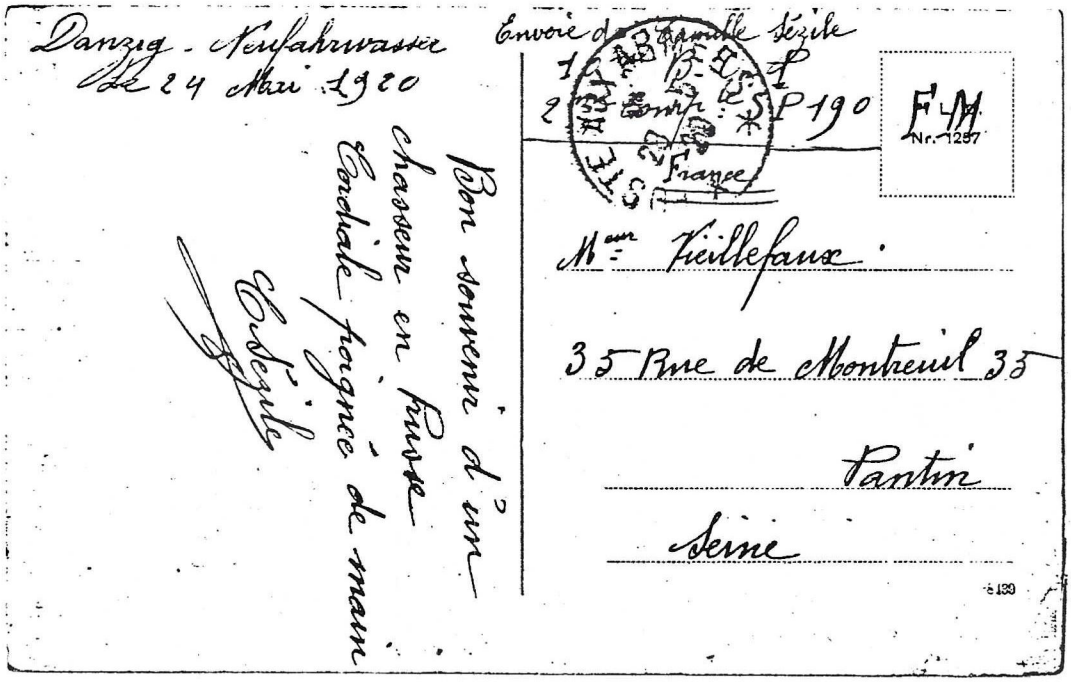
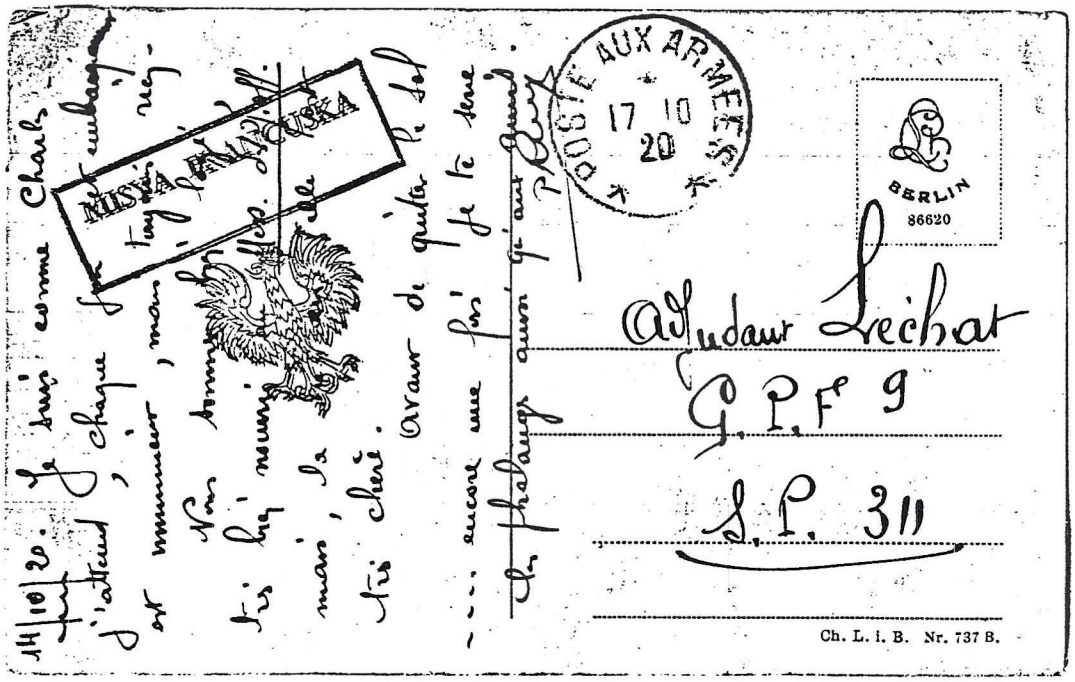
DANZIG
French Forces

Poste aux Armees
28 May 1920
17 October 1920

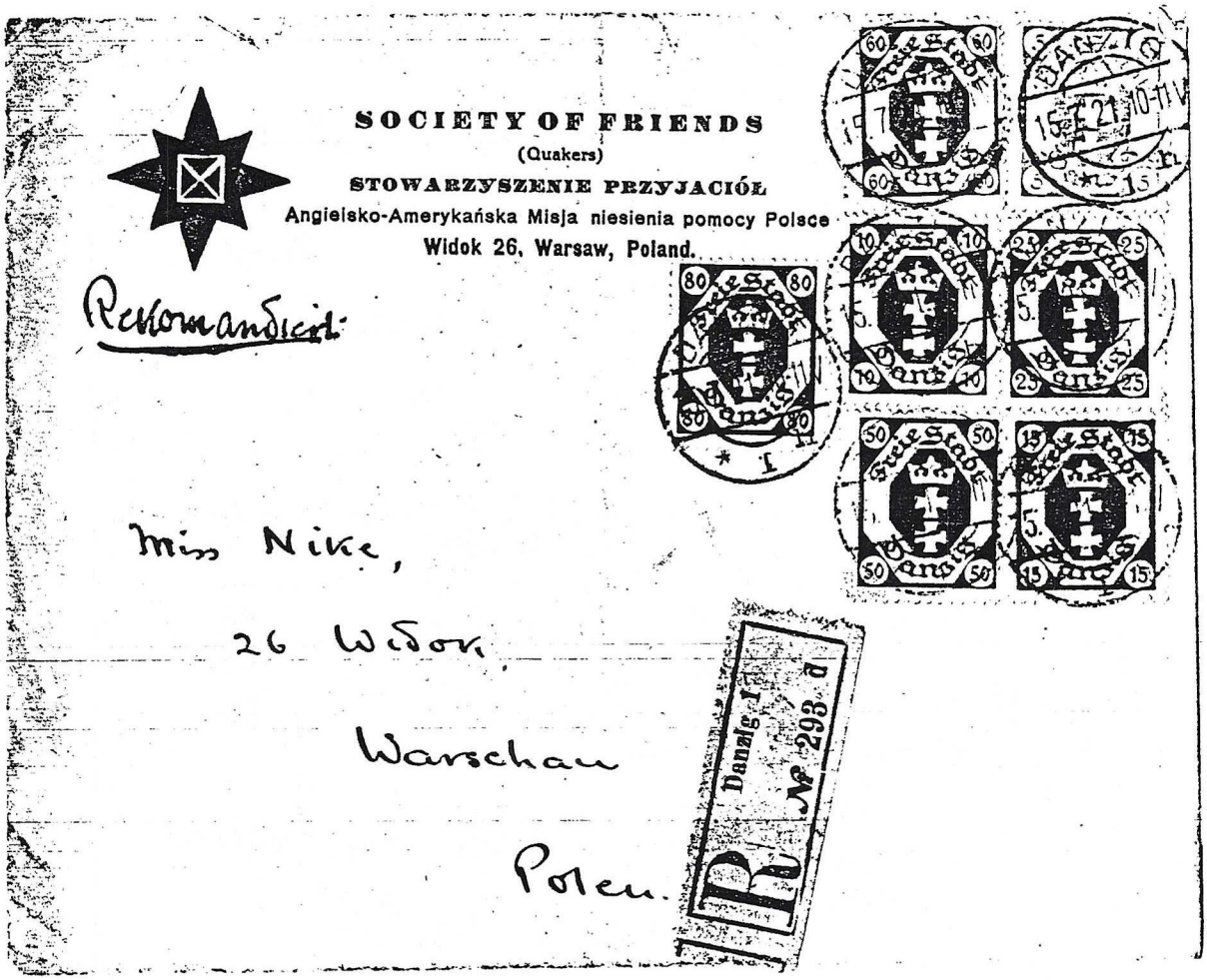




The French also sent a battalion of light infantry to Danzig, which was assigned FPO #190. The troops were present from February 1920 to January 1922. However, examples of mail from this contingent are sought after by Danzig specialists and considered very uncommon. Lower postcard is inter-unit mail sent to a member of the French Military Mission in Warsaw.

DANZIG
American Relief Organizations

Danzig
15 July 1921



American relief organizations, including the Quakers (Society of Friends) used the port facilities of Danzig to move food and other supplies into Poland.

POLAND

Independent Polish Government

Warschau
13 December 1918

Lodz
31 January 1919

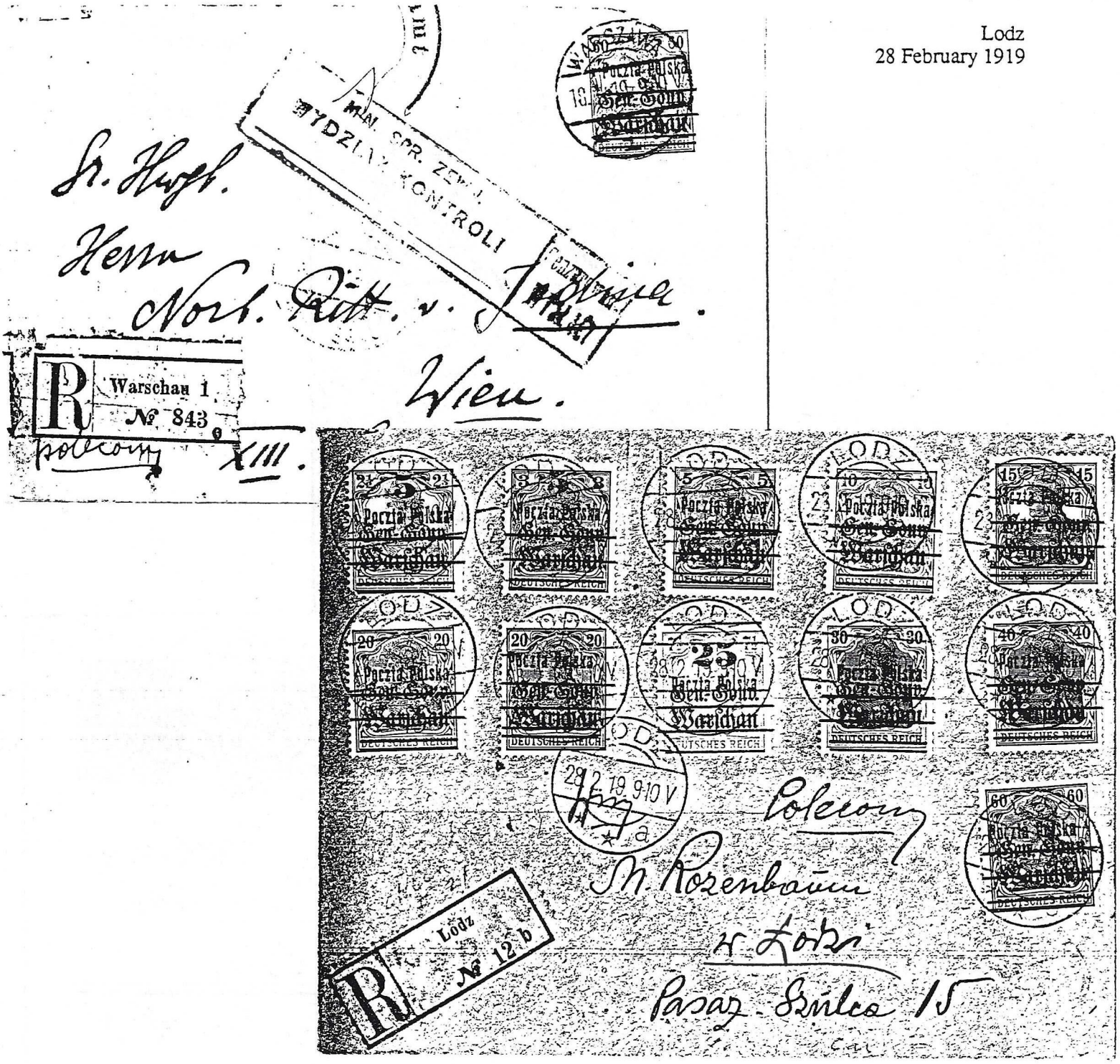


German forces occupied the northern half of Russian Poland from 1915 to 1918. However, their troops began to withdraw in mid-November 1918 under the terms of the Armistice, enabling the Polish authorities to establish a functioning government. The first stamps of the independent administration, consisting of overprints reading "Polish Posts" on four unissued values of the Warsaw local post, were issued on 17 November 1918.

POLAND

Warszawa
18 January 1919

Lodz
28 February 1919



Supplies of the first issue were quickly exhausted. Thus, it was decided to overprint the large remaining stocks of German occupation stamps (General Government Warsaw issue) with "Polish Posts." Eight values were so overprinted, and three received an additional surcharge of higher denominations. These stamps were issued between 5 December 1918 and 15 January 1919.

Covers shown above show continued use of old German registry labels.

POLAND

Grodno
4 October 1919

Ostrow
24 September 1919

Warszawa
11 November 1920



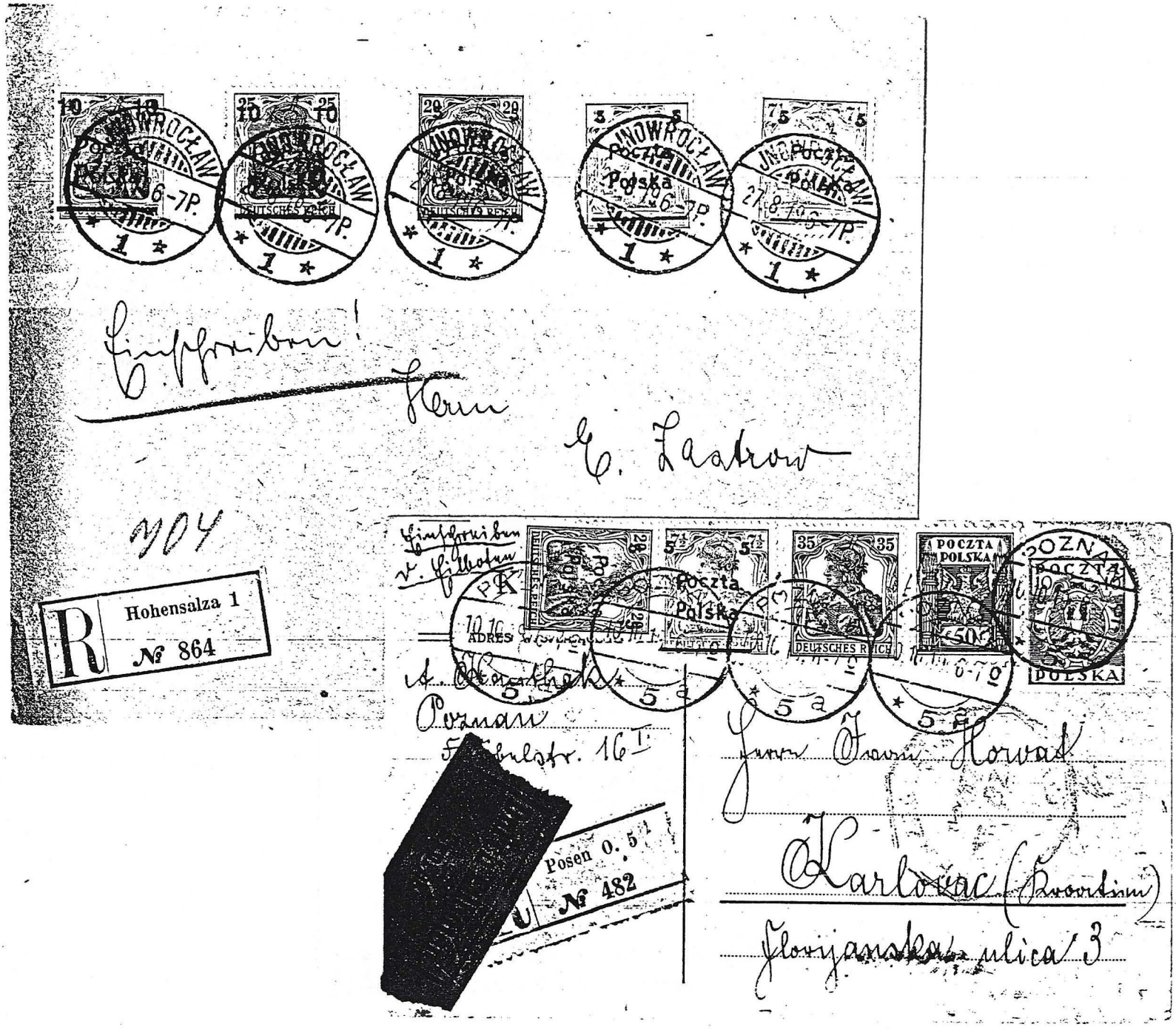
The first Polish definitive series was issued 27 January 1919, consisting of 12 values from 3 fenigow to 5 marka. Mail during this period was subject to censorship due to the war which had broken out with Russia in a dispute over the eastern boundaries of the Polish state.

Examples shown are postal card to France and registered covers to Egypt and to the Polish Military Liquidation Commission in Vienna, which was working to settle the accounts of the former Polish Legionnaires in the Austro-Hungarian army.

POLAND
Posen - West Prussia

Inowroclaw
27 August 1919

Poznan
10 October 1919



Under the terms of the Versailles Treaty, Germany was required to give up the districts of Posen and West Prussia to Poland, with plebiscites to be conducted in areas of East Prussia. Polish postal service began in Posen on 1 August 1919, when five German stamps overprinted "Polish Posts" were introduced.

During the early period, extensive use was made of German stamps (overprinted or not), postmarks and registry labels, even intermixed with Polish counterparts. German postage continued in use officially until mid-1922.

POLAND
Posen - West Prussia

Gniezno
24 October 1919

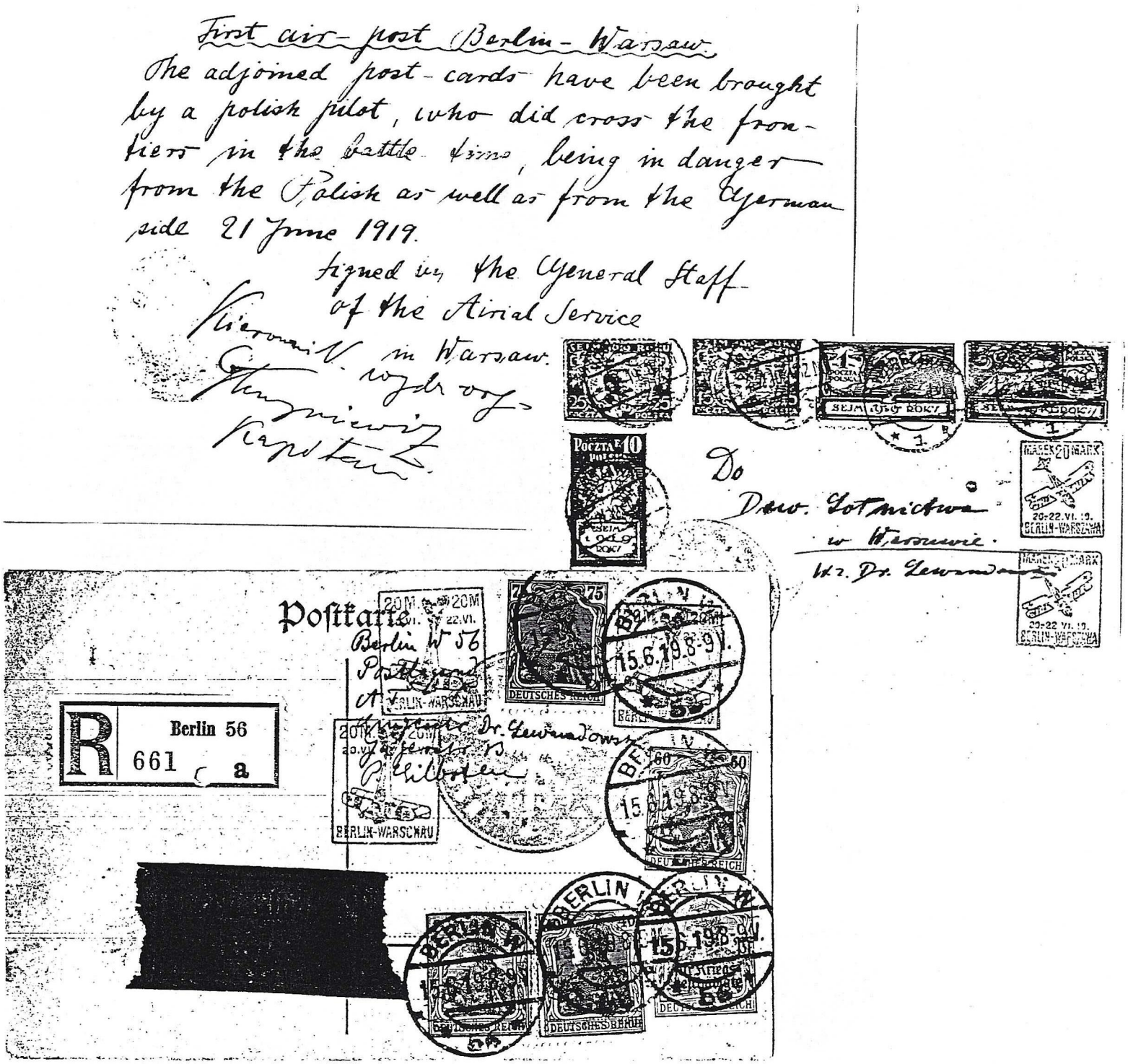
Thorn
15 February 1920



A second set of two provisional overprints on German stamps was issued for the Posen territory on 2 September 1919, with values of 5 and 10 pf. Because of the unsettled political and economic conditions within Poland, including the war against Soviet Russia, mixed franking was permitted. Note that upper cover has Polish postmark and German registry label; lower cover has the opposite.

POLAND
War Reparations

Berlin
15 June 1919



As a part of war reparations from Germany, a 2-seat bomber was assigned to Poland. Pilot Zuske traveled to Berlin to take possession of the plane and on 21 June flew it to Warsaw. This event is regarded as the first airmail flight in the Polish Republic and was commemorated by special cachets on postcards franked with German stamps on one side and Polish on the other. Only 70 examples were prepared, each accompanied by a special certificate and wax seal from the General Staff of the Polish Air Force.

POLAND
Military Mail

Fieldpost
15 April 1919
21 May 1919
12 August 1919



The independence of the Polish Republic was threatened by Russia almost from its birth. The initial phase saw Soviet troops advancing from the Dnieper River to the Bug by February 1919, where they threatened Warsaw. However, a successful Polish counterattack was mounted and, by the end of 1919, the area up to the borders of Belarus and Ukraine had been cleared.

Cards above show various usages, including provisional fieldpost cancel (FPO No.17), posting at a nearby civil post office (Mlawa), and cover with the cds and special registration box marking of FPO No. 38.

POLAND
Military Mail

Fieldpost
6 February 1920
25 July 1920
21 November 1920



The second phase of the fighting involved another serious threat. The Poles had become allied with the Ukrainians, but the Soviet forces broke through their lines near Kiev on 8 June 1920. The ensuing Russian advance also carried to the vicinity of Warsaw, but the Poles under Marshal Pilsudski were able to counterattack and score a decisive victory at Radzymin (10 miles NE of the capital) in August.

Cards above show several types of military cancels, including front office, base office and standard fieldpost that were used during this period. Mail to and from the troops continued to be carried free of charge.

POLAND
Military Mail

Fieldpost
10 January 1921
21 February 1921
27 February 1921

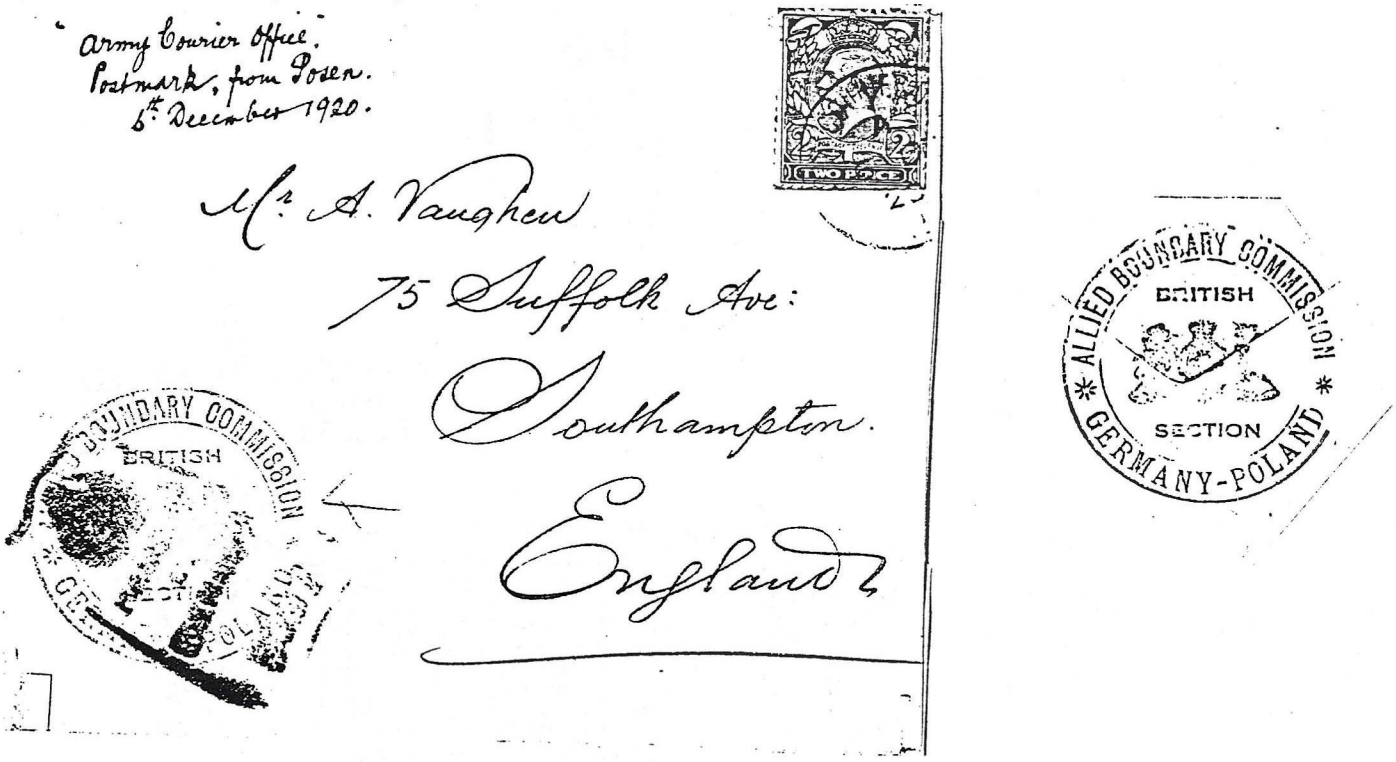


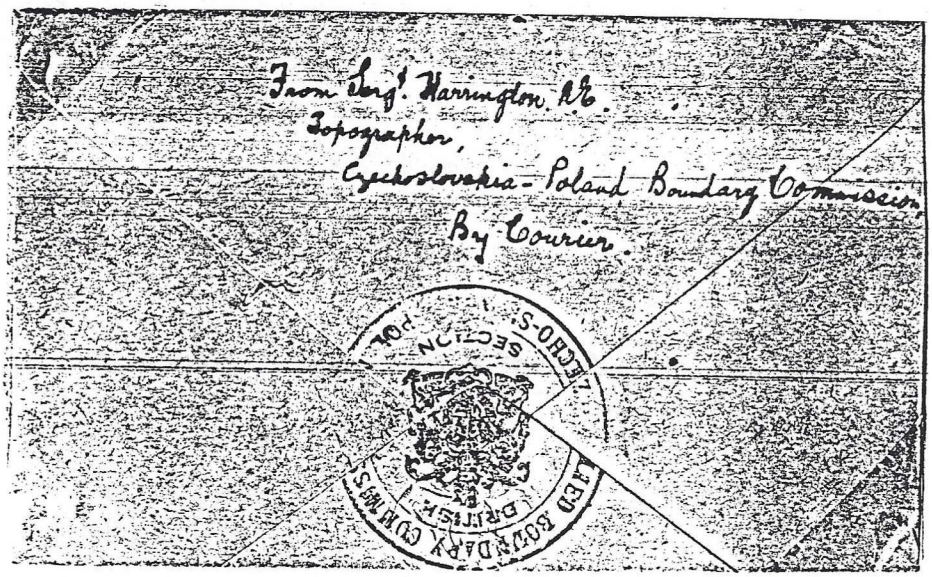
In the third and final phase of the Russo-Polish War, the Polish forces were able to advance rapidly and occupy nearly 52,000 square miles of territory (which today comprises the western areas of Belarus and Ukraine). The Soviet government signed the Treaty of Riga on 18 March 1921, ceding this territory to Poland (until 1939).

POLAND
Allied Boundary Commission

Germany - Poland
6 December 1920

Czecho-Slovakia - Poland
May 1921

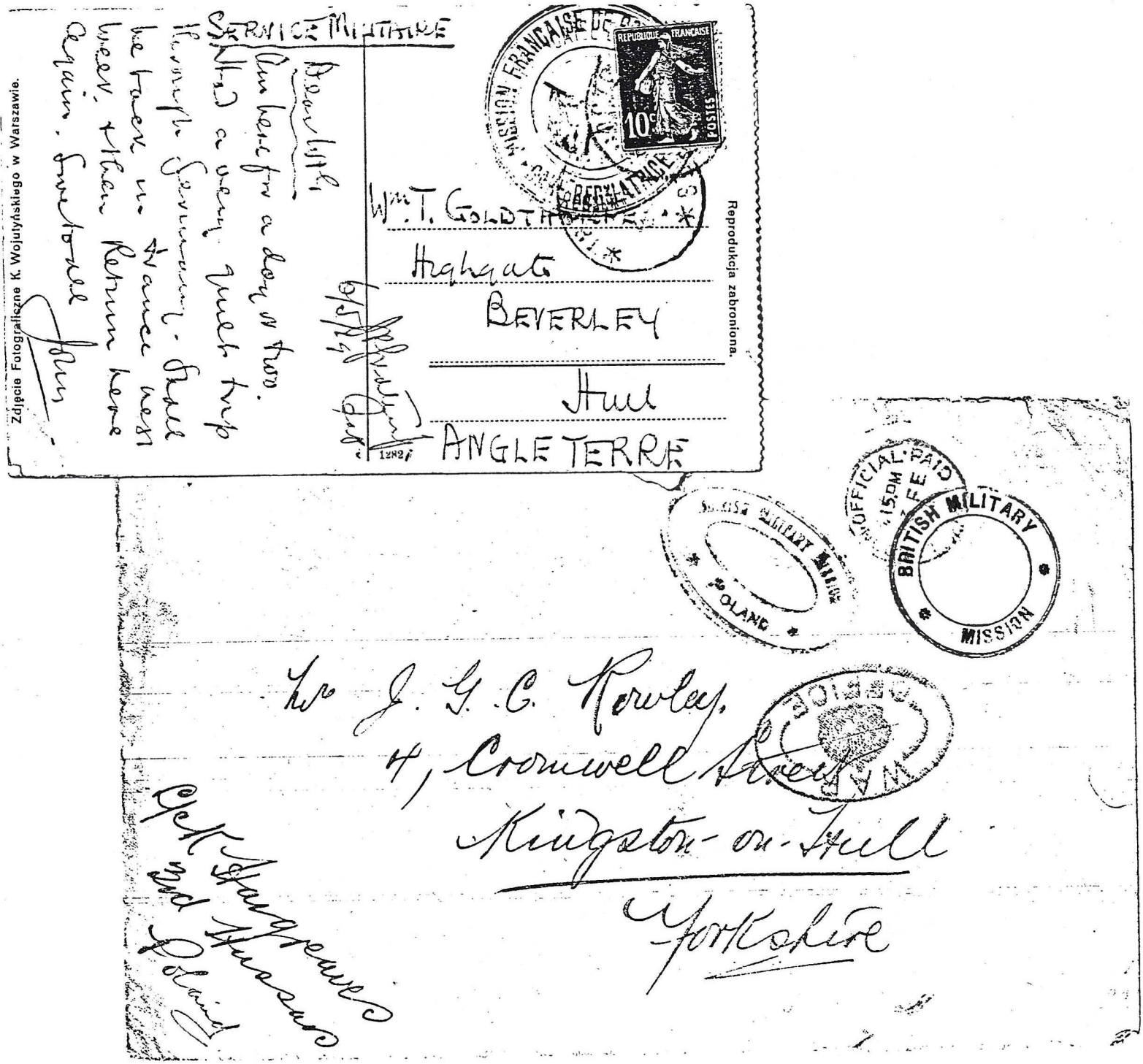




The Allied Boundary Commission was charged with defining the new borders of the Polish state with Germany and Czechoslovakia. Above examples from members of the Commission were sent to England via courier.

POLAND
British Military Mission

British Military Mission/Poland
6 May 1919
February 1920



Zdjęcie Fotograficzne K. Wojutyńskiego w Warszawie.
Reprodukcja zabroniona.

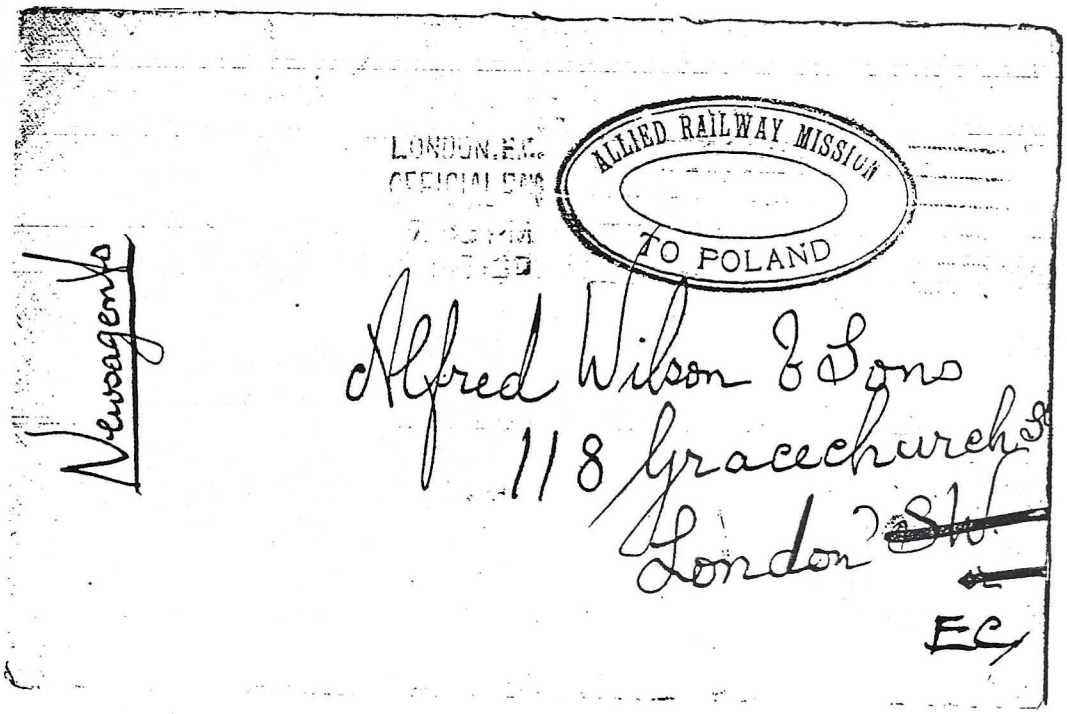
Following the end of the war, a military mission was established to help organize the Polish Army. Most of the training and supply activity was conducted by the French, but the British were also present. Postcard mailed from Warsaw by British soldier through the French FPO. Cover sent by military pouch via the War Office in London,

POLAND
British Military Mission

Mission for Supply & Relief of Poland
August 1919

Allied Railway Mission to Poland
October 1919





The British also participated in the reconstruction of the Polish railway system and the distribution of food supplies to the general populace. Above covers have cachets from organizations conducting such operations.

POLAND
French Military Mission

Tresor et Postes
28 May 1919
22 November 1919

Tresor et Postes 311
20 September 1920



In order to assist the Poles in turning back the Russian invaders, France sent a substantial military mission to supply and train the Polish forces. Normal fieldpost service was provided for the members of the mission, and appropriate unit cachets were applied to designate mail that was entitled to the postal franchise.

POLAND
French Military Mission

Tresor et Postes 311
30 August 1919
2 June 1920
17 June 1920



The bulk of the mail from the French Military Mission was processed by FPO #311 in Warsaw, even that from units located elsewhere in the country. Examples shown originated from Poznan, Kielce and Lublin.