

HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

NEWS LETTER



Founder: E. H. SPIRO

President: L. MOORE, M.R.E., F.R.P.S.L.

Hon. Treasurer:
Mr. L. E. STILES
135 St. John's Road,
Walthamstow,
London E.17 4JH
Tel. 01 527 6670

Hon. Secretary & Editor:
Mrs E. J. RAWNSLEY,
3 Cranford Gardens,
Victoria Dr.,
Bognor Regis, Sussex
PO21 2EL

Hon. Exchange Pkt. Sec:
Mr. C. RAUCH,
353 Baddow Road,
Chelmsford, Essex.
CM2 7QP
Tel. 021 5354149

No. 1

JANUARY 1980

34TH YEAR

LET'S LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

By F. R. LESSER

1979 has come to an end and what do we see in retrospect and in the immediate future? Inflation has become a world-wide disease, a global economic pattern. In an age of enormously self-proliferating technology, our basic energy sources are at stake or subject to a re-ordering in priorities. With more people than ever before sharing in modern productivity, adherence to political 'isms' and pan-religious revivals may cause painful confrontation but will not prevent continued progress on a universal scale. Therefore, inflation as an economic expediency to 'lubricate' the distribution process may continue with us for quite some time. So let's put up with it and continue with the hobby of collecting stamps as before. We may feel horrified at the prices for select material, but we may also have forgotten the 1½d. bus ride not so very long ago.

Of course, as more people become addicted to the hobby, the greater and more furious the demand for classical material. Had our forefathers known what philately would be today, the hobby might never have started over 100 years ago, or the sequestered realm of a few acquisitional minds become a world-wide industry. Yet this does not prevent still greater efforts and monetary sacrifices to excel and reach for higher peaks in terms of philatelic accomplishments. Never before has there been such communicative access to worthwhile material and philatelic research. A look at the truly opulent auction catalogues - CORINPHILA, RAFF or MUELLER - confirm the new trend. Stamp catalogues are now appearing in coloured print. The dull black and white stamp catalogues of the past would not enthuse anybody any more. How wealthy has the hobby become! And how wealthy are we, the philatelists! Once upon a time, stamp magazines and philatelic publications were full of ads offering material, i.e. material worth collecting seriously. And today? WANTED is the message!

No wonder, therefore, that Switzerland, with its long prevailing stamp validity limitation, long from a modern postage issuance policy point of view, has so much to offer to those who associate the collecting of postage stamps with a self-appointed responsibility to preserve and safeguard the evidence of a past evolution in human communications.

The new breed of collector, the investor, may be viewed as a threat to philately as a whole, but how many among them were not philatelists to start with, or at least knowledgeable as to the value of a postage stamp as a collector's item? On the other hand, the acquisition of selected philatelic material purely for inflation-proof 'shelter' reasons removes much material from the collecting public. Yet, any truly involved philatelist does not mind competing and may, in fact, make out better in the long run just as real love overcomes many immediate problems.

So don't let us lose heart in the face of the continuing climb in prices. A £5 stamp in the late 30's meant as much sacrifice as a £100 'investment' today. Or have we forgotten? 1980 will present us with another escalation in prices, that's for sure, so why not take another close look at what you have already carefully mounted and identified and do a bit of gloating After all, that's what philately is all about

' SWISS CLASSICS '

(Inland orders subject to 15% VAT)



CANTONALS

<u>1843 ZURICH 4, HORIZONTAL:</u> (Type IV) brilliantly fresh beautiful copy with wide margins. Zumstein & Rellstab certificates. (Cat. £8500)	£ 5000.00
<u>1843 ZURICH 6, HORIZONTAL:</u> (Type V), unused, brilliantly fresh, wide margins. Slight faults. ... (Cat. £700)	£ 240.00
<u>1843 ZURICH 6, HORIZONTAL:</u> (Type IV), LUXURY used copy with Rellstab certificate ... (Cat. £700)	£ 900.00
<u>1845 GENEVA SMALL EAGLE:</u> Attractive lightly cancelled copy on part cover front ... (Cat. £680+)	£ 350.00
<u>1847 GENEVA EAGLE, DARK GREEN:</u> Fine used copy on small piece (Cat. £1175)	£ 390.00
<u>1847 GENEVA EAGLE, DARK GREEN:</u> Outstanding brilliantly fresh wide-margined copy, faintest trace of filing crease. Rellstab certificate ... (Cat. £1175)	£ 1100.00
<u>1848 GENEVA EAGLE:</u> Unused envelope cut-out, wide margins, slight faults. ... (Cat. £195)	£ 100.00
<u>1845 BASEL DOVE:</u> Brilliantly fresh, full margined copy, very slight thinnings. Hunziker certificate. ... (Cat. £4000)	£ 2600.00
<u>1845 BASEL DOVE:</u> Copy of outstanding beauty and colour, lightly cancelled, tiny thinning. Magnificent example of this world rarity. (Cat. £4000)	£ 3000.00
<u>1845 BASEL DOVE:</u> Full margins, crisp embossing. (Cat. £1150)	£ 950.00
<u>1845 BASEL DOVE, VENTURINI ESSAY:</u> LUXURY margins. (Cat. 1200)	£ 1200.00

1850 O R T S P O S T

<u>FRAMED CROSS:</u> (Type 2) exceptionally beautiful full margined copy, tiny trace of thinning, cancelled with very rare single 'P' of the third postal district. Hunziker certificate. (Cat. £850 approx)	£ 525.00
<u>FRAMED CROSS:</u> (Type 19) scarce Aarau grille postmark. Rellstab certificate ... (Cat. £650+)	£ 325.00
<u>FRAMED CROSS:</u> Deep jet black shade, full margins, tiny thinning. (Cat. £650)	£ 290.00
<u>FRAMED CROSS:</u> Full margins, tiny thinning, rare attractive manuscript cancellation ... (Cat. £650+)	£ 200.00
<u>FRAMED CROSS:</u> (Type 22) on piece superbly used together with 1851 <u>Rayon I</u> (this stamp of rare Stone A3). This franking combination is catalogued at SFr.9000.- on full cover. Rellstab certificate	£ 575.00
<u>UNFRAMED CROSS:</u> Type 23) full margins, slight faults with extremely rare double print variety, and extremely pronounced shift. In spite of faults it is probably not possible to find a better example of this rarity. Moser R&S certificate. (Cat. £2400 approx)	£ 825.00

1850 P O S T E L O C A L E

<u>FRAMED CROSS:</u> The extremely rare first fine print, lightly cancelled full margined copy. Moser R&S certificate. (Cat. SFr.5000.-)	£ 1350.00
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<u>FRAMED CROSS:</u> (Type 18) full margined jet black shade, superbly cancelled. In spite of very faint vertical crease an outstanding example of this beautiful stamp. Rellstab Cert. (Cat. 625)	£ 625.00

Catalogue quotations are taken from THE AMATEUR COLLECTOR LTD Switzerland Catalogue 1980, now on sale at £ 4.85 post free (£13.75 Sea Mail, \$16.65 Air Mail).

The above material can be forwarded on approval, against suitable references, or subject unsold will be on show on STAND 30 at

H.L.KATCHER

February 5th - 9th ... ROYAL HORTICULTURAL NEW HALL

We hope to welcome our many friends from 'Helvetia', both old and new, where at our large Stand they can see our unrivalled wide range of Swiss material.

THE POSTAL HISTORY OF GENEVA

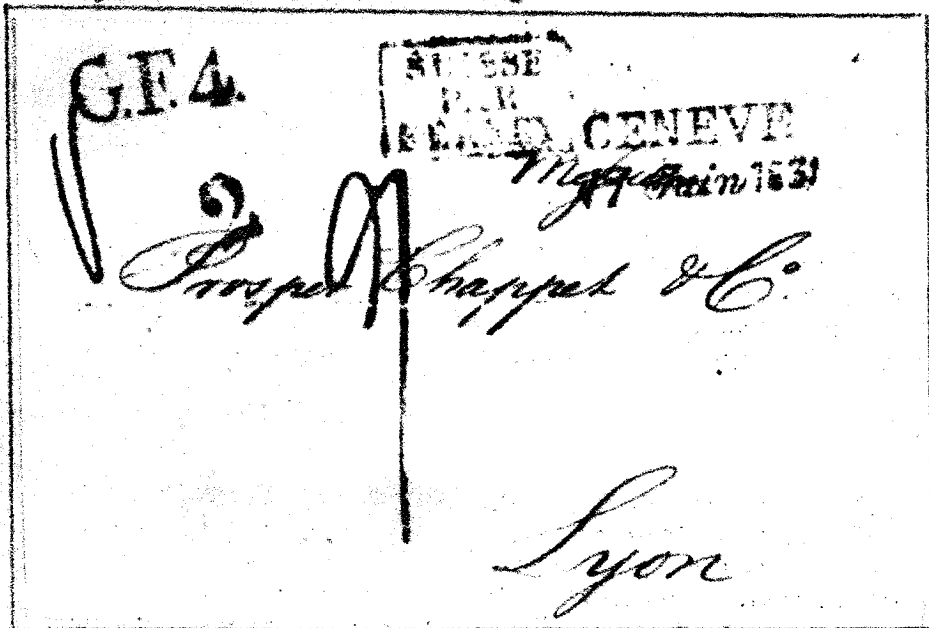
By C. J. LaBlonde

Part V

GENEVA AFTER 1830

In 1830 the Canton decided to have a go at running its own postal affairs and a five-man commission was appointed to carry out this task commencing on January 1, 1831. We will now examine postal activities during the period 1830 to 1860, omitting events surrounding issuance and use of the first stamps in 1843, which will be covered separately.

The changeover in management had little effect on the postal markings used on letters originating in Geneva. A wide variety of two-line departure postmarks continued in use until 1840. Winkler lists 17 different cancels of this type, the differences being quite minor and usually involving the day and year (either or both straight or slanted). One important change occurred in the mark required by the postal treaty with France. The former 'F.F.4' which indicated 'Fischer par Ferney, 4 Kreuzer' was changed to 'G.F.4' which meant 'Geneva via Ferney, 4 Kreuzer'. The change was effective from January 1, 1831, and continued

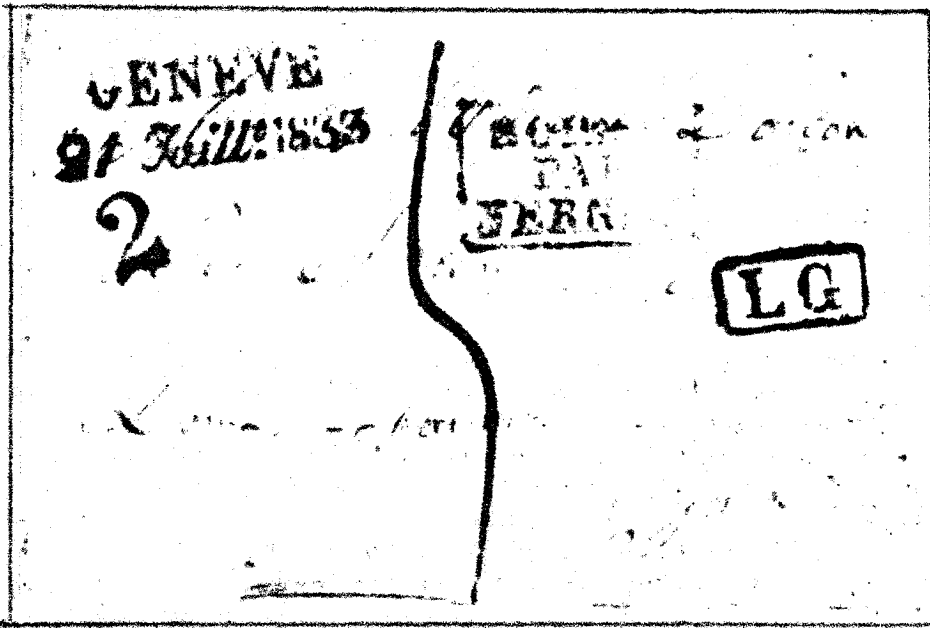


for at least six months (Fig. 13). Due to the relative scarcity of this mark, its exact period of use has not been determined. Note that the French exchange office at Ferney applied the usual mark 'Suisse par Ferney' and the numeral '2', indicating the amount due to the Swiss for carrying the letter to the border. All of these marks were in black.

Fig. 13. Letter to Lyon June 17, 1831. Two-line Geneva postmark. (W.No.2628). Arrived June 18, 1831. 9 decimes postage. French transit mark, and Treaty mark 'G.F.4'.

As noted previously in 1830 the mail in Geneva was delivered by four ladies. A fifth letter carrier was added in 1834. Until 1835 letters could be mailed only at the main post office which was located

at 63/64 Rue du Rhône. Two mailboxes were installed during 1835, one in the Rive district and the other in the Place St. Gervais. These boxes were emptied three times each day. To provide mail service outside the city, a rural postal service was organized in 1832.



Initially employing 10 letter carriers, the purposes of the 'Landpost' were to deliver letters, collect postage due on these letters, and empty rural mailboxes. By 1835 the Landpost was handling more than 80,000 letters each year.

Fig. 14. Letter to Lons-le-Saunier (Jura), July 21, 1835. Geneva two-line postmark (W.No.2629) 5 decimes postage; usual Ferney transit mark and boxed treaty mark 'L.G'.

Sometime around the middle of 1831 the treaty marking 'G.F.4' was replaced by the letters 'L.G' in a rectangular box. An example is shown in Fig. 14. Winkler lists a total of three such marks, the differences being in size and colour. Until 1840 it was applied in black, after that in

red. This mark may be interpreted as 'Lettre Genevoise' or a letter from Geneva. This, of course, showed the origin of the letter as required by the treaty with France.

During the decade 1830 to 1840 the number of prepaid letters began to show a slight increase. To indicate a prepaid letter several methods were used, sometimes alone and sometimes all together.

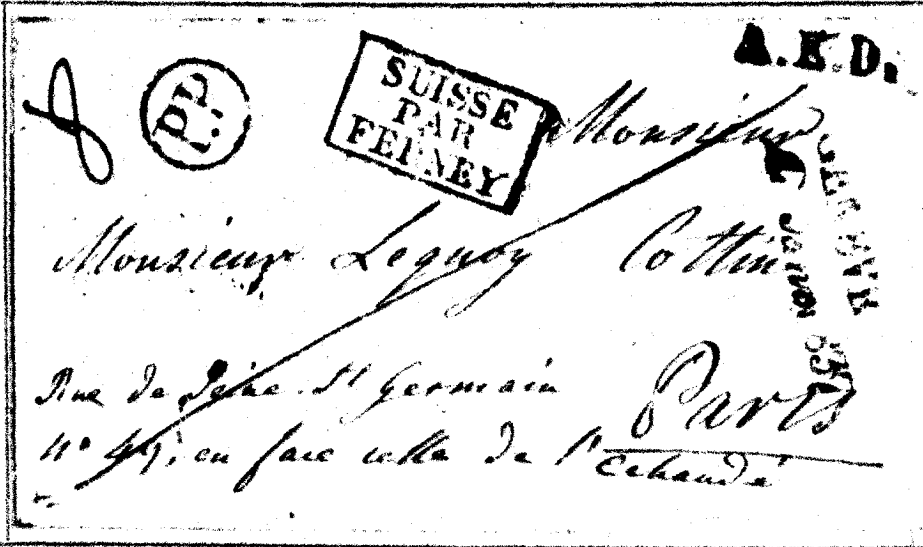


Fig. 15. Letter to Paris, January 4, (1)837. Geneva two-line postmark (W.No.2634). Arrived Jan. 7, 1837. Usual Ferney transit mark. 'P.P' in circle and diagonal line both indicate prepayment.

Fig. 15 shown an interesting example. The letter is prepaid as indicated by the 'P.P' in a circle and by the diagonal line across the face of the letter. The 'P.P' was applied in black until 1840 and in red after that. If one believes the departure date on this letter it is very old as the year reads 837. Of course it is really 1837 with the '1' missing. The French transit mark 'Suisse par Ferney' on this letter is in red as is the French mark 'A.E.D.' which means 'Affranchi Etranger jusqu'à Destination' or foreign postage prepaid all the way to the

delivery point.

In 1838 the five-man postal commission was abolished and operation of the postal system was given to the Ministry of Finance. During this year the Geneva post office handled 816,020 pieces of mail (not counting local letters) and the Landpost handled another 107,980 pieces. Sixteen letter carriers were employed by the Landpost in 1839. Geneva suggested to the French that a direct mail route to Paris be established but this did not come to pass due to objections raised by some French districts. Postage for a local letter was reduced from 10 centimes to 5 centimes and a sixth mailman was employed in 1840.

The post office was moved in 1843 to the Place Bel-Air where it remained until 1865; a Credit Lyonnais Bank now stands on this spot. Guillaume Pasteur, Postmaster of Geneva, made treaties with 11 other cantons and the Kingdom of Sardinia to simplify postage rates and to speed delivery of mail. The government decreed that five new mailboxes located at Hotel-de-Ville, Bourg-de-Four, Longmalle, Molard and Coutance should be emptied six times each day; two new employees were engaged to do this. The 1846 revolution and the subsequent provisional government had little effect on postal matters. Finally in 1849 the entire postal system was taken over by the Federal Government and Geneva became part of District I.

(To be continued)

SOCIETY MEETINGS

NORTHERN GROUP: Sat. 2nd Feb. BOOKLETS & COINS - Disc. Leader: Dr. G.G. Ritchie

LONDON GROUP: Wed. 13th Feb. TPOs - Mr. I. Tillen and Other Members

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: The Northern Group are giving a display to the Blackburn Philatelic Society on SATURDAY, March 1st, 1980, at 2 pm. An invitation is extended to all Helvetia members in the north-west who are unable to attend Group meetings in Leeds to take part on this occasion. The meeting will be held at the FENISCOWLES METHODIST CHURCH HALL which is on the A674 between Blackburn and Exit 8 on the M61.

For further information please either write to Mr. R.A. Hoyle (address on p. 7) or contact Helvetia member, Mr. D. Cairns, Tel. Blackburn 21690.

Will N. Group members also note a change in the programme. The AGM, scheduled for April 12th has been brought forward to MARCH 25th, to avoid clashing with the YPA Convention.

POSTAGE DUES YESTERDAY AND TODAY

By EDGAR BOMMELI, Grand Lancy - Translation by H. STEINER

THE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION

Part XI

For a short time 'T' cancellations were used on the postage stamps of the Federal Administration, that is on the stamps with the diagonal 'Officiel' overprint of the 'Historical' and the 'Landscape & Industry' series. These so-called administrative stamps, valid from January 1st, 1935 to January 1st, 1960, served the Administration for the franking of registered and foreign mail. Table 7 shows the issues which can be found with 'T' cancellations:

TABLE 7 - 'T' CANCELLATIONS ON ADMINISTRATIVE STAMPS

<u>Z.No.</u>	<u>Issue Date</u>	<u>Issue</u>	<u>Values</u>	<u>Validity</u>
57 - 63	1942	Historical	6	On sale to 1.7.59 Valid to 1.1.60
65 - 73	1.2.50	Industry & Landscape	11	1.1.60

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Some International Organisations with offices in Switzerland, mainly in Geneva, still have their own postage stamps and use them for their mail; some others have stamps only for philatelic purposes (UIT/ITU). This does not mean that they have 'T' cancellers. Postage due mail is treated in different ways and a short resumé of their methods is given here.

BIE International Bureau of Education, Geneva

Own stamps from 15.8.44.

Own post office: 1211 Genève 14 Palais Wilson

They have their own circular 'T' cancel, Type II, 'T' in circle.

Normal Swiss postage stamps are used to collect postage due on mail to the BIE and only on request will they use BIE stamps for this purpose. They can be cancelled either with a date stamp or a 'T'. Insufficiently stamped letters are normally delivered without dues being paid. Therefore, collect only on cover if you are sure they have not been 'made'.

BIT International Labour Office, Geneva

Own stamps from 27.3.1923.

Own post office: 1211 Genève 22 BIT

Used Swiss postage stamps until the introduction of 'T' cancels 'circular type - 'T' in circle). Was removed to new building in 1974/5.

OMM World Meteorological Organisation

Own stamps from 29.10.1954.

Used the nearest post office: PTT 1200 Genève Montbrillant, now - from 27.1.73 - called 1200 Genève 20 Centre International des Conférences.

Postage due mail is noted on collection sheets by the PTT and the postal amount collected every month. Neither postage stamps nor 'T' cancels are used for postage due purposes.

OMS World Health Organisation

Own stamps from 24.6.1948.

Own post office: 1211 Genève 27 Organisation Mondiale de la Santé.

They use a 'T' in circle cancel on both Swiss stamps and their own issues indiscriminately.

SDN League of Nations

Own stamps from 3.10.1922.

Own post office: Genève 1 Société des Nations (after 11.7.27 became Genève 10).

Used Swiss postage due stamps.

ONU European Office of the United Nations Organisation

Own stamps from 1.2.1950 - 3.10.1965 (overprints on Swiss service stamps);
from 4.10.1965 onwards stamps of the United Nations in Swiss
currency.

They own a 'T' in circle cancel made of rubber which is still in use today.
At first Swiss postage stamps were often used as dues or the mail was delivered
without extra charge. Since 1965 only UN stamps have been used for postage due
purposes.

UIT International Telecommunications Union

Own stamps since 22.9.1958.

Own post office: Genève 14 Palais Wilson (until 1967). Then moved to the
new building and used PTT post office Genève 20 Montbrillant
and, from 27.3.73, 1200 Genève 20 Centre International
des Conférences.

As long as the UIT was in the Palais Wilson the 'T' in circle (or a date
stamp) was used on Swiss stamps for postage dues; today all postage due mail is
noted on a collection sheet by the PTT and collected monthly. Neither postage
stamps nor 'T' cancels are used for postage due purposes. UIT stamps have been
seen with 'T' cancellations, but not on cover!

UPU Universal Postal Union

Own stamps since 16.9.1957.

Post Office: PTT 3000 Bern 15 UPU.

Their own headquarters with post office is being built at the time of writing.
Mail addressed to the UPU which is classed as postage due is delivered by the PTT
without further charge; therefore, it is not cancelled with a 'T' nor does it have
stamps added.

In short:

1. Stamps of the following five Organisations can be found with 'T' cancels:
BIE, BIT, OMS, ONU and UIT, but see the remarks above.
2. Frequently Swiss postage stamps are used for dues instead of the stamps of the
various Organisations.
3. Only the PTT circular 'T' canceller, Type II, is used.
4. Today 'T' cancels are used only on special request; if the post office
concerned suspects philatelic use they will refuse it. The UN post office
in particular will not use it philatelically.
5. Letter post of these Organisations is sometimes delivered without charging dues
or, more often, the amount is noted and collected at the end of the month.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF 'T' CANCELS?

A completely false sense of values prevails in many places, even among
dealers and catalogue publishers, regarding the values of 'T' cancelled stamps. We
cannot deal with every cancel and 'T' cancel which occurs on postage or postage due
stamps in this article. However, a correct analysis can throw a little light on
the price situation. If we can bring some balance to this question then the
article will have served its purpose.

We can draw some interesting conclusions when we compare the three most
important series of postage stamps which have appeared since the introduction of
'T' cancellations:

Industry & Landscapes 1945 (Z.Nos. 298-308)

Postal History Motifs & Architectural Monuments 1960 (on phosphor
paper 1963-7). (Z.Nos. 355-372, 355L-371L)

Architectural Monuments 1964-8 (Z.Nos. 412-427)

A total of 30,000 stamps have now been examined (to end of 1978),
divided between single stamps, blocks, cut-outs and entires. Special and rare
cancels were ignored in this exercise, as were those which had obviously been
'cancelled-to-order'.

In our next issue we will discuss these issues in detail.

(To be continued)