



The Free State of Danzig

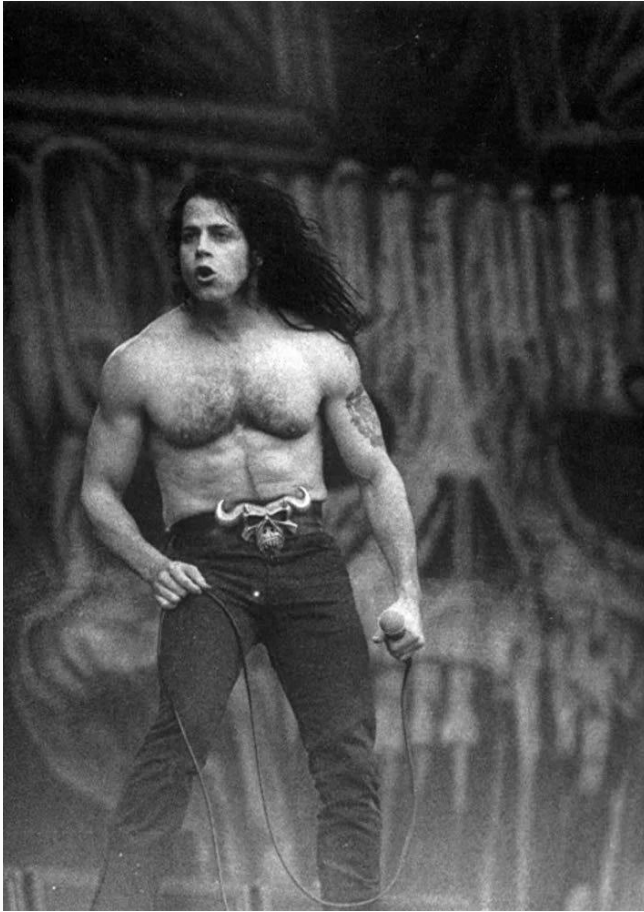
A Postal History | 1920-1939



Topics

- Geography & Statistics
- Pre War History (thru 1914)
- Post War History (1919 - 1939)
- Postal History (1920 - 1939)
- Postal Sets
- War Story

Early Education



* Not the Free City of Danzig

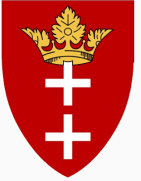
My first experience with the name
“Danzig” as a teenager



* Not the logo of the Free City of Danzig

Geography

Pre-World War 2



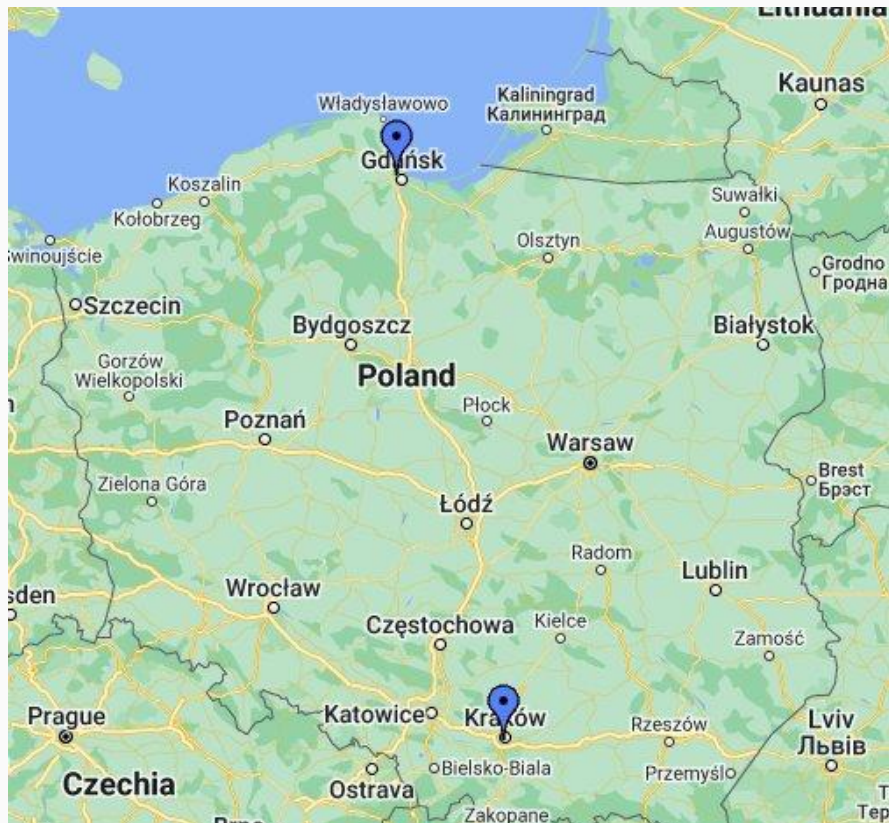
Geography

Post-World War 2



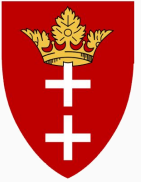
Geography

21st Century



- Port city on the Baltic Sea
- 340 km to Warsaw | 511 km to Berlin | 600 km to Kraków

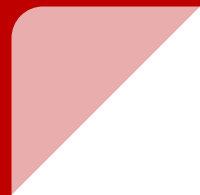
Statistics



- Included the towns of Zoppot, Oliva, Tiegenhof, & Neuteich
- Included 252 villages and 63 hamlets
- Covered a total area of 760 square miles (Luxembourg = 998)
- 22 square miles of freshwater surface
- 181-mile-long border (41 miles of coastline)
- 357,000 pop (1919), 408,000 pop (1929)
- 11 post offices as of 1939



History





Pre War History

- ca. 997 - City of Gdansk established
- 1793 - Danzig becomes part of the **Kingdom of Prussia**
- 1807 - Napoleon declared Danzig a semi-independent client state of the French Empire, known as the **Free City of Danzig**
- 1814 - Re-incorporated into the Kingdom of Prussia after Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of Leipzig
- 1871 - Gdansk joins Prussia et al as part of the German Empire



1920 - Poland requests access to the Baltic Sea (through the League of Nations) per Wilson's 13th "Point of Light". As 90% of the people in Danzig in this period were German, the Allied leaders at the Paris Peace Conference compromised by creating the **Free City of Danzig**

1933 - Nazi Party takes control of the German Senate

1935 - Danziger "Gulden" currency devalued more than 40%

1938 - Germany demands the incorporation of the Free City into the Reich

1939 - Germany invades Poland at the start of WWII

1939 - The Free City is formally annexed by Nazi Germany, creating the administrative division of Reichsgau Danzig-West Prussia

1945 - Soviets occupy the city. Potsdam Conference agrees to return Gdansk to Poland



Postal History

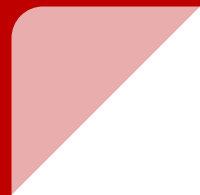
“The Free City of Danzig was a semi-autonomous city-state that existed between 1920 and 1939. It consisted of the port of Danzig (today Gdansk in Poland) and nearly 200 towns in the surrounding areas. The city-state was not independent – it existed under the protection of the League of Nations.”

“Danzig issued stamps from 1920 – 1939. Initially the stamps were overprinted German stamps, but in January 1921, the first Danzig Free State stamps appeared and this continued until the beginning of World War II when the Free City was annexed by the German Reich.”

241 “Front of Book” - 32 Semi-Postal - 35 Air Post - 47 Postage Due - 52 Official



Postal Chronology





1920

- Definitive: Overprinted German Stamps (38 stamps + 6 designs)
- Airmail: Overprinted German Stamp w/plane & wing designs (3 stamps + 1 design)

1921

- Definitive:
 - Hanseatic Trading Ship (10 stamps + 2 designs)
 - Arms of the Free City (14 stamps)
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig (3 stamps)
- Semi-postal: St. George Slaying the Dragon (3 stamps)
- Airmail: Monoplane over Danzig (6 stamps + 2 designs)



1920-21: Overprinted German stamps of 1906-1920



Scott #3



Scott #23



Scott #25



Scott #29



Scott #37



Scott #48

1921: 1st set of stamps - Hanseatic trading ship, coat of arms, creation date (15 Nov 1920) and the inscription "Freie Stadt Danzig" (Free City of Danzig)



Scott #50



Scott #57



1921-22: Coat of Arms



Scott #89, 90, 92, 93



Scott #96 - 98



Scott #94 - 95



1921: Semi-postal - St. George Slaying the Dragon



1921: Airmail



Scott #B1-B3

Scott #C4-C9

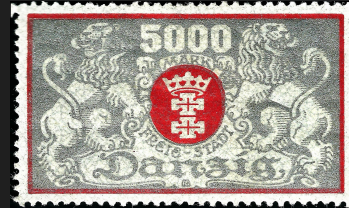
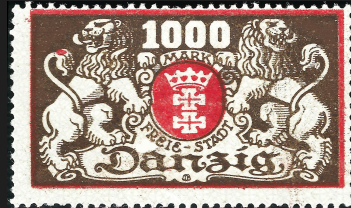


1923

- Definitive:
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig (24 stamps + 2 designs)
 - Overprinted Coat of Arms of Danzig (32 stamps + 2 designs)
 - Arms of the Free City (6 stamps)
- Semi-postal: Elderly Pensioner w/silhouette of Danzig (2 stamps)
- Airmail:
 - Monoplane over Danzig (12 stamps + 3 designs)
 - Overprinted Monoplane over Danzig (2 stamps)



1923: Coat of Arms



Scott #109 - 112



Scott #99 - 103, 106 - 108



Scott #118



1923: Coat of Arms

The End of Hyper-Inflation



Scott #137 - 147

September 1923



Scott #148 - 155

October 1923



Scott #156 - 167

November 1923
New Currency "Gulden"



1924-1937

- Definitive:
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig - 1924-37 (9 stamps)
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig - 1925, 1927-35 (9 stamps)
 - City Monuments of Danzig - 1924 (7 stamps + 5 designs)
 - City Monuments of Danzig - 1925-32 (7 stamps + 2 designs)
- Semi-postal: International Philatelic Exhibition - 1929 (3 stamps)
- Airmail: Monoplane over Danzig (5 stamps + 2 designs)



1924-37: Coat of Arms



Scott #170, 173, 175,
177, 179, 181, 184,
187, 191

1924-32: City Monuments



Scott #193, 195, 197 - 199



1930-1935

- Definitive:
 - Overprinted Coat of Arms of Danzig - 10th Annv - 1930 (10 stamps)
 - Overprinted City Monuments of Danzig - 10th Annv - 1930 (1 stamp)
 - Overprinted City Monuments of Danzig - Intl Air Post Exhibition - 1932 (5 stamps + 5 designs)
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig - 1933 (1 stamp)
 - Overprinted Coat of Arms of Danzig - Rate Increase - 1934-36 (5 stamps)
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig - 1935 (8 stamps)
- Semi-postal:
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig - Winter Relief Charities - 1934 (3 stamps)
 - City Monuments of Danzig - Winter Relief Charities - 1935 (3 stamps + 3 designs)
- Airmail: Monoplane (5 stamps + 2 designs)



1930: Coat of Arms w/
10th Anniversary Overprint



Scott #200 - 210



1932: Overprinted City Monuments

International Air Post (Philatelic) "Exhibition"



Scott #C31 - 35

1934-36: Coat of Arms



Scott #211 - 215



1935: City Monuments

Winter Relief Semi-postal



Scott #B12 - 14

1935: Coat of Arms



Scott #178, 180, 182,
186, 190, 192



1936-1937

- Definitive:
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig - 1937 (3 stamps)
 - Overprinted City Monuments of Danzig - 10th Annv - 1930 (1 stamp)
 - Overprinted City Monuments of Danzig - Intl Air Post Exhibition - 1932 (5 stamps + 5 designs)
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig - 1933 (1 stamp)
 - Overprinted Coat of Arms of Danzig - Rate Increase - 1934-36 (5 stamps)
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig - 1935 (8 stamps)
- Commemorative:
 - 125th Anniversary of the village of Brösen - 1936 (3 stamps + 3 designs)
 - Danzig Air Defense League - 1937 (2 stamps)
 - Souvenir Sheet - Danzig Philatelic Exhibition - 1937 (1 stamp)
- Semi-postal:
 - City Monuments of Danzig - Winter Relief Charities - 1936 (5 stamps + 5 designs)
- Airmail: Souvenir Sheet - Danzig Philatelic Exhibition - 1937 (1 stamp)



Scott #216 - 218

1936: 125th Anniversary
of the village of Brösen



Scott #B15 - B19

1936: Winter Relief charity



1938-1939

- Definitive:
 - Coat of Arms of Danzig - 1938 (8 stamps)
 - City Monument of Danzig - 1938 (1 stamp)
- Commemorative:
 - 150th Birthday of Arthur Schopenhauer - 1938 (3 stamps + 3 designs)
 - Celebration of Stamp Day - Scenes of Danzig History - 1939 (4 stamps + 4 designs)
 - Notable Danzig Citizens - 1939 (3 stamps + 3 designs)
- Semi-postal:
 - Sailing & Steam Ships of Danzig - Winter Relief Charities - 1938 (5 stamps + 5 designs)
- Airmail: Monoplane - 1938 (4 stamps)



1938

150th Birthday of Arthur Schopenhauer



Scott #222 - 224

1938

Sailing & Steam Ships of Danzig - Winter Relief charity



Scott #B28 - B32



1939

Celebration of Stamp Day - Scenes of Danzig History



Scott #234 - 237

1939

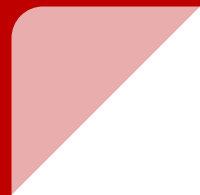
Achievements of Gregor Mendel, Dr. Robert Koch, and
Wilhelm Roentgen



Scott #238 - 240



Forgeries





1920. GERMANIA SURCHARGED 'DANZIG'

Genuine vs. Forgery



Genuine Michel #40



Forged overprint on genuine stamp



1920. BERLIN REICHSPPOSTAMT SURCHARGED 'DANZIG'

Genuine vs. Forgery



Genuine Michel #48



Forged overprint on genuine stamp



1921. FLUGPOST. 5 MARK

Genuine vs. Forgery



Genuine Michel#70y

Serrate rouletted 13 1/2. Honeycomb wmk.

Soecknick certificate (2012)



The inside is too wide

The perforations are not deep
and are uniform on all sides.

Essay with forged perforations

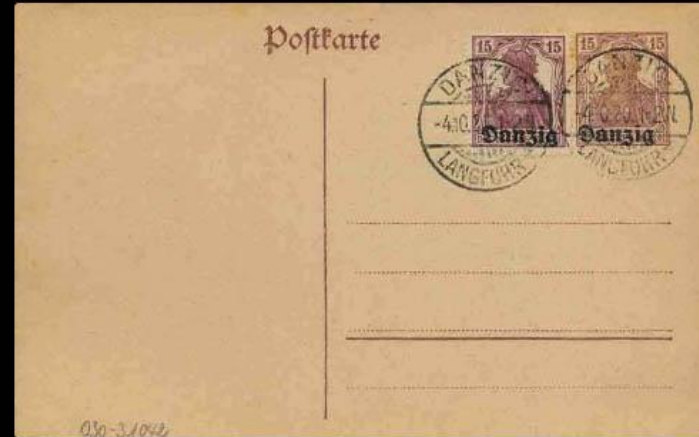


FORGED COVERS / CARDS



Forged Vorläufer cover

Postmark is from 1920. The name "Freie Stadt Danzig" was not used until 1921.



Stamps added to genuine card.

Forged postmark copied from French handbook applied



Stamps added to genuine card.

Forged postmark copied from French handbook applied

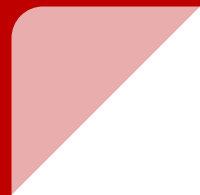


Stamps added to genuine card.

Forged postmark copied from French handbook applied



War Story





War Story

Defence of the Polish Post Office in Danzig

The Defence of the Polish Post Office in Danzig was one of the first acts of World War II as part of the September Campaign. On September 1, 1939, the Invasion of Poland was initiated by Germany when the Schleswig-Holstein battleship opened fire on the Polish-controlled harbor of Danzig, around 04:45–48 hours. Danzig paramilitaries and police, supported by Germany, immediately joined the offensive to take full control of the city, by capturing the Polish post office.

Polish personnel defended the building for some 15 hours against assaults by the SS Heimwehr Danzig (SS Danzig Home Defence), local SA formations and special units of Danzig police. All but four of the defenders, who were able to escape from the building during the surrender, were sentenced to death by a German court martial as illegal combatants on October 5, 1939, and executed.



The employees of the Danzig Post Office fought the Germans for 15 hrs during the Invasion of Poland



References

1. [Wikipedia - Free City of Danzig](#)
2. [Richter Stamps - Danzig](#)
3. [Wikipedia - Defense of the Polish Post Office in Danzig](#)
4. [Stamp Collecting World - Danzig](#)
5. [Dead Countries - Polish Post Offices in Danzig](#)
6. [Stamp Forgeries of the World - Danzig](#)



9699. P. Z. - DANZIG. PARTIE AM KRAHNTOR.

Das Ende