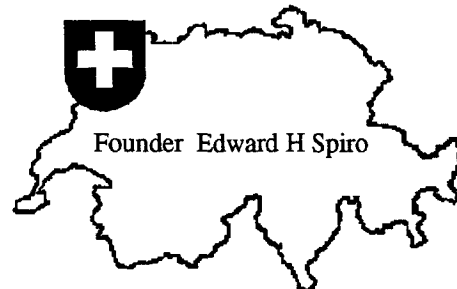


HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Hon. President: Mrs A Lee FRPS L, RDP, CPhH

Hon. Secretary: J A Cordingley, Ysguborwen, Bryn-crug, Tywyn, Gwynedd LL36 9PU Tel: 01654 710020

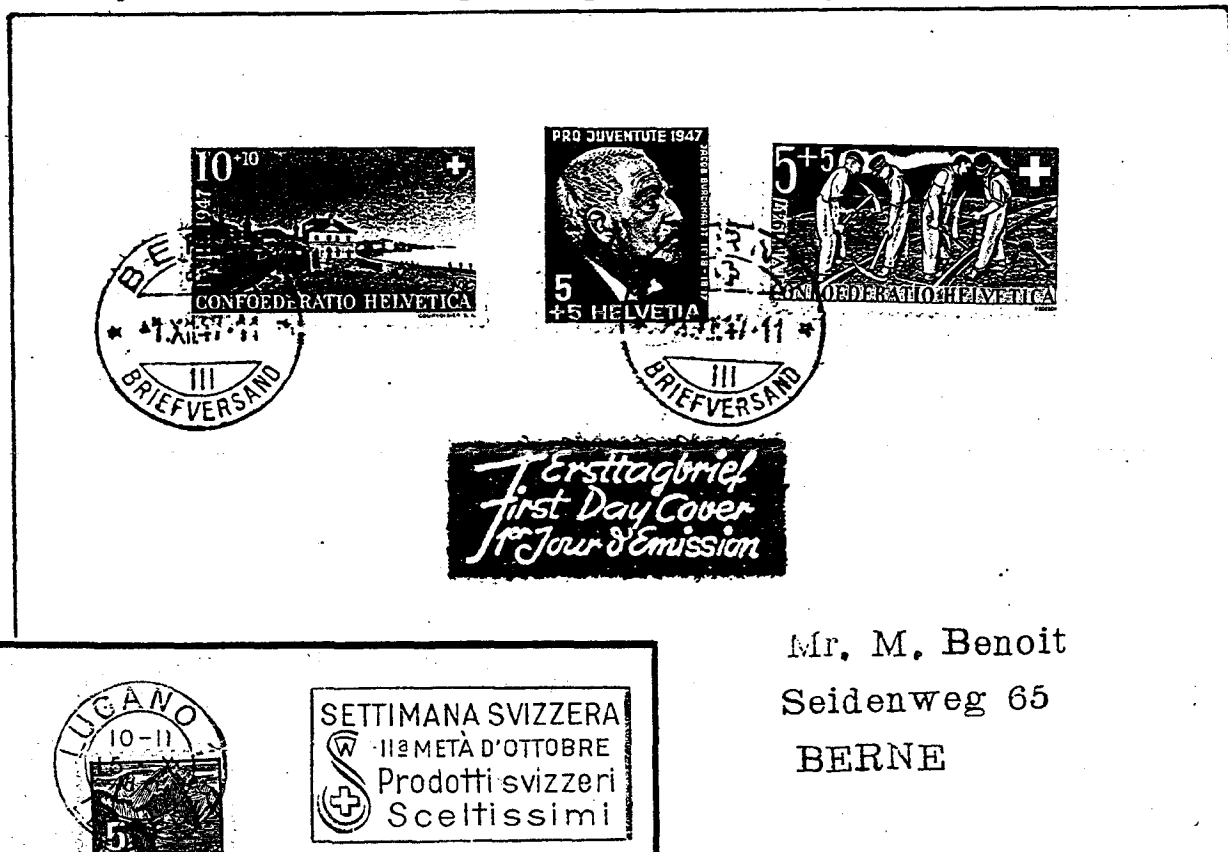
Hon. Editor: Peter Hobbs, Six Tynning End, Widcombe Hill, Bath BA2 6AN Tel: 01 225-31 09 71

No. 1 January 1998

A BENOIT COVER - THE BACKGROUND

M Rutherford

An ordinary-looking cover, cancelled in Bern 1 on 1st December 1947, but there is more behind it. Maurice Benoit was a high-ranking PTT official who knew all the tricks, but never did anything illegal. For instance, by making use of scarcely used 'Poste Restante' facilities at Mobile POs and Special Counters he could achieve a variety of cancels on one cover in his unique way. In later years he was a member of the SVPS, and died a few years ago. Hundreds of his covers are in important collections of postmarks. He always used light-coloured covers when this was not common. He placed the stamp more in the centre of the cover so that the machine cancel, in the 1930s, did not fall on the stamp as was usual. I made the mistake years ago of cutting up a nice Benoit cover (see inset). Dated 15.X.35, announcing a 'Swiss Week' to buy Swiss products, to fight unemployment.



Mr. M. Benoit
Seidenweg 65
BERNE

However, the last date of validity of the two National Fête stamps on this cover was 30th November 1947, only the PJ 5c was a First Day. Today it would not be allowed to call the whole letter a FDC. The label is private, black with orange

text. The cover was over paid by 100%. This combination of 'old' and 'new' stamps was possible because the PTT realised that legally a letter posted in a box after the last collection, but before midnight, still had valid stamps on it. So letters taken from a street letter box during the first collection the next day were still acceptable with 'old', invalid stamps. Combined with the First Day of another issue stamp the cover became an interesting document. This possibility was published by the PTT at the time, but was not known to all collectors.

To see how often this could be done I drew up the table of validity of both PJ and PP stamps.

Pro Juventute - Validity

Issue	mnths	FD	LD
1913-15	3	1.12	28.2
16-28	5	1.12	30.4
29-52	6	1.12	31.5
53-63	7	1.12	30.6
64 - unlimited		from 1.12	

Pro Patria - Validity

Issue	mnths	FD	LD
1938-39	5	15.6	15.11
40	8+	20.3	30.11
41-46	5½	15.6	"
47	5½	14.6	"
48-49	5½	15.6	"
50-51	6	1.6	"
52	6	31.5	"
53-57	7	1.6	31.12
58	7	31.5	"
59-63	7	1.6	"
64 - unlimited		from 1.6	

From this one can see that for 13 years, from 1940 to 1952, where the last day of the PP was 30th November and the first day of the PJ was 1st December this 'trick' was possible. The other way (last day of the PJ nudging the FD of the PP was only possible in 1950 and 1951) otherwise there is always a gap or an overlap. Strangely in 1952 this overlap was only one day.

There was another, and earlier, occasion when this late cancel together with a FD was allowed. In 1924 two stamps were issued for '50 Years UPU' on the 9th October with a validity till the 30th November (Z 167,168), and a special notice was sent to all POs that letter box items could be cancelled on the 1st of December, together with the new PJ stamps. I have seen such a FDC made by a colleague's father at the time - a rare item. So there are 16 such opportunities in all, who has even one of them? On a single washed-off stamp you might be lucky to find such an example, of last day plus one.

NETWORK information for the benefit of those members who can! If you do find things of interest to the rest of us this way then send it to the Editor so that the rest of us can learn something. You may know all about this anyway! From Tell we have: Swiss Federal Government site, with links to federal departments, many in English is at: <http://www.admin.ch> The Federal Railways are at: <http://www.sbb.ch/index.htm> For the latest Swiss newspapers there is the Schweizer Review site at: <http://www.revue.ch/index-revue.html> (that is the 'noughts & crosses' sign) The Geneva News (in English, I think) is at: <http://www.gnir.ch/index.html> For just General information about Switzerland try: <http://www.discover.ch/index.html> or http://www.ethz.ch/swiss/Switzerland_Info.html For the benefit of our member out there who is interested in the fourth language of Switzerland he can go to: <http://www.shire.net/PUNTS/> Then if you want the Swiss equivalent of searching in German go to: <http://www.search.ch/> for links into the Swiss-based internet. There must be quite a lot of interest for collectors of cancellations at a French site called 'Collect Cancellations' at: <http://www.chez.com/memorial/> Please do let the Editor know what you find, and any other sites of interest to members.

HARRISON TRIAL PRINTS - Newsletter p61 August & p74 October

A report has come in of further items from the Chateau de Chillon design. These are in a previously unrecorded 'purple frame and green chateau' both perf and imperf, so any further information on these items should be sent to the Editor.

CATALOGUE PRICES - Z 114 70c brown/yellow Helvetia with sword. This stamp is listed in 1998 catalogues as: umm 320fr, mm 100fr, used 32fr. The AMCO catalogue lists it at \$50 mm and 60c used! What is the true price of a good clean used copy?

AMBULANT STRAIGHT LINE CANCELLATIONS - A member asks where these cancellors were kept at the stations. On a Sunday, the normal time when they were used, the stations were unmanned. Was the cancellor kept in the letter box on the platform? Or was it carried on the train by the postal staff who emptied the letter boxes?

In the SBZ recently Dr Guggisberg, Chief Editor, urged the PTT and the PJ Organisation to review their policy on the premium on the annual issues of charity stamps to something more like the original premiums for charity issues.

In 1913 it was 5+5c on just one stamp. In 1923 it was 25c on 75c worth of stamps and 1933 was 25c on 65c of stamps, as was 1943. 1953 added a 40+10c stamp making 45c on a set of five at 105c. 1963 was again 45c on 115c, and 1973 55c on 145c. 1983 jumped to 100c on 210c. By 1993 the surcharge was 50% - 150c on 300c.

A number of factors have contributed to the fall in sales of these stamps from a high of more than 65 million to some 21 million in 1995. Increased postal rates meant that revenue from the premium only fell to 7 million odd francs from the 8 million francs collected in 1982, but there was a drop in 'real terms'. It is not just due to the fall in the number of stamp collectors but must also be due to the 'law of diminishing returns' where 'more is less' has affected sales. Is it time for a rethink? (with thanks for research by Mrs J F Ward.)

NEW ISSUES for 7th January

The break-up of the PTT took place on the 1st January 1998. This radical change has 'inspired' the issue of two 90c stamps, one for Swiss Post and the other for Swisscom. Apparently this partial privatisation will be in line with EU ideas and, from the year 2000, the staff will lose their status as civil servants.

Also on 7th January four stamps for the 150th anniversary of the Swiss Federal State, and the bicentenary of the Helvetic Republic, are issued in a four language block with a central design, 90c each or fr3.60 together if you want a clean central cancel! Not announced in Focus on Stamps.

Can any of our experts on cancellations provide an explanation of the razor blade cancel shown on this postcard from Geneva in 1902. The top and bottom bars of the bridge are missing. Last time we showed a cancel with bars missing like this the explanation was 'must be on a soft parcel' - most unlikely this time.

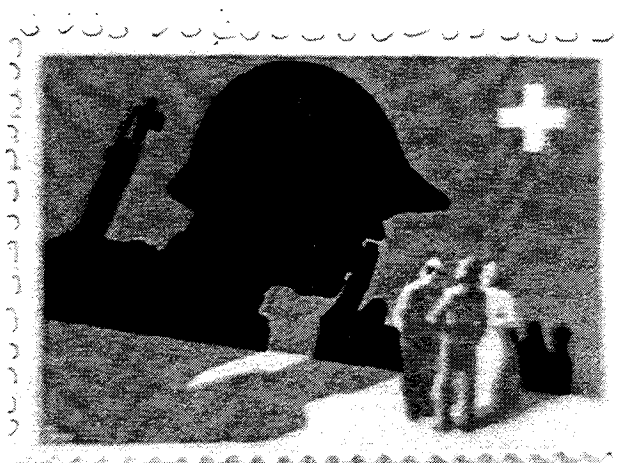


Martin Mantell has provided an enlarged copy of this 2c sitting Helvetia - it is blood red in colour and the wrong perfs. What is it?



One of the SBZ designers, Jacques Hänsler, has found this 'Tell Girl' in his attic.

What is this Swiss label that is like the 'Walls have ears' wartime posters?



SBB/CFF/SFF RAILWAY STAMPS - 1913 to 1960

A Green

The first railway tracks laid within Switzerland were an extension of the French line from Strasbourg to Basel St. Johann in 1844, but the honour of being the precursor of Swiss rail connections goes to the Zürich to Baden line, opened in 1847. Martin Escher-Hess purchased the property of the failed 'Zürich Basel Railway Company' and formed the 'Schweizerische Nordbahngesellschaft' to construct a line to Basel. The line to Baden was intended to be the first section of the line but opposition from the citizens of Basel, and financial problems, led to the link being extended only as far as Aarau. Although 9000 passengers were carried within seven days of opening, the line soon lost its attraction as a spectacle and became known for carrying fresh bread from Baden to Zürich, hence the nickname 'Spanisch-Brötli-Bahn'.

In 1849 the Federal Assembly requested that a national railway be planned. A trunk line from Genève to the Bodensee ports of Romanshorn and Rorschach was proposed by Robert Stevenson and Henry Swinburne, together with one cross route connecting Basel to Luzern via Olten and two branches - Lyss-Thun and Rorschach-Chur. This scheme was placed before the Government in 1852.

The First General Railway Law was issued in July 1852 giving the cantons the right to grant concessions to construct railway lines. Local commercial considerations dictated which lines were built first. This right was transferred in 1872 to the Federal Council and nationalisation was approved by referendum in February 1898. Thus the SBB/CFF/SFF was formed in 1902. Constituent companies were purchased over several years; the last I can trace being the Uerikon-Bauma-Bahn (UeBB) in 1948. On 23rd June 1944 the Italian name was changed to 'Ferrovie Federali Svizzere' (FSS).

Railway stamps were introduced to the Swiss public in 1874 by the Jura Industrial Railway (opened 1857) a few months prior to its amalgamation with the Jura-Bernois Railway. The new company merged with the Bern-Luzern Railway in 1884 to form the Jura-Bern-Luzern Railway, which in turn became the Jura-Neuchâtelois Railway in 1886. This company was purchased by the SBB on 1st July 1913.

SBB railway stamps were made available on 1st March 1913 to prepay charges raised by the railway company for the carriage of goods. The stamps were of the same design from their introduction until their withdrawal on 31st May 1960, although the Amateur Collector Catalogue lists seven different types of paper as having been used in their production.

Information regarding the calculation of the charges is being gathered by examining consignment notes (Lettre de voiture). The table shows the type of information being sought from members who may have these documents. Most of the information is handwritten and sometimes can be very difficult to decipher!

Early indications suggest that the charge was based on weight and the type of goods being carried until the 1950s when distance also became a factor. The weight was charged in bands; band one being up to 20kg, and then in 10kg steps. Freight was classified by types. To calculate the charges it appears to have been the normal practice to round weight upwards, then apply the rate and round the cost up to the next 10c value. One strange feature of the information examined so far is that no two rates per 100kg are the same.

Your responses are eagerly sought so that the exercise may have some statistical worth and lead to some positive definition of the charges prepaid by these stamps. (The SBB claim that they have no records of the rates charged as they destroy all their documents after 12 months. Where else can Mr Green search? Ed.)

FREIGHT LETTERS

We have, after many years, a fair stock again, of these railway documents. Dates we can offer start in the 1890's prior to the federal railway period to the 1920's. The majority are priced at £6.00 each rising to £20.00. A starter pack of 9 different types is available at £60.00. Approvals on request.

THE AMATEUR COLLECTOR LTD., P.O. Box 242 London N2 0YZ
 Tele: 0181 348 0296 Fax: 0181 347 8397

DATE	From	To	Weight kg	Dist km	Rate per 100kg	Class	Charge Designation
020402	Basel Ubernommen	Sursee	21 (30)			two	0.40+40(1)
150402	Basel Ubernommen	Sursee	129 (130)			one	1.00
200602	Basel Versandt	Sursee	23		7	Express three b	0.80
230321	Basel Bendische St.E	Basel SBB	9055(10000)			two	7.00+10
230123	Sion	Raron	610		160	one	9.80+10 sal de cuisine
030828	Bienwil a See	Stein Sackingen	30		288	one	0.90+10 Tbak & Fabrikate
080828	Kilchberg Zurich	Stein Sackingen	41		343	one	1.80+10 Chocolat
080828	Offen BF Guter	Stein Sackingen	130		274	one	3.60+10 Kaffee
150828	Pratteln	Stein Sackingen	30		329	one	0.50+10 Persil
150828	Zurich Wallis hofen	Stein Sackingen	46 (50)			one	1.70+20(2) Tabak & Suppen
160828	Kemptta	Stein Sackingen	28 (30)		168	one	1.20+10 Suppen
210828	Basel	Stein Sackingen	98 (100)		302	one	1.70+10 Chocolat
280828	Langenthal	Stein Sackingen	133			nine	4.30+10 Kase Fromage
290828	Neuhausen	Stein Sackingen	45		97	one	1.80+10 Confitserie
030435	Salgesch	Raron	300		162	Express	3.00+10 Wien
130838	Oberentfelden	Lenzbeurg	62		164	two	1.20+10 Polsserwasse
210142	Birrfeld	Zurich Langfrei	8 (20)		167	one	0.50+10 leer Zuruck mit leeren Hutsen
160642	Giswil	Zurich Tiefenbruen	7 (20)		164	one	0.50+10 leer packg
030943	Nebikon	Zurich Langfrei	11 (20)	73	302	two	0.60+10 1 Blechanne leer gebraucht retour
080943	Ennenda	Zurich Langfrei	17 (20)			two	0.60+20(2) leer
290644	Schupfheim	Zurich Tiefenbruen	2 (20)		494	Eig	0.50+20(2) Weisslechhausa leer
230845	Meiringen	Augeben	25 (30)		451	two	1.20+20 Feuerloscher
220945	Airolo	Zurich Langfrei	6 (20)		452	one	0.90+30(3) leer
151145	Kolliken	Zurich Langfrei	31 (40)		265	one	1.10+30 Feuerlosch-Apparat
250247	Rivera	Zurich Langfrei	66		296	two	2.60+30 leergebraucht retour
200347	Stans	Zurich Langfrei	8 (20)	66		two	0.60+10 Korflasche luft ehaum Emails retour
110947	Winterthur	Zurich Langfrei	13 (20)		679	two	0.50+30 Kleiner Feuerloscher
031247	Veytaux-Chillon	Zurich Langfrei	13 (20)		844	two	1.40+40(4) Caisse vide
041148	Vernier-Meyrin	Zurich Langfrei	30	76		two	2.60+20 Extincteur usagee en retour
280856	Nidturn Haslen	Zurich Tiefenbruen	100	103		one	5.00+10 Baumwolltuch
211156	Meiringen	Zurich A	36 (40)	81		one	2.90+10 Drucksachen
100560	Mannendorf	Luzern	30	33		one	1.50+20 leer
120560	Benzenccchwil	Luzern	60				1.90 Porzellan
120560	Worb	Luzern	16				1.50 leer
120560	Reichenburg	Luzern	37	84			2.50+20 leer

- Notes 1 Charge plus 30c ; Nachnahme mach Eingang plus 10c ; Canton Taxe.
 2 Charge plus 10c ; Frais de passage plus 10c ; Federal Timbre
 3 Charge plus 10c ; Taxe de la declarat plus 10c ; Timbre Federal plus 10c ; frais de passage
 4 Charge plus 20c ; ZS(?) plus 10c ; frais de passage plus 10 c ; Timbre Federal

* * * * * IMPORTANT NOTICE * * * * *

By the time you read this notice the Packet Secretary will have

MOVED HOUSE

to: Flat 13 41/43 Belsize Avenue LONDON NW3 4RN - make a note NOW!

Northern Group Meeting, 6th December. I feel sure that at some time or other everyone must have participated in a Lucky Dip in the bran tub at a local fête. On some occasions there will have been disappointment at what has been pulled out of the tub, at others however, a sense of great pleasure. The latter sensation was what members experienced when Michael Proctor presented his "Lucky Dip" prior to Christmas. Now in our philatelic pursuits some collect just one or two particular aspects of Helvetia, others perhaps, three or four. There are, however, those amongst us who are happy to collect almost anything and everything of quality which relates to Swiss philately and I know that Michael will not take it amiss when I describe him as one such collector. Over the years during which he has been a member of the Society he has visited countless Stamp and Postcard Fairs in this country and abroad and, with a shrewd eye, has put together a collection which illustrates virtually every aspect of our hobby. We were treated to pre-stamp covers and entires between the years 1791 and 1855 with many fine strikes, postage dues on both out-going and in-coming mail and a selection of covers from Great Britain to Switzerland during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, many with Swiss transit and receiving marks. There were newspaper wrappers and some delightful early 20th Century coloured postcards depicting national costume. What was particularly interesting amongst a fine display of Airmail, Pro-Juventute and Pro-Patria material from the 1920's, 30's and 40's was the number of commercially used cards and covers not often seen amongst these categories. For example, from the Leysin Air Meeting of 1.XI.1926 was a card of the "Helvetia Société Suisse d'Assurance" but displaying all the correct etiquette for the flight. From the first Swissair flight to the U.S.A. on 2.V.1947 was a commercial registered cover with the registration fee of 30c. made up of 3c x 5 plus 15c from the 1936 Landscape series in addition to the obligatory Fr 2.50 airmail stamp, whilst from the Pro Juventute selection was a similar cover to Kenya with the set of 1937 carrying a first day cancellation. These and many more items made for a most interesting afternoon and, as David Hope remarked in his vote of thanks, all of us had seen something which we would like to have in our own more specialised collections. Thank you Michael!

D.C.

On December 10th twelve members attended the Victory Services Club when the evening started with Fred Pickard summarising the excellent event in Hove at which the Society had been represented. He was very appreciative of the effort put in by member Bert Mitchell and considered the day to have been a great success. Claude Mistely then introduced our continuing theme of Swiss philately on a decade basis by reminding us that the period 1910-1919 was the study area for the evening.

An extensive collection of illustrated World War I military postcards were displayed by two members. Although many were unused they represented the variety of interests that had led to their issue - some were produced as lottery cards; to promote the 'defence of the frontiers'; to raise funds to provide soldier comforts e.g. restaurants and accommodation. With an interesting collection of soldier stamps also on view it was clear that these features of Swiss philately could provide fascinating study and an insight into Swiss life at such a period - a time when General Wille (seen on a postcard) was the sole Swiss General and had been appointed specifically to run the military during these tense years. A registered letter caught the flavour; from Batterkinden to Zürich with 3x5c stamps showing harvesting soldiers plus 2x5c Tellboy and a 10c Tell. Other items of military significance were also on view - a Piotta internment camp cancellation on a card dated 1916 sent from one internee to another in the Chalet Bertha in Wengen, and a piece of Swiss guarded train mail from Bucharest to Bern!

The 1914 Swiss National Exhibition featured on a nice 5c booklet postcard. The labels, letter sheets and envelopes displayed were just some of the very many items produced for that Exhibition. A small collection of the 10c Helvetia bust type II printed in 1909 but used between 1910-1919 showed an inexpensive stamp used on a variety of mail. Within this, the blue *Chiasso Lettre Transit* cancellation appeared on a card sent from Luzern via Basel to Barbados. This same cancellation also appeared on two other pieces of mail - on a card from Grand Saconnex to Edinburgh, and a card from Yens to London. Does any member know why mail was routed this way?

Stamps did get a look in with the complete issues of the period displayed. These included an intriguing collection of Tellboys, 2¹/₂c, 5c in various colours, and a 7¹/₂c all overprinted SPECIMAN for the South West Africa postal authority. Two private address labels overprinted by the PTT were also very different and unusual. Both featured the Helvetia with sword but one had two 40c stamps showing a parcel rate.

Geoff Hubbard in giving the vote of thanks expressed his admiration for the richness of material displayed.

JAC

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

January 14th London, Swiss Revenues - an Update by F Pickard & E Lienhard.

February 7th Northern Group Annual Competition - Start preparing NOW.

February 11th London, The Committee Entertains!

March 7th Sussex Group - Letters A, B & C, see your card for the venue.

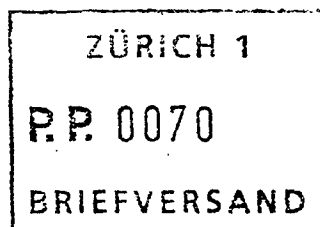
If YOU are displaying Swiss to a local society then let the Editor know.

Bob Johnson showed his display 'A Trip through Ticino' to the Huddersfield and Harrogate Societies in November. It was received with a lot of enthusiasm and it may be that new members will result from the visit!

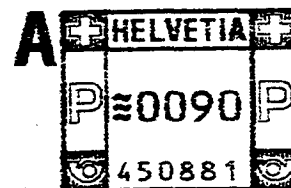
DID YOU KNOW?

M Rutherford

- that the PTA, the official weekly bulletin of the PTT, dies at the end of 1997; replaced by ? New stamp issues in the quarterly 'Focus on Stamps', new postal services (unknown), closed foreign routes, and re-opening (unknown), and many other public announcements are left hanging in the air. Cancellation information, special cancellations, new slogans, closed POs and similar items will be given in a new publication 'Stempel News' (Cancel News) to be issued free by the Philatelic Services. If it is to be weekly or monthly is not stated. We will see.
- that another change is that from January 1998 there will be no slogans used which advertise Swisscom services (machine cancellations of Group 1) unless, perhaps, they are paid for separately?
- that once again, without PTA mention, there will be cheaper inland parcels from 10th to 22nd December, called 'Colis Noël', and with a white label.
- that practically only for PTA subscribers six new 90c special stamps are announced for issue on 5th January. These are to celebrate 200 years since the French invasion, and 150 years of the new Swiss Constitution, as well as the separation of the postal from the telephone services in January 1998. There are also two 70c postcards with an historical illustration.
- that there is a most interesting exhibition in the Museum of Communications in Bern from 5th December to the 1st February 1998 on 'The History of Philately in Israel'. The graphic presentation has been done by non-philatelists, and its excellence sets new standards, the direction being towards the 'Open Class'. Well worth a visit.
- that the Swiss PO, which handles all UN mail in Bosnia namely from Liestal to Sarajevo, has brought out 30 000 letters and 1600 parcels, with 20 000 letters and 5000 parcels going in. Only 20% of the original POs in Bosnia are functioning.
- that with the new software more and more handwritten addresses are being read in the coding machines so that letters can be sorted automatically to the postman's walk; long possible with typed letters.
- that the PJ First Day cancel of 20.11.97 just appealed to me, the effect of the waterline has been used so well, see below.
- that one of the firms which organise items of great rarity has discovered that there are 163 Swiss Alpine Club huts, each with its own 'Hut Stamp', in rubber, of no postal value at all. But now you can subscribe to the series of 163 sheets, illustrated, for CHF 12.25 each. Dare I say it - don't miss this chance to fill your waste bin.
- that the system of sending on underpaid letters without delay, but asking the sender, via a postcard, to send in the missing amount, without surcharge, has been modified in Zürich at least. Instead of the previous handstamp in black they now use a meter impression in red. See the figure below, sent by Tony Hoyle. This also gives them a total for the day. See also a previous article in August 1996.
- that Pitney Bowes have been introducing their new 'Easy Mail' system for about 3 years worldwide and now in Switzerland. Shown below, with a UK type. The 11 digits are a code for machine identification, and to separate mailing costs of different departments of a particular firm.

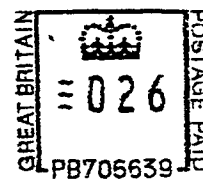


17400700803



If you do not already get a FREE copy of 'Focus on Stamps' then write to:
 Swiss Postal Service
 Stamps and Philately
 Customer Service
 CH-3030 BERN

1
01
48
40
74
34



As a little light relief during the darkest days of winter when it is not really good enough to get on the garden, the puzzle below is reprinted from Linn's Stamp News, June 26, 1995. It was published in the American Helvetia Philatelic Society Journal 'Tell', No. 5 1996. You will have to use the Scott catalog numbers as a guide!

Great men on Swiss stamps

Beginning in 1914 with William Tell, Switzerland has honored many great men on its postage stamps through the years.

Like Tell, most of the

Puzzle

By Victor A. Schlich

men so honored have been Swiss, although there are many eminent exceptions.

Collectors also will find stamps from Switzerland honoring Canadian doctor Frederick Banting, German bacteriologist Robert Koch and Montgomery Blair, Lincoln's postmaster general and a co-founder of the Universal Postal Union.

The surnames of 34 of the great men who appear on Swiss stamps are hidden in this puzzle. The object of the puzzle is to find and circle those names.

Names in the puzzle run in all directions. They may appear forward, backward, up, down or diagonally.

Each surname is given in capital letters as it appears in the puzzle.

The Scott catalog number of a stamp from Switzerland that portrays each man is given in parentheses following the name.

Frederick BANTING (539); Montgomery BLAIR (593); Oskar BIDER (630); Eugene BOREL (591);

Joseph BOVET (662); Alexandre CALAME (B298); Numa DROZ

(B137); Armand DUFAUX (622);

Henri DUNANT (663); Alfred ESCHER (217); Le-



This 1-franc stamp depicts the 16th-century military leader Ludwig Pfyffer, one of 34 distinguished men on the stamps of Switzerland hidden in this puzzle.

onhard EULER (B267); Nicholas FLUE (B86);

Auguste FOREL (536); Ludwig FORRER (B150); Salomon GESSNER (B91);

Jules GONIN (537); Albrecht HALLER (B72); Gustav HASLER (686); Hans HERZOG (B96);

Hermann HESSE (669); Jurg JENTSCH (276); Carl JUNG (664); Johann KERN (685); Robert KOCH (538); Johan PESTALOZZI (306);

Ludwig PFYFFER (2750); Rainer RILKE (667); Othmar SCHOECK (505); William TELL (167); Aristide VINET (B60);

Niklaus WENGI (B187); Johann WETTSTEIN (312); Ulrich WILLE (B179); Huldreich ZWINGLI (502).

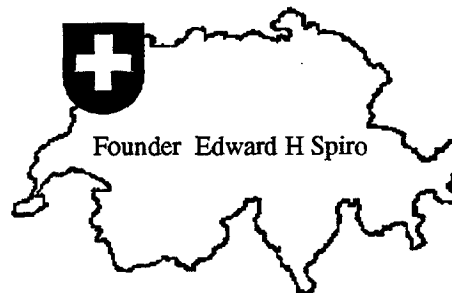
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W K E R N G W V H R E H C S E
S H A L L E R E Q H E S S E W
C A Q D N I H D T B F O R R E
H S A G L C P B R T O J H T B
O L I K S F L L L O S V Q P A
E E E T Y E T R L A Z T E H N
C R N F R V T K U E I S E T T
K E F O I T O D F L T R K I I
J E B N N C U W G A Z F M R N
R P E A H F T N L O G O E E G
X T N N A E I O G Q N R M N A
E U Y U L W Z J O M I E A S F
D A X L Z Z Z C U U N L L S L
R T U W I L L E J N O U A E U
X X R E D I B P S U G E C G E

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SORRY there are no prizes for this one!

HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Hon. President: Mrs A Lee FRPS L, RDP, CPhH

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No. 2 February 1998

A COVER FOR COMMENTS FROM READERS

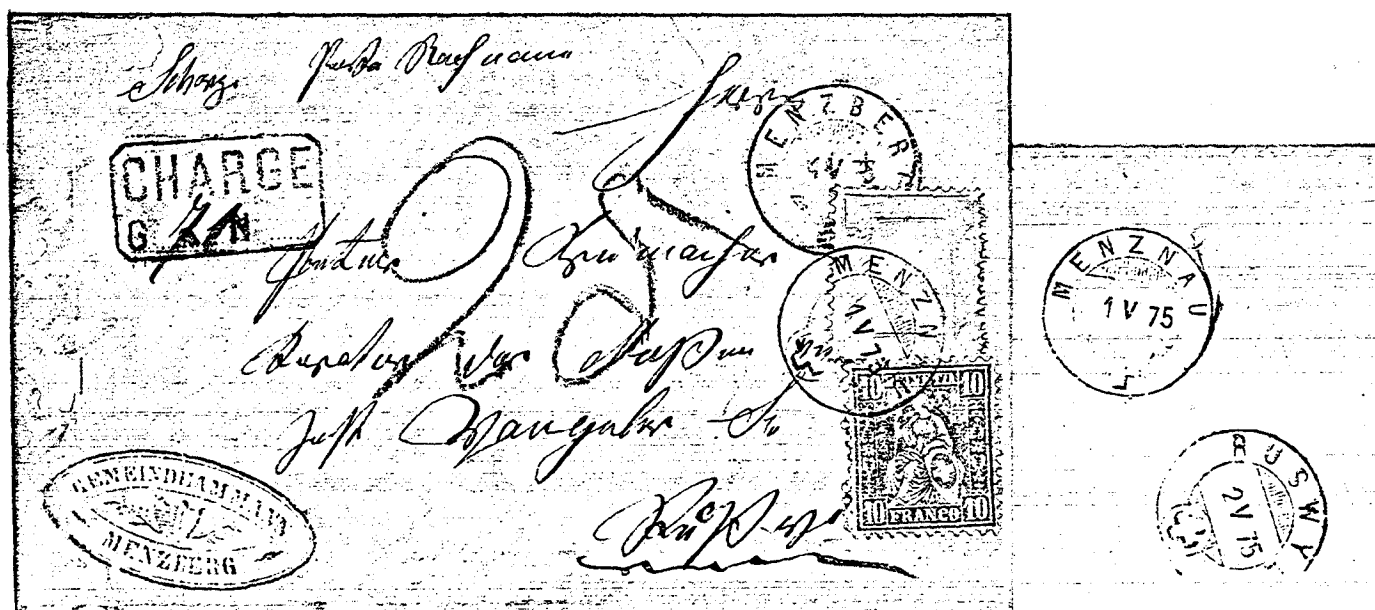
David Whitworth

This registered cover from the parish of Menzberg, is addressed to Ruswyl, and was apparently posted without stamps. The circular date stamp of Menzberg, 1st May 1875, is partially obscured by a 15c yellow stamp (Z 39), which does not show up very clearly on the copy. This stamp, together with an additional 10c stamp, has been cancelled with the circular date stamp of Menznau, again 1st May 1875. The cover is backstamped Menznau 1st May 1875, and Ruswyl 2nd May 1875.

Presumably the blue script figure 25 was applied in Menzberg, indicating 25c to pay, and the stamps added in Menznau. I estimate that Menzberg, a small village in the hills above Menznau, is some 4 or 5 kilometres away, and the distance to Ruswyl a further 7 or 8 km, making the total distance possibly 13 km by road. On the basis that this puts Ruswyl beyond the local letter rate, I conclude that the postage rate was calculated to be 15c for unstamped mail, and a further 10c was required to pay for registration.

If the cover was sent by the local parish council (Gemeindeammann), why were no stamps applied in Menzberg, where 20c would have been sufficient to pre-pay the postage and registration? Presumably the recipient had to pay.

Any ideas that members may have about this cover can be sent to the Hon. Editor for publication in a future issue of the Newsletter.



50 YEARS OF THE SOCIETY'S NEWSLETTER

Bob Johnson

My first title for this report was '50th Anniversary of the HNL' but this failed to convey the scale of the task undertaken since the first issue, No. 2, in Jan/Feb 1948 (no one can find a copy of No. 1!). We have had nearly 600 issues (very few were combined in an issue for two months). This has happened with only four editors: the first being our founder Edward Spiro for 10 years; Phil Stratton took over for a year and then the late Mrs Edythe Rawnsley said she would do it on a temporary basis only, as well as continuing as Hon. Secretary and Librarian. She remained in the post for some 28 years, relinquishing the post of Secretary in 1981 but continuing as Editor until December 1986 when the present incumbent, Peter Hobbs, took over. Bearing in mind that the editor often had a full-time job as well, it is quite remarkable that it has been possible to keep up the issue of a monthly Newsletter (many societies are lucky to have a quarterly magazine).

At first the Newsletter was produced by cutting a wax stencil on a typewriter without any illustrations. Printing was then done on flat bed machines and later on rotary duplicators. When it became possible to cut stencils on a scanner then it was possible to add illustrations. Only with the advent of the latest photocopying machines has it become possible to improve the illustrations.

We must not forget the labour of 'stuffing' the envelopes, adding the stamps and posting, a job which was done by the Secretary/Editor until 16 years ago when Geoff Hubbard took over that task, followed more recently by Doug Houtris.

We must be very grateful to these people for producing the Newsletter for those members throughout the world who are unable to come to meetings as it is their regular contact with their Society.

The Editor has had an enquiry from member No. 7 to ask if he is a 'founder' member of the Society and if there are any other members from the early days. Norman Thompson believes it was early in 1949 when he joined. Bob Johnson who wrote the item above is No. 5. Your Editor is a 'comer' with No. 104! Norman Thompson also asks if there is a translation of the 'Abarten, Plattenfehler and Retouchierungen' information from the Zumstein Specialised Catalogue which could be published in the Newsletter.

H E Quinton sends in: "These are a few personal views on the Chairman's Report to the AGM where he notes some of the appalling issues by the PTT. I agree with him on that point and would add that in the editorial to their publication 'Focus on Stamps' they usually state that 'We have some lovely novelties for you in this issue!' What we as collectors would like is fewer but better quality issues. What can we collectors do to improve things? Ignore their novelties and such unnecessary productions. Don't buy c.t.o. (go for postally used - the stamps have been used for their original purpose). Buy fewer mint issues. Is it worth a try? Letters of complaint don't seem to work."

The AMERICAN HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY (AHPS) will hold its ANNUAL CONVENTION at the Milwaukee Philatelic Exhibition MILCOPEX from 17th to 20 September 1998. Information, reservations and other details can be obtained from Chuck LaBlonde, 2940 Underwood Point #5, Colorado Springs, CO 80920, USA. Forget Micky Mouse and go and meet some enthusiastic collectors of Swiss stamps for a change this year.

MEMBERS WHO RECEIVE THE PACKET should note that Geoff Hubbard may have moved but he still has the same telephone number if you need to ring him - 0171 794 8078.

SMALL AD. - Does anyone have a spare copy of the UPU 1900 10c, 78A or 78B, with the time date slug in the cancel showing III or IV (3 or 4 am) that Doug Houtris can have to complete a 'clock' of this issue. Address at the bottom of page 14.

SMALL AD. - Swiss Revenue Stamps catalogue; photocopied issue of the 1947-1950 Schaufelberger Federal, Cantonal and Municipal (A-L only) spiral bound at only £5- plus the postage. Ring the Editor for more details.

WANTED - A copy of the PTT Alpine Postbus Guides for the Grand St Bernard and the Simplon, the 1932 editions if possible. Details to the Editor.

WANTED - for research, photocopies of the tabs of Franco label No. 1. This is the part that gives the printing details. Send to the Editor, postage etc refunded.

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED that they can put small ads in the Newsletter free of charge.

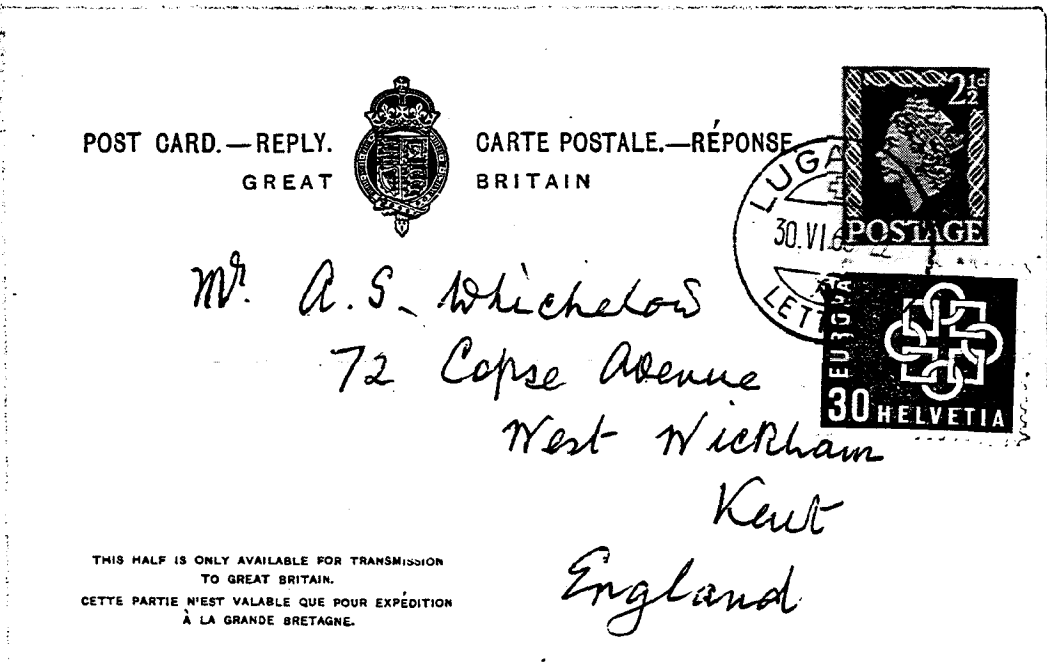
A PUZZLE FOR THE POSTAGE DUE SPECIALISTS?

from Bill Straw

This is both halves of a GB reply-paid postcard sent on the 16th of June 1960 to Interlaken. The message on the back reads "Let me have the attached card by posting it after your arrival, Arthur". Was the rate for postage to Switzerland at that time 3d? London Foreign marked it at 10c gold so was it correct to tax it at 25c in Interlaken? The reply half was sent from Lugano on the 30th of June with the message "Card received. Returning today. AHW". Who added the 30c Europa? Was it Mr Whichelow who was playing safe and adding an (unknown) deficiency, evidently it was acceptable to Lugano Post Office and attracted no further attention when it reached West Wickham. Somehow it has the feel of a philatelic item about it but all suggestions will be welcome, sent to the Editor for publication.



The postcard rate from Switzerland to GB in 1960 appears to have been 30c so was the person just putting on the normal rate and thought that the 2½d stamp was not valid in Switzerland?



STAMP ALBUMS

A recent purchase of cancellations has left me with a number of surplus albums - surplus because their make and size is not what I have adopted as my standard. The albums are far too good to throw away.

All are dual peg fitting, most are of FRANK GODDEN make. On offer are:

6 of THE FG DE LUXE leather bound binders - some slight wear, 2 in stout card slip cases

12 of THE FG WARWICK rexine bound binders, all with slip cases

3 of Stanley Gibbons DEVON rexine bound binders, some wear and no cases

and to fit the above,

about 350 white linen hinged interfaced leaves beautifully headed Switzerland within coloured Swiss shields

I am open to sensible offers for some or all of the above. Write or better still give me a ring!

John Cordingley, YSGUBORWEN, BRYNCRUG, TYWYN, LL36 9PU Tel: 01653 710020.

Members must be prepared to pay postage.

LATEST LIST OF TPOs

from Michael Rutherford

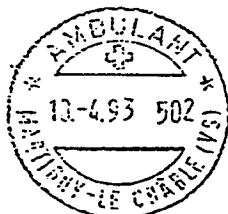
This list shows where TPOs are operating on the private railway network and where the postmark shows the route travelled.

Route travelled by the TPO	Items intended for postmarking can be sent to the following offices
1. TPOs operating on the Federal Railways network	Bahnpostamt 6000 Luzern
2. Martigny - Le Chable	Office postal 1920 Martigny 1
3. Montreux - Zweisimmen	Office postal 1820 Montreux 1
4. Brig - Zermatt	Postamt 3900 Brig
5. Brig - Oberwald (postmark 'FURKABAHN')	Postamt 3900 Brig
6. Burgdorf - Langnau	Postamt 3400 Burgdorf 1
7. Luzern - Engelberg	Bahnpostamt 6000 Luzern
8. Lugano---Ponte-Tresa Last day 31.5.96	
9. Chur - St.Moritz Chur - Davos St.Moritz - Scuol Chur - Disentis St.Moritz - Campocologno	Postmark "Räthische Bahn" Bahnpostamt 7000 Chur

A useful map showing all the private railways in Switzerland, as well as the urban transport companies, bus companies, mountain transportation systems and shipping companies is available from: Verband Öffentlicher Verkehr VÖV, Dählhölzliweg 12, CH-3000 Bern 6. They have an internet address: <http://www.voev.ch> as well as an E-mail address: voev.svs@spectraweb.ch It gives a different view of the system. Ed.



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John Pearson of Reading picked up a postcard recently with this good strike of the temporary or replacement cancel from COPPET. It is listed in the PEN catalogue of 1978 as having a value of 30fr so keep your eyes open for similar items. You never know when you may find something that is outside the dates known at present for the use of these interesting cancels.

ARTE POSTALE

COPPET

29. IX 04



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Surrey Rectory