), was sent intercity to Lwów on December 5, 1939, and cancelled with a bilingual (Russian/Ukrainian) Lwów/L’viv handstamp.



A Polish postal card, written in pencil and sent from Lwów to Czartkow and dated October 25, 1939.

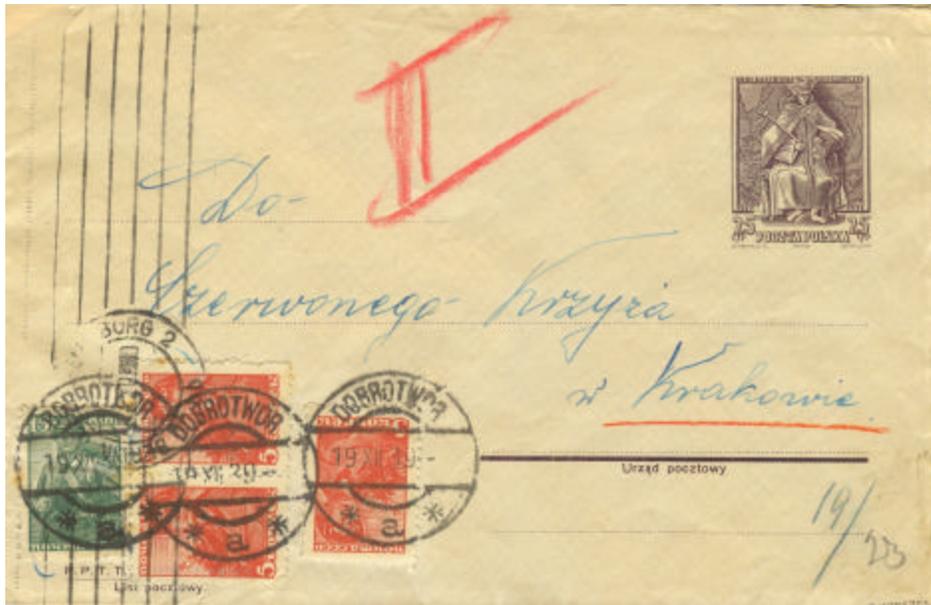
The 5 kopek stamp obliterates President Moscicki and the two stamps, 15 kop. pay the **Polish intercity rate of 15 gr.** (100 grosze = 1 zloty = 100 kopek=1 ruble)



Postcard addressed to Równo in pencil and cancelled with a with ? ? ? ? /Równo handstamp on October 5, 1939.



Postcard mailed to Tarnopol with the same ? ? ? ? /Równo cancellation found on the previous card, although the message is dated December 5, 1939. While it is possible that Równo 6 was using a defective Russian canceller on which the date could not be changed, the fact that both cards bear identical cancels placed in similar locations over the same Polish stamp raises the suspicion that the cards were philatelically prepared in advance, and sent (if, indeed, they were mailed at all) later. Adding to this possibility is the fact that Równo 6 would not likely have had a Russian canceller as early as October 5th, since the area was not officially incorporated into the Ukraine until November 2, 1939.



Polish stamped envelope sent to the Polish Red Cross in Kraków (where it was censored by the Germans) from DOBROTWOR (Western Ukraine) on December 19, 1939. Since Polish stamps were technically not permitted on mail leaving Soviet territory, the apparently successful use of Polish postal paper attests to the chaos at the time. The foreign letter rate at the time was either 55 groszy or 50 kopecks; this mixed franking is at the Polish rate.



Registered cover from OLYKA 1 to Lwów, dated November 9, 1939. The 55groszy/kopecks paid the Polish intercity rate of 25 groszy and the 30 groszy registration rate.

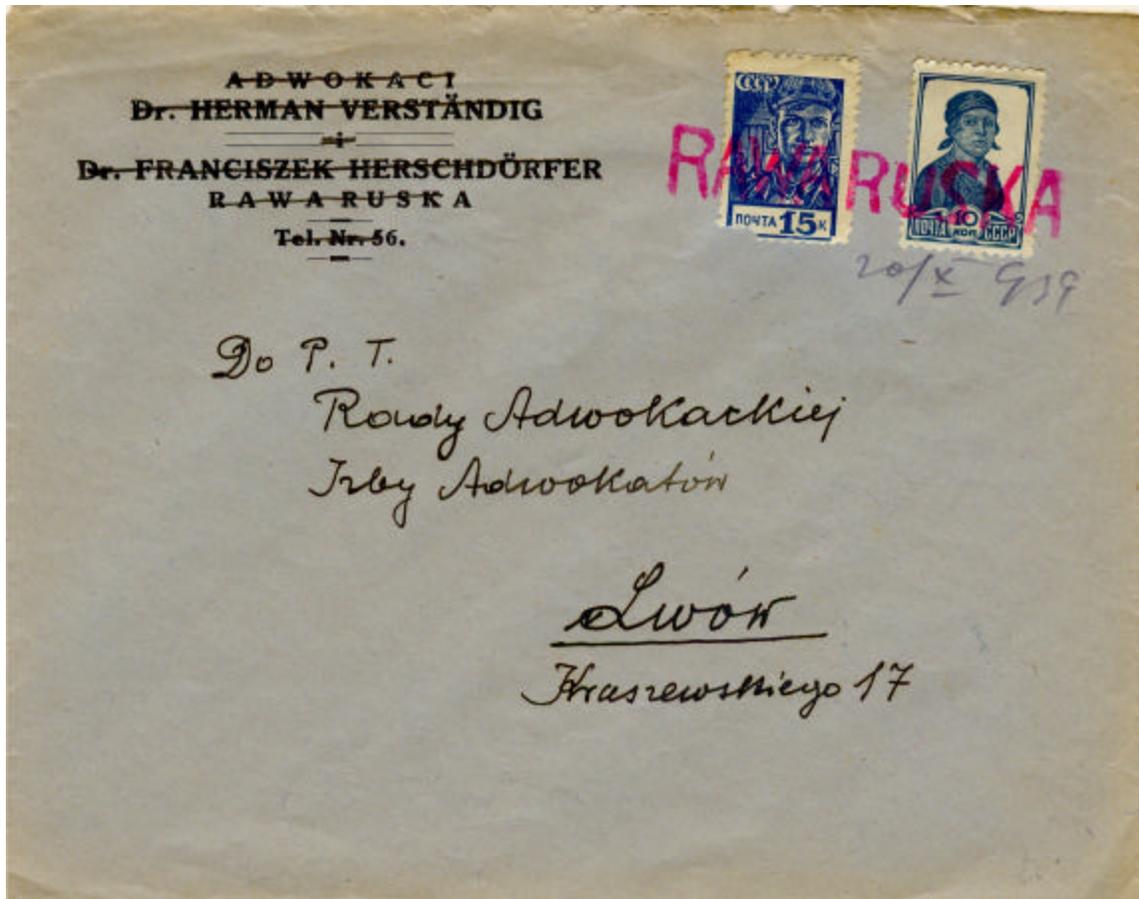
Polish postcard mailed from BRZEZANY on November 22, 1939 with an added Russian stamp to pay the 15-kopek local rate. Although the Polish imprinted stamp was not covered or obliterated, the 15 groszy were not counted as valid postage. The Russian stamp is also cancelled with a ?????/????I? (Lwów/L'viv) handstamp, also dated November 22nd.



- 5a. Mixed franking of 20 gr./kopeck paid the Russian intercity rate
 Polish Brzezany Bugien cancel dated November 11, 1939
 Bi-lingual Lwów cancel, dated November 14, 1939

PROVISIONAL CANCELLATIONS from WESTERN UKRAINE

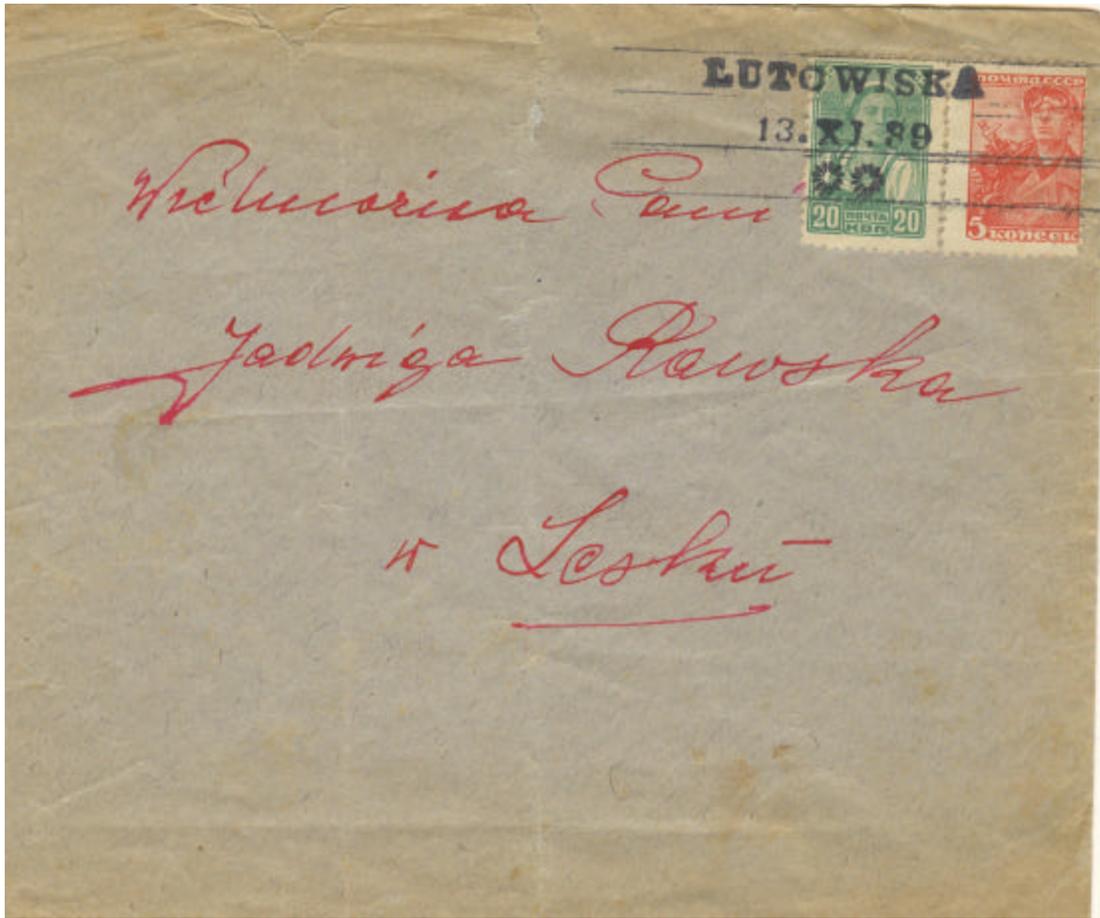
As with Byelorussia, few provisionals are known. Each of those shown below is the only example known.



With pencil manuscript – 20/X 939 – October 20, 1939

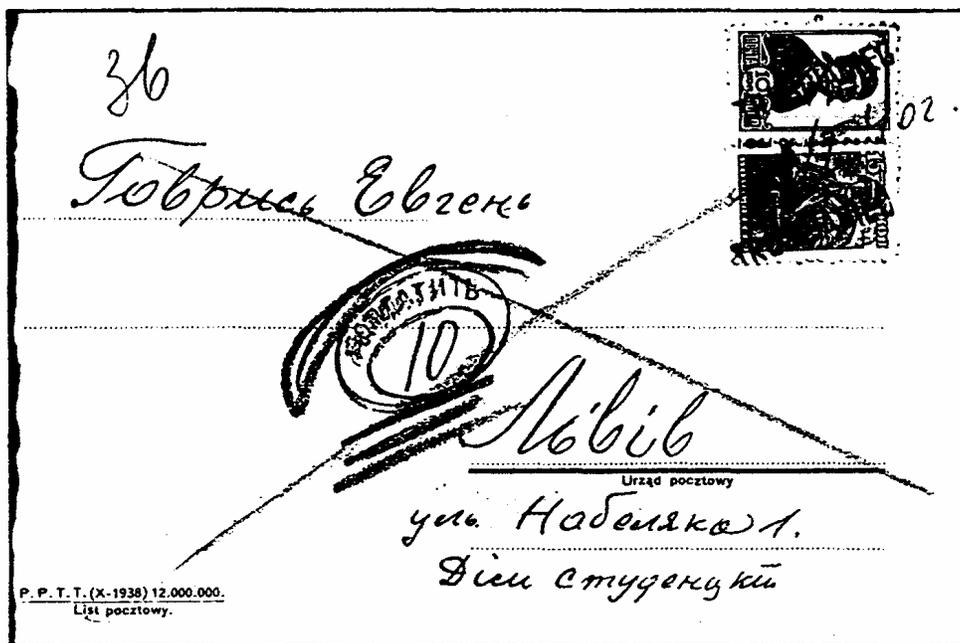
Only known copy

Rawa Ruska is in the Western Ukraine, north east of Lwów. Town is now part of the Ukraine Republic. Rate of 25 kop. paid the 25 gr. which was the Polish intercity rate. Zloty and Ruble were on par



Typeset cancel with changeable dates
Only known copy

25 kopeck paid the Polish rate for intercity mail of 25 gr. Both currencies were on par. Lutowiska is in the Western Ukraine area. Cover is mailed to Lesko, in the Western Ukraine and is now a part of Poland



TROŚCIANIEC

A 1938 Polish stamped envelope with the imprint covered by two Soviet stamps, sent from Troscianiec to Lwów on January 21, 1940. Each stamp is cancelled with the straight-line provisional TROSCIANIEC town cancel, with the date (21/1/40) added in manuscript. The 25 kopecks paid the Polish intercity rate. Since Polish rates were invalid after December 21, 1939, a postage due handstamp was applied to the cover. The Russian intercity rate was 30 kopecks, and the amount owed (double the 5-kopeck deficiency) was indicated with a manuscript "10."



This cancel is a Russian postage due notation with a script **10**. Polish rates were invalid after December 21, 1939 and the Russian rate of 30kop was in force. The custom was to charge double the postage due, hence the 10 kop. notation

Today the town is part of the Ukraine and known as Trostyanes



MSZANIEC

Letter sent to Chodorow from Mszaniec with two undated, rubberstamped MSZANIEC cancels applied to the strip of five Soviet 5 kopeck stamps. A Chodorow receiving cancel on the reverse (not shown) is dated January 27, 1940. As with the cover above, the correct—i.e., Soviet—intercity rate was 30 kopecks after December 21st, but no additional fee was collected.

Today, the town is part of the Ukraine and known as Mshanets.

JAGIELNICA



This the only known examples of a provisional cancel from this town, which is now part of the Ukraine.

The back of the stamp has disturbed gum, as if it were steamed or soaked off a card. Until there is an example on cover, this cancellation has to remain suspect as to actual usage.

(Collection of Richard Ogar)

Postal rates ironically were in most cases identical with Russian rates. The usage of Polish postal stationery and stamps was permitted if these items were already in the hands of the sender. They could not be purchased at the post office. However, due to the lack of cards, Polish postal cards were sold after the imprinted stamp was either obliterated or a Russian stamp placed over the Polish stamp.

FOREIGN MAIL

While there is ample evidence of mail traveling to and from P.O.W's and the Red Cross during the last three months of 1939, not much other civilian mail seems to have moved during that time. In fact, some sources have indicated that mail abroad and to German-occupied Poland did not begin until March 1940. The examples below would seem to prove otherwise.



Russian postcard mailed from ?????/????? 1/Lwów/L'viv 1 to Łódź in German-occupied Poland on November 6, 1939. Since the card bears no German transit marking, was not censored, nor received a Russian transit marking, it is possible that it was never delivered.

It is possible that this card was never delivered, but sat in a mail sack and if there was in fact mail service between German and Russian occupied Poland. The following cover shows that there was mail delivery between General Government and Russian occupied Polish territories.

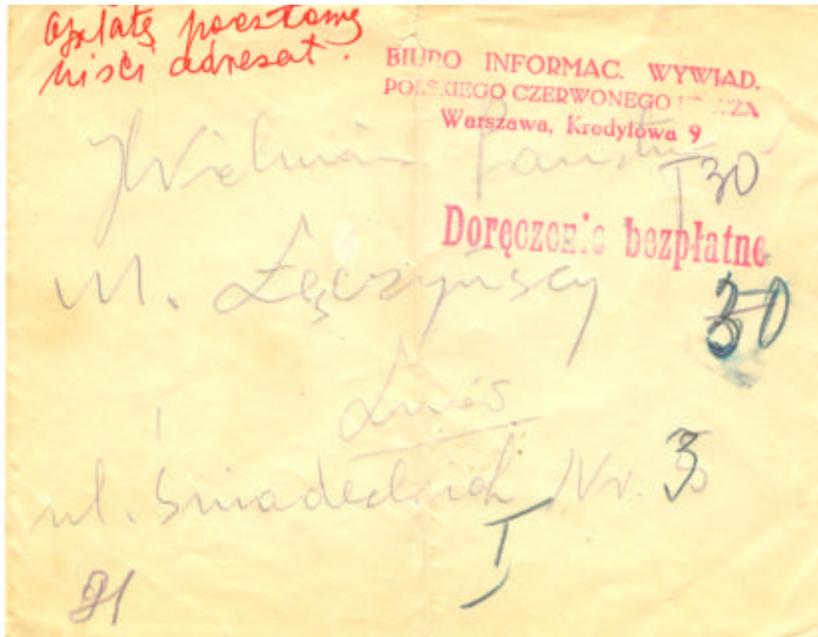


An apparently private cover sent from Teschen/Cieszyn in German-occupied Poland via Deutsche Dienstpost Osten to Lwów in Russian-occupied Poland on October 26, 1939. The reverse bears a Moscow transit cancel for November 16th, and a ?????/???I?/Lwów 1 receiving stamp for November 22nd.



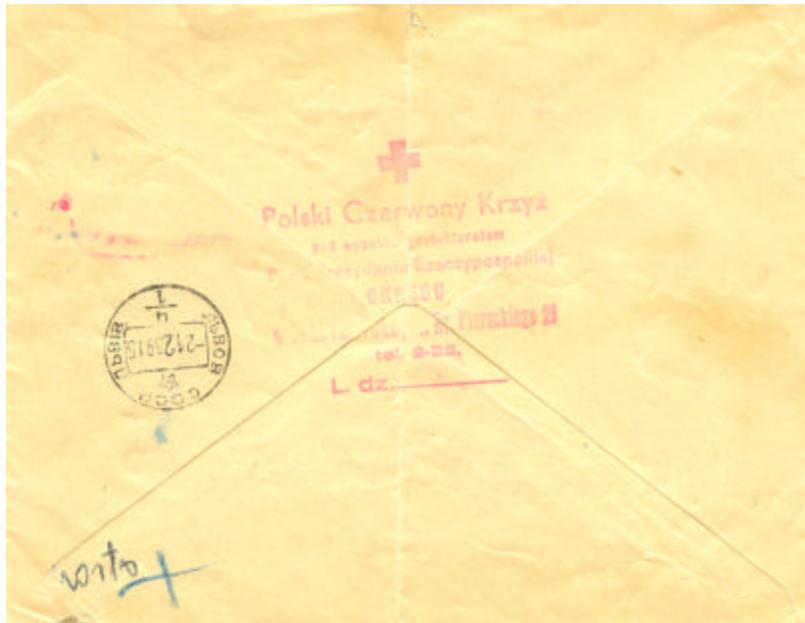
Obviously, there was communication into non Russian areas even at this early date

POW / RED CROSS MAIL

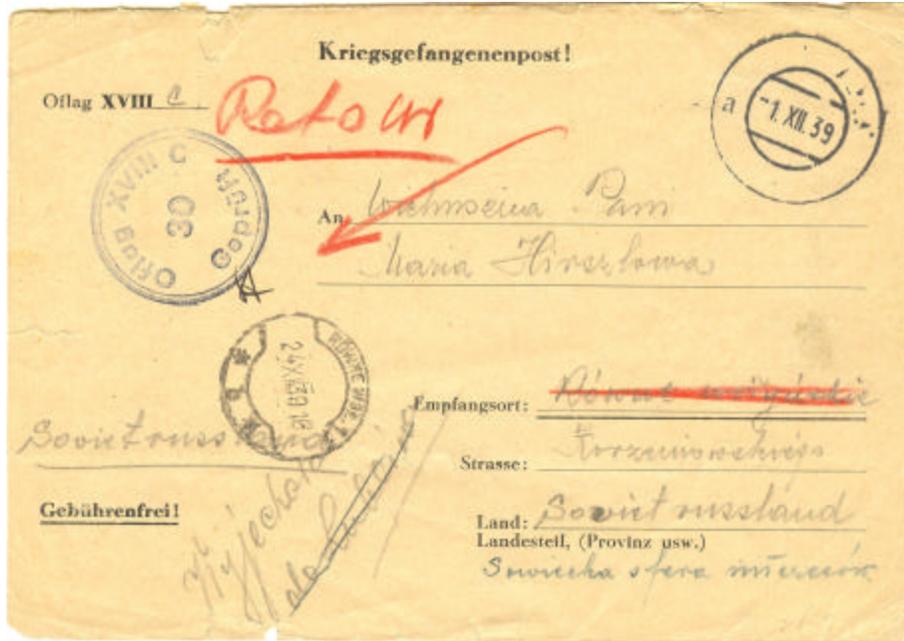


Red Cross cover from Warsaw to Lwów stamped “Red Cross cover from Warsaw to Lwów stamped “**Doreczne Bezpłatne**” (“Free Delivery”) in red. A manuscript note in red ink at the upper left reads “Postal charges will be paid by the recipient.” Therefore, at least two postal clerks have noted “T30,” indicating 30 groszy/kopecks postage due. (Oddly, that figure is the Russian intercity rate, when it ought to have been charged as foreign mail.)

Notation in red ink at the upper left reads “postal charges will be paid by receiver”



The manuscript notation “Porto” (Postage Due”) appears on the reverse of the cover, along with a ? ? ? ? / ? ? ? ? I? 1/Lwów/L’viv 1 receiving cancel.



Formula P.O.W letter sheet from Oflag XVIIIIC sent to Równe Wolynskie and cancelled with a mute German date stamp on December 1, 1939. A purple German censorship stamp is at the left. The destination has been crossed out in red pencil, and “Retour” (“Return”) added, along with an arrow, at the top left. A manuscript notation stating that the addressee had “left for Lublin” has been partially crossed out. A Polish RÓWNE WOL. 1 cancel dated December 24th apparently indicates the day the cover was returned



“Left for Lublin” in red
 Russian Równe Wolynskie receiving mark – December 15, 1939

There is no indication of the routing of these covers



Polish post card with a 15-kopeck stamp placed over the 15 groszy Polish imprint before it was sold, paying the Polish intercity postcard rate between PODHAJCE and Lwów on November 30, 1939.



On this Polish postcard, sent to Lublin (Generalgouvernement) on January 1, 1940, the imprint has been obliterated with a large “X” and the card re-franked with a 45-ruble Russian stamp cancelled at RÓWNE WOLYŃSKIE 1. The 45 ruble rate is pre December 21, 1939 foreign registration, although the card was not marked as registered. This overpayment would suggest a philatelic use, but the message on the back seems legitimate: “yesterday I sent you a registered letter, today one to Halinka. If you can, please send the money to Lwów.”

ALTERED POLISH CANCELLERS

Except for the Stanisławów/Stanislawiv district, bilingual Russian/Ukrainian cancels were introduced in the fall of 1939. It should be noted, however, that Polish cancels are found well into the occupation period, the latest known being a Brody/3a used as a receiving mark on a Polish Red Cross card from Warsaw on November 5, 1940.

The Stanisławów district, with a huge Ukrainian population, created Ukrainian cancellations from altered Polish cancellers.

As previously noted, Polish and Russian cancellers varied in that Polish cancellers used a Roman numeral to indicate the month, whereas Russian cancellers used the Arabic system. In addition, Polish hand stamp cancellers were double ringed with a bridge. Russian cancellers were a single ring, with the date in an enclosed rectangle with curved sides.

Most likely due to Ukrainian nationalism, a number of Polish cancellers were reworked into Ukrainian language cancellers. All were done in the Stanisławów region. No Polish cancellers were re-worked in Byelorussia.

Russian Cancel



Stanislaw? w

Polish Cancel

Ukrainian Cancel
from altered Polish cancellers



Stanislaw? w



Stanislaw? w A



Stanislaw? w =c=



Nadworna



Horodenka/a



Zabblotow



Delatyn



Morsyn



Dolina/ =6=



Kolomyja/a



Kolomyja 2



Kutu



Stryj/ =a=



Stryj 1



Zurano

Very likely other such altered cancellers exist, but as yet have not been found.



Radziechow/3a

There is a precedent for the alteration of cancellers in Stanislawów. This cancel was used by the Western Ukrainian Peoples Republic (1918-1919) when Austrian cancellers with Polish names were altered to conform to Ukrainian nationalism. This double-ringed canceller substitutes ??? ? I? (Radekhiv) for Radziechow. Note only the century, not the year, is indicated.

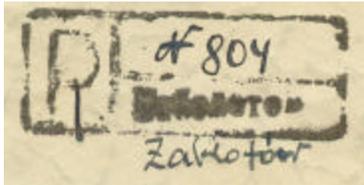


Registered express postcard with mixed franking sent from Kolomyja to Thorn (Torun) on November 13, 1939, and canceled with an altered Kolomyja/a handstamp. Since the required Thorn receiving mark is not present, the card is most likely philatelic.

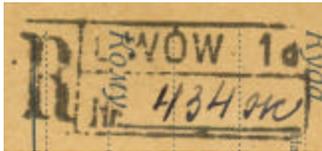
REGISTRATION MARKS

Latin alphabet registration marks were to be used only on international mail. UPU regulations forbade the use of Cyrillic alphabet registration marks except on domestic mail.

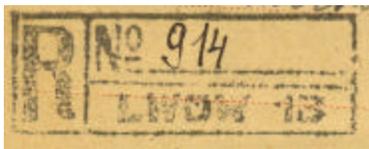
Polish (Latin) Registration marks used on mail to the West



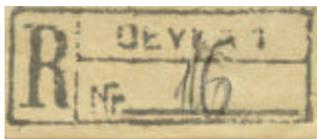
Reworked registration mark from Zablotów



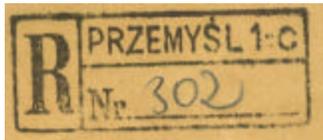
Unusual registration mark from LWÓW 1d.



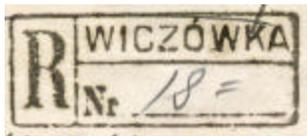
Standard registration mark from Lwów 13



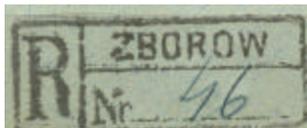
Olyla 1



Przemysl 1-c



Wiczówka

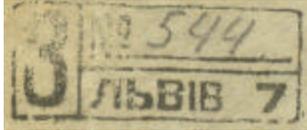


Zborow

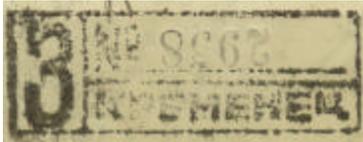
Russian (Cyrillic) Registration Marks used on local mail and to the East



???I?/L'viv 1



???I?/L'viv 7



?????????/Krzemieniec



???? ??????/Rawa Ruska



Cover to Tel-Aviv in Palestine from Lwów with both types of registration markings. The Cyrillic marking was used in error, crossed out and the proper Latin style registration mark used



Postcard sent from LWÓW 2 on April 12, 1940 to a Polish military internee housed in Cernauti [Czernowitz], Romania, and received in Cernauti on May 6, 1940.



A Russian stamped envelope sent (date illegible) to Orłow [Orłau] from Równo in Upper Silesia. Awarded to Czechoslovakia in the 1920 plebiscite, Orłow was annexed by Poland after Czechoslovakia capitulated to Germany.



This registered notice of receipt of an express mail item, sent from KOLOMYJA on October 23, 1939, is one of the very few non-philatelic examples of mixed Polish and Russian franking. The manuscript notation “45” to the left of the cancel on the reverse indicated the amount owed by the recipient, which is reflected in the 25groszy/20kopeck franking.

Zawiadomienie

o przybyciu przesyłki ekspresowej¹⁾ towarowej

(§ 59, pkt 2 R. P. O. § 16, pkt 1 R. P. T.)

Oddano na pocztę dnia 23.10 1939 r. o godz.
 Wręczono odbiorcy przez posłańca
 W dniu dzisiejszym nadeszła pod adresem Ab. Altman

przesyłka ekspresowa¹⁾ za listem ekspresowym¹⁾ pospiesznym¹⁾ nr 6902
towarowa przewozowym zwyčajnym

Stacja nadania Nazwisko nadawcy	Cechy Nr lub adres wzgl. Nr wagonu	Ilość sztuk	Rodzaj opakowania	Nazwa towaru	Waga kg	Uwagi s)
<u>Hamirów</u>		<u>2</u>	<u>skrzynki</u>	<u>mydło</u> <u>pa. m. m.</u>	<u>62</u> <u>2</u>	

Na przypadającą do zapłaty sumę zł gr składa się :

Przewoźne		Zaliczka ²⁾ w gotowiznie		Zaliczenie ¹⁾		Dopłaty ¹⁾		Koszty za- wiadomienia	
zł	gr	zł	gr	zł	gr	zł	gr	zł	gr
								<u>45</u>	



(Miejsce na gotówkę
przy wystaniu)

Przesyłka będzie wydana w godzinach służbowych dla publiczności za
 zwrotem niniejszego zawiadomienia, opatrzonego podpisem odbiorcy, po
 wykupieniu listu ekspresowego¹⁾
przewozowego
bagażowa¹⁾
Ekspedycja pospieszna¹⁾ stacji dnia 23.10 1939 r.
towarowa¹⁾

Nr księgi przybycia 2194

Pokwitowanie

Wyżej wyszczególnioną przesyłkę otrzymałem
 dnia 19..... r.

 (podpis)

¹⁾ Zbyteczne skreślić.
²⁾ Wzmianka o przeladunku w drodze przesyłki wagonowej, ew. skrócony termin odbioru
 lub wyladowania przesyłki itp.

F. K. P. Seria H Nr 220 — 1939—III— 427000 Zakł. Graf. „Biblioteka Polska“, Bydgoszcz

Just left of the circular pre-war canceller is a notation in pencil of “45” – amount to be paid by the recipient for the cost of notification. The 25gr. Polish stamps and the 20 kopek Russian stamp signify the payment of this charge.



Registered domestic letter mailed from Kremenets/Krzemieniec on December 29, 1940 to Lviv, and received on December 31, 1940.





Registered international letter sent from ???????/Zaboltoŭ/Zablotów, Western Ukraine, on April 23, 1940, to New York City, where it was received on May 31, 1940. There are no transit markings on the cover. The 1.20 ruble rate paid the Russian rate for a registered international letter.



A registered cover cancelled at PRZEMYSL 1c on October 21, 1939. The reverse bears 55 kopecks (for the Polish registered intercity rate) in Russian franking, with a Polish cancel, along with an October 23, 1939 ??????/Lwów receiving cancel.



Letter from ????????/Stanislawów, Western Ukraine to Stalag IA, dated January 14, 1940 with a Russian canceller. The ten-kopeck stamp was presumably removed by a German censor.



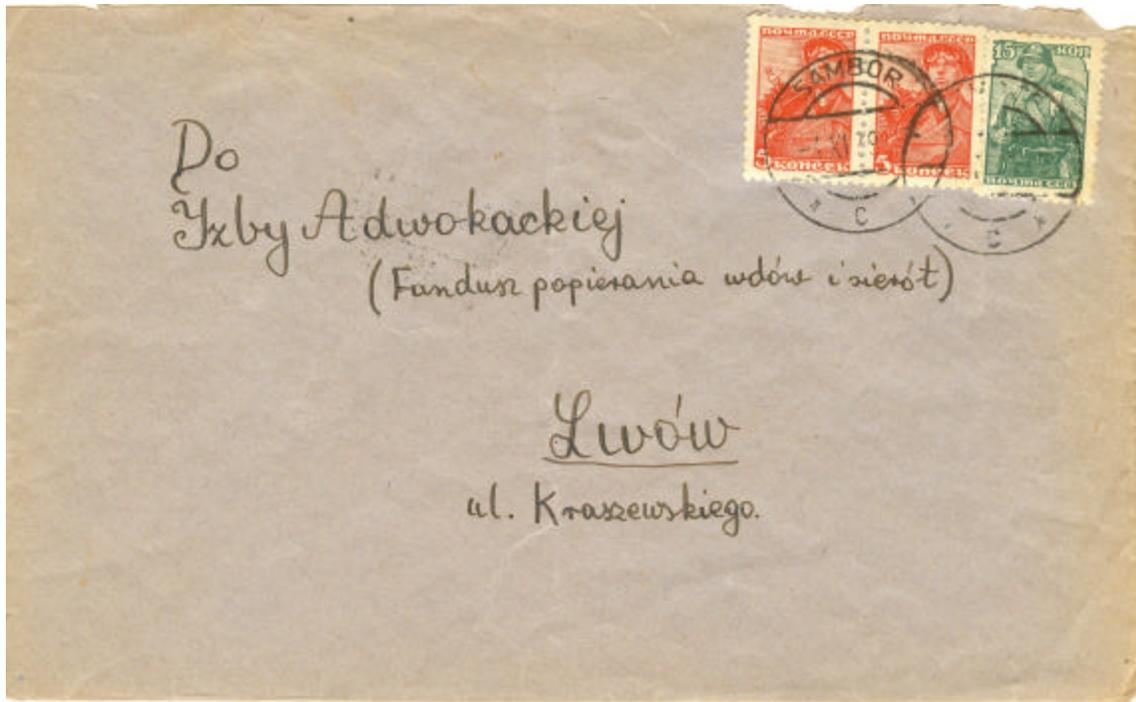
Registered letter from ?????/Lwow 1c to Kent, England, dated February 11, 1940. British censor tape at the left edge.



Registered cover sent from BOLECHÓW/Bolechów on October 10, 1939, and marked as received with a Polish LWÓW Lwow1 on October 11th. Sixty kopeks was the correct Russian rate for a registered intercity letter.



Registered letter sent from ROZNIATÓW/Rozniatów on November 13, 1939, and received at LWÓW 1 on November 15, 1939. Sixty kopeks was the correct Russian rate for a registered intercity letter.



Cover mailed from SAMBOR Sambor on November 1, 1939, and backstamped with a Russian ??? ?/???I? / Lwów receiving mark on November 5, 1939.



A registered Russian 30-kopeck stamped envelope, franked with three additional 30 kopek Russian stamps, and mailed to Kraków (Generalgouvernement) from WICZÓWKA on Mar. 9 1944. Since German-occupied Poland was considered a foreign country, the correct postage would be 50 kopecks foreign letter rate and 80 kopecks for foreign registration.



(Collection of Richard Ogar)

Registered postcard from Kolomyja to Brooklyn and rerouted to Philadelphia

Mailed on April 18, 1940, arrived in NYC on May 31, 1940, canceled in Brooklyn on June 3rd, forwarded June 4th and arrived in Philadelphia on June 5th



The chaos of war is evident in this card. The 15kop./15gr. was the pre-war inter city rate. However this card was now considered “international” since it was sent to German occupied Poland. The stamps are cancelled with a pencil and a postage due “T” was applied.

Card was sent from Lwow to a suburb of Katowice; an area that was annexed to Germany. November 28, 1939



Machine transit cancel is Berlin-Charlottenburg, a suburb of Berlin and dated February 5, 1940. the card was routed through Moscow, though there is no marking reflecting that route.

RAILROAD POSTAL AGENCY

Railroads were an important part of the transportation system, not only in Poland, but Russian and the Republics as well. Obviously, because of the war, the system was disrupted. At the end of 1939, the railroads slowly began to function on a limited basis and service improved as time progressed.

Trains had railroad postal agency cars that carried mail. Train depots along the route had mail boxes on the platforms. Mail from these boxes was picked up by the clerk and stamped on the postal car. These covers are virtually impossible to find.



Stanislawow to the village of Semiginow via Morszyn, dated may 15, 1941



Cancellation reads "Stanislawow Railroad Agency - May 15, 1941. Using altered Polish canceller (month is in Latin rather than Arabic)



Russian transit cancel, dated May 15, 1941



Receiving cancel using altered Polish canceller, dated may 17, 1941

FANTASY OVERPRINTS

A number of stamps issued in 1937 and 1938 were overprinted to make it appear as if they were overprinted by the Soviet occupation forces. These include the entire series commemorating the 20th anniversary of Poland's independence; Scott 320/332//Fischer 310/322; the 1937 Marshall Smigly-Rydz; 1938 President Moscicki and the 1938 Review of Marshall Pilsudski. Very likely there are other overprints; however I have not seen any.

The overprinting took up the space of two stamps and is in fact a private issue printed sometime after the end of World War II.



Scott 312/ -- Fischer 298



Scott 320/332 -- Fischer 310/322



Scott 318 -- Fischer 304



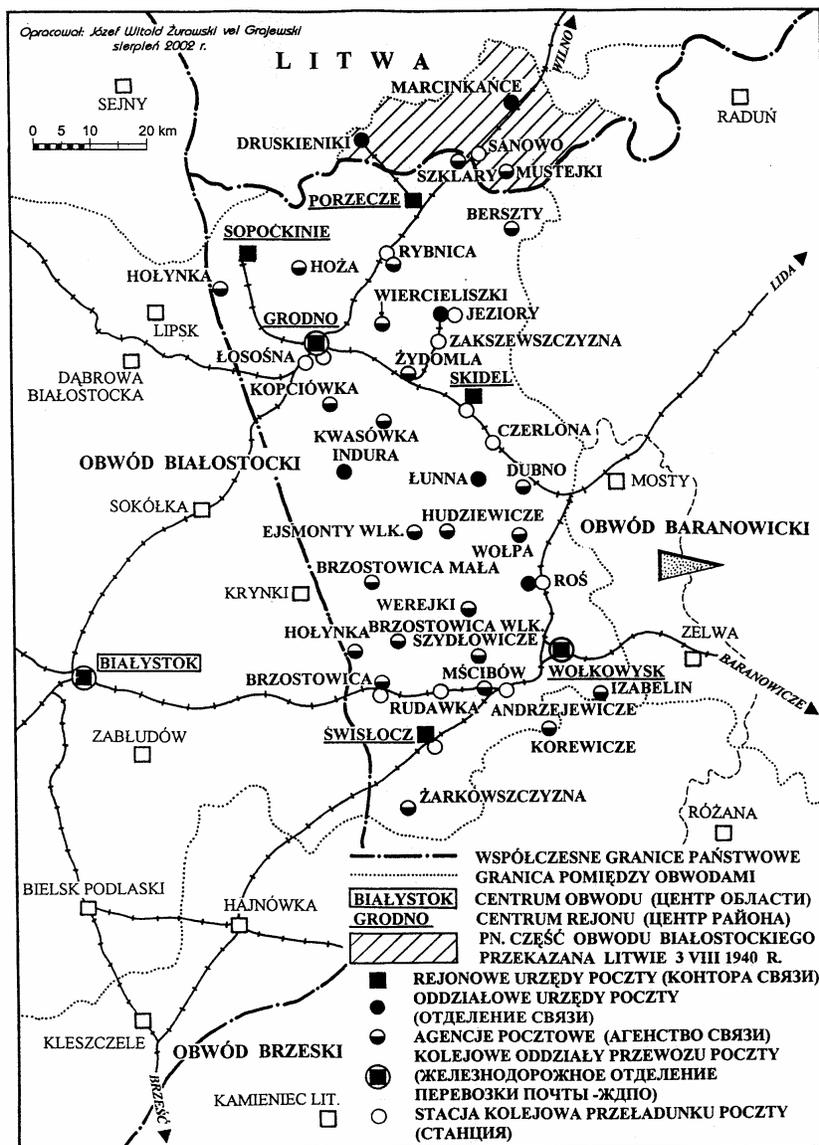
Scott 340 -- Fischer 335

SELECTED SECTIONAL MAPS OF ANNEXED POLISH LANDS

Maps are provided to help identify town names with locations

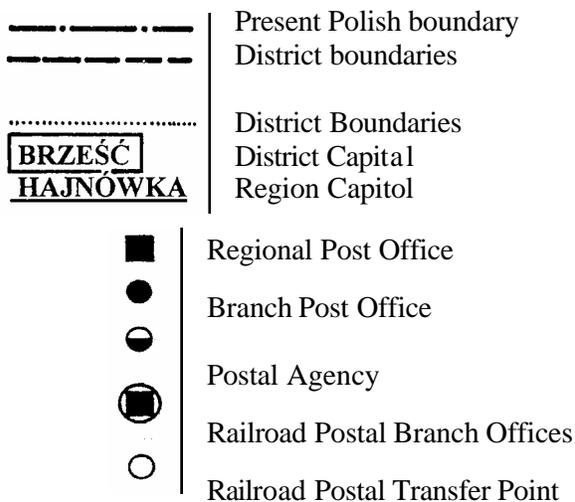
No Maps of the Western Ukraine Area were available at the time of this printing

EASTERN SECTION OF BYEŁOSTOK PROVINCE

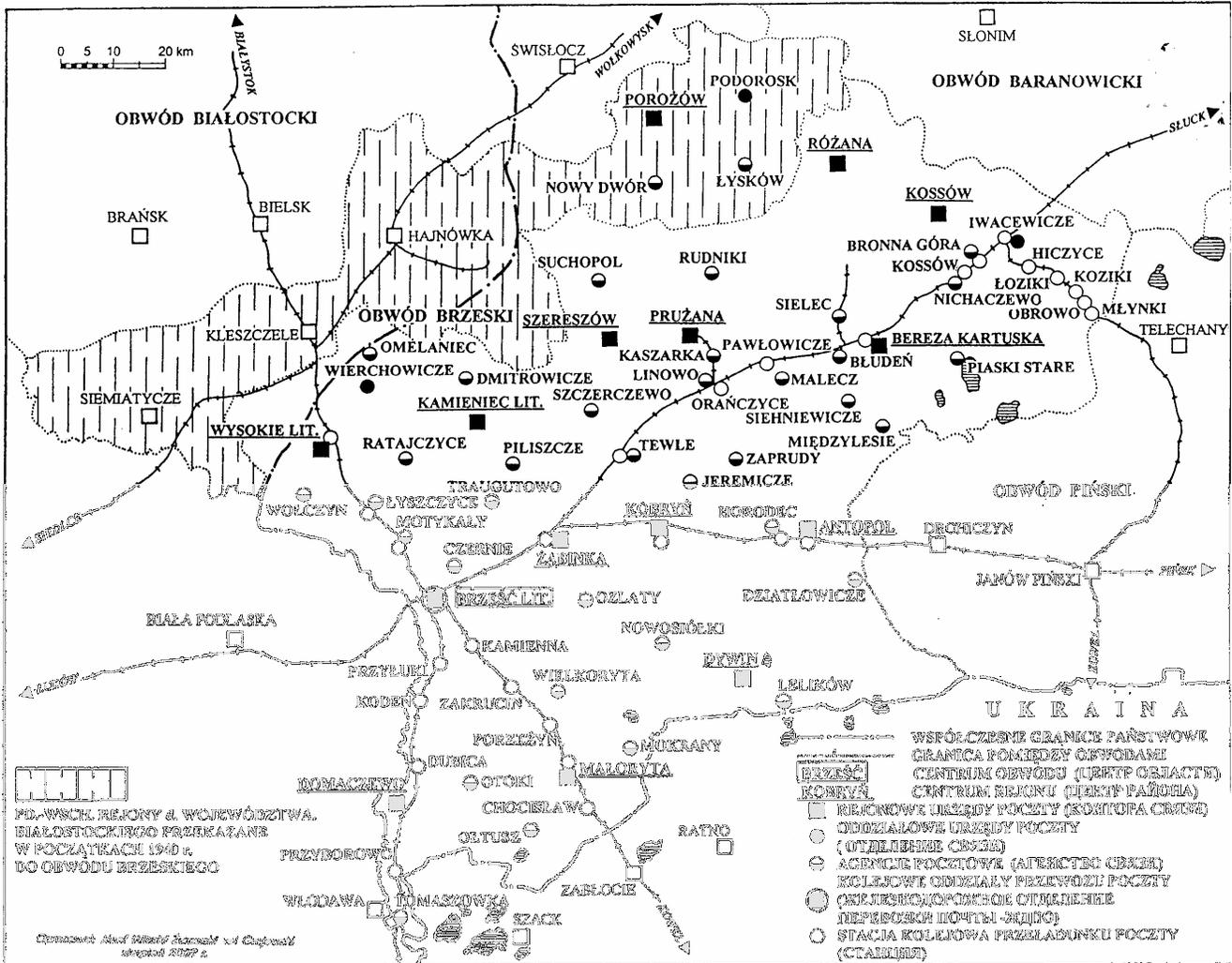


- Present Polish boundary
- District boundaries
- BIAŁYSTOK**
GRODNO District Capital
- Region Capital**
- Area ceded to Lithuania on August 3, 1940
- Regional Post Office
- Branch Post Office
- Postal Agency
- (with circle) Railroad Postal Branch Offices
- (with circle) Railroad Postal Transfer Point

NORTHWEST SECTION OF BRZESC DISTRICT POLESKIE PROVINCE



EASTERN SECTION OF BRZESZ DISTRICT (now part of Byelorussia USSR) POLESKIE PROVINCE



Areas Transferred to Białystok Province in the early months of 1940



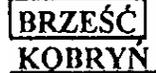
Area transferred to Brzesz province in early 1940



Present Boundaries



Province Boundaries



Province Capital
District Capital



Regional Post Office

Branch Post Office

Postal Agency



Railroad Postal Branch Offices



Railroad Postal Transfer Point

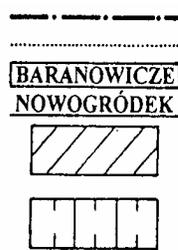
PINSK PROVINCE



- Present Boundaries
- Province Boundaries
- PIŃSK**
LUNINIEC Province Capital
- LUNINIEC** District Capital

- Regional Post Office
- Branch Post Office
- Postal Agency
- Railroad Postal Branch Offices
- Railroad Postal Transfer Po int
- (Empty circle symbol)

BARANOWICZE PROVINCE



Present Borders

Province Borders

BARANOWICZE

Province Capitols

NOWOGRÓDEK

District Capitols

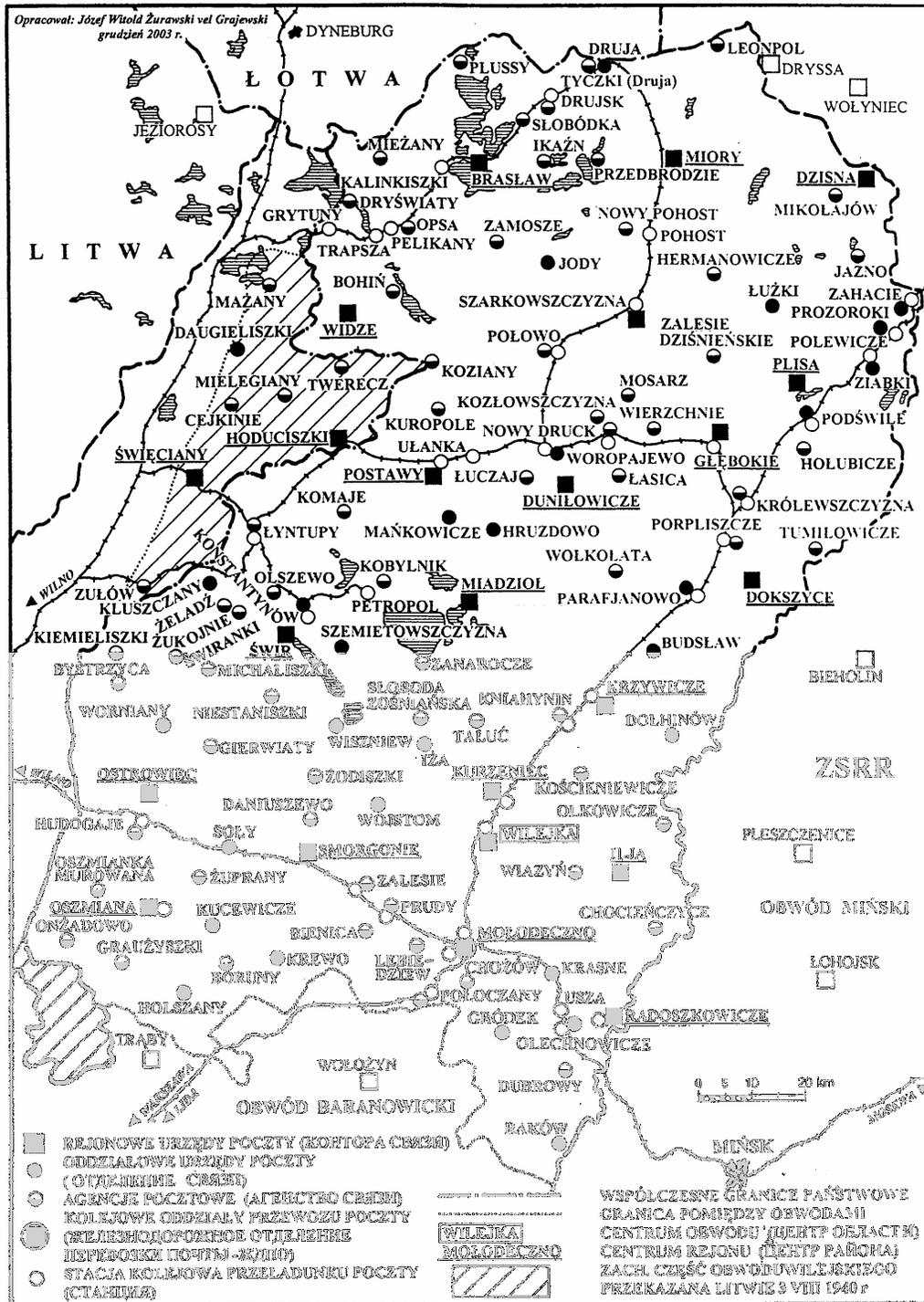


Area ceded to Lithuania on August 3rd, 1940



Eastern area of Białystok Province ceded to Baranowicze and Brest provinces in early 1940

WILNO PROVINCE



- Present Borders
- Province Borders
- WILEJKA** Province Capitoll
- MOŁODECZNO** District Capitoll
- ▨ Area ceded to Lithuania on August 3rd, 1940

REFERENCES

Many articles written in the Polish philatelic press have been omitted from this bibliography, but can be found in Zurawski's book. I have listed all the known English language references.

A copy of his work can be obtained by writing

Jozef Witold Zurawski vel Grajewski
Ul. Tamka 5/29
91-403 Lódz,
Poland

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