

# HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Founded in 1946 by Edward H Spiro

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No. 1 January 2007

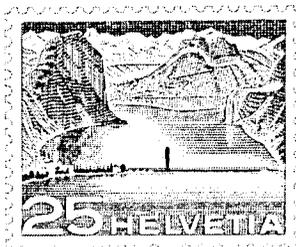
1<sup>st</sup> August 1949 - First day of issue of the Industry and Landscape Definitives.

David Whitworth

On reading Fred Pickard's erudite comments in the December newsletter, answering a query concerning the 1936 Landscape issue, I was reminded of the situation regarding the 1949 issue. Printing started in May of that year, and in the case of the 20c value, printing was halted after 18,000 sheets of 50 stamps had been printed; it was decided that the appearance of the stamp was not satisfactory. A new die was prepared and printing recommenced, some 1,558,240,000 being eventually produced; the original 18,000 sheets were not destroyed however, they were issued to Post Offices along with those of the later printing (die 2). The differences between the two dies, was not discovered until late in 1951.

Obviously large quantities of the Die 2 stamp were printed before the first day of issue, consequently there was plenty of scope for printing errors to have occurred. I have a block of four stamps, with a first day cancel, which shows blotches of colour, which are not uncommon in stamps with much later cancellations.

Whilst looking at the first day of issue blocks, I discovered error in the 25c value; this was not due to faulty printing, but was caused by a scratch in the printing plate, which creates a straight line of colour, not unlike a tall post, rising from the road across the Melide dam, directly above the letter L in Helvetia.(see illustration)



Zumstein lists this error under Z302 pf1; I had previously seen exactly the same fault in a single stamp, unfortunately undated, and I also have a stamp with a similar fault, but in this case directly above the E in Helvetia. This would seem to be a different scratch in the plate. I started looking at all my 25c stamps, and found a further example of the first fault, in a 25c Officiel overprint dated 6<sup>th</sup> April 1955, this made a total of three examples of the same fault.

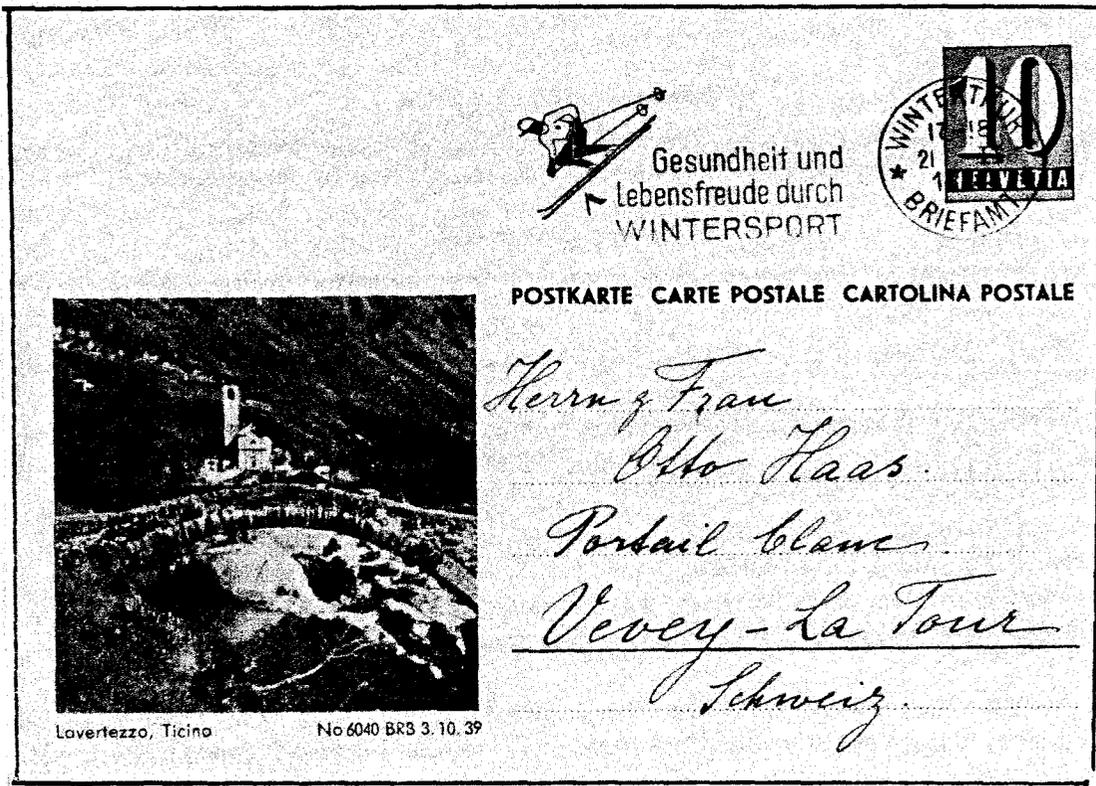
Finally I examined a first day cover with the 25c stamp, and found the same type of fault, this time below the road, falling between the E and L of Helvetia. Have other members seen this type of fault where indicated?

BACK NUMBERS OF THE "NEWSLETTER" ARE AVAILABLE FROM Doug Houtris - the man who sends out the Newsletters every month! The last 10 years are available in sets at 5GBP per year, or 50p per month - FREE postage. Payment by cheque please to 'Helvetia Philatelic Society' (under 2GBP can be in mint, current GB stamps of small denominations only) orders to Doug at: 62 Thirleby Road, Edgware, HA8 0EZ. GB.

"BRB 3.10.1939"

Bundes Rats Beschluss = Federal Council Decree  
 In French ACF Arrete Conseil Federal,  
 In Italian DCF Decretare Consiglio Federale  
 (probably - translation from dictionary for French and Italian)

Is this shutting the door  
 after the horse has bolted?  
 All those 'Leica'-toting  
 tourists had gone home!



Made in Switzerland

Autoreposto al 20. 10. 39. - quello B. R. E. del 3. 10. 1939.



Made in Switzerland

No. 667 ACF 3. 10. 1939

Examples from other picture post-cards, both printed and rubber stamped on the address side.



No. 587 DCF 3. 10. 1939

BRB 3.10.1939 - an explanation from Eric Lienhard

With a nudge from the 'fount of knowledge' that is Michael Rutherford towards the Zumstein Postal Stationery Catalogue, page 46, and the footnote on page 371 of the October issue of the *Schweizer Briefmarken Zeitung*, I have translated the following:

The notation "BRB 3.10.1939" is to be found on some postal stationery post cards and topographical picture post cards during WW2.

On the issues 1939 to 1945 on some postal stationery cards with pictures one can find the notation "(4 digit number) BRB 3.10.1939". This notation is due to a Federal Council Decree of this date, worded as follows

Section 1 :- The export of maps, plans and other territorial representations, .... are subject to authorisation.

Section 2 :- Sale, distribution and publication of maps, .... are subject to authorisation.

Section 3 :- As mapping material in the meaning of sections 1 & 2 are the following

- a) all official maps which are issued, published or sold by the Federation, Cantons or Communities
- b) ??? no section b) ???
- c) Private maps of any kind, purpose or origin ( e.g. aerial photos, picture postcards ) within the area of the federal overview map of the frontier areas.

The BRB (Federal Council Decree) was lifted on 1.7.1945.

On page 107 of the Postal Stationery Catalogue further reference is made on this subject: All National Exhibition cards still in stock at the beginning of October 1939 were withdrawn from sale for military reasons. However, they were still valid for postage until 31.12.1940. A withdrawal or exchange for other stamps was not given.

**POST SECOND WORLD WAR CENSORSHIP OF MAIL  
ENTERING AUSTRIA AND GERMANY FROM SWITZERLAND.**

It has come to Henry Towers and my attention that mail into both Germany and Austria was censored in those countries well after the cessation of hostilities in May 1945. We have mail sent from Switzerland to Vienna in May and June 1946 which was censored by the Austrian Civil Censorship Authorities. Mail addressed to Augsburg in the American Zone of Occupied Germany as late as the end of July 1946 was opened by the U.S. Civil Censorship, Germany. Does any member know as to whether Postal Censorship applied throughout all the Zones of Occupation in both countries? Also when did this practice cease? Information please, and many members must have items in their collections, to the Editor for subsequent publication. Maybe too some of our members have friends in the Austrian and German Philatelic Societies who can provide this information. Perhaps we should ask too the question as to whether mail entering Switzerland at that time was also subject to inspection.

Peter Vonwiller.

The "ODDBALL" from Martin Mantell on p57 of the August 2006 issue - D R. Brinkley

Mr Mantell's 'proto-T Due' cover of May 1954 (HPSN Aug 2006) doesn't surprise me. In fact nothing in the Postage Due world of the first half of the 1950s surprises me. It seems clear that whether because they were running short of Postage Due stamps, because they had heard the system was going to change, from carelessness or from cussedness, Post Offices at that period were doing a lot of things with understamped letters that weren't according to the book.

As examples:

A 1951 T handstamp used instead of Postage Due stamps on an internal Swiss letter.

A 1952 incoming letter showing a T handstamp with correctly cancelled Postage Due stamps stuck over it.

A 1954 letter with a normally cancelled definitive stamp used as a Postage Due.

Figure 1 - 1951

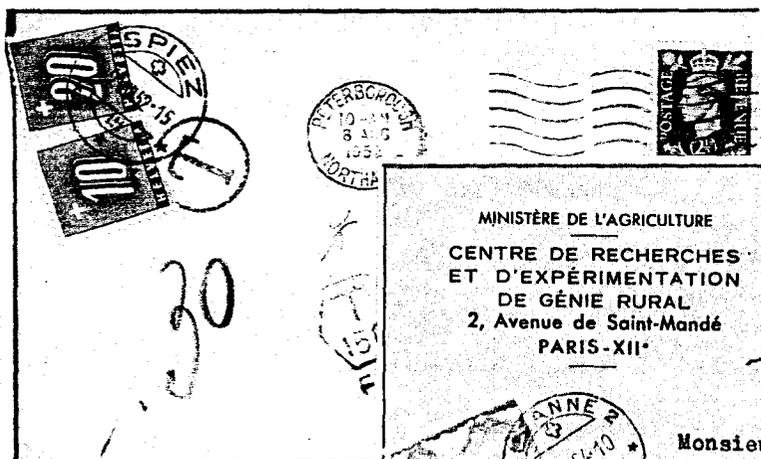


Figure 2 - 1952

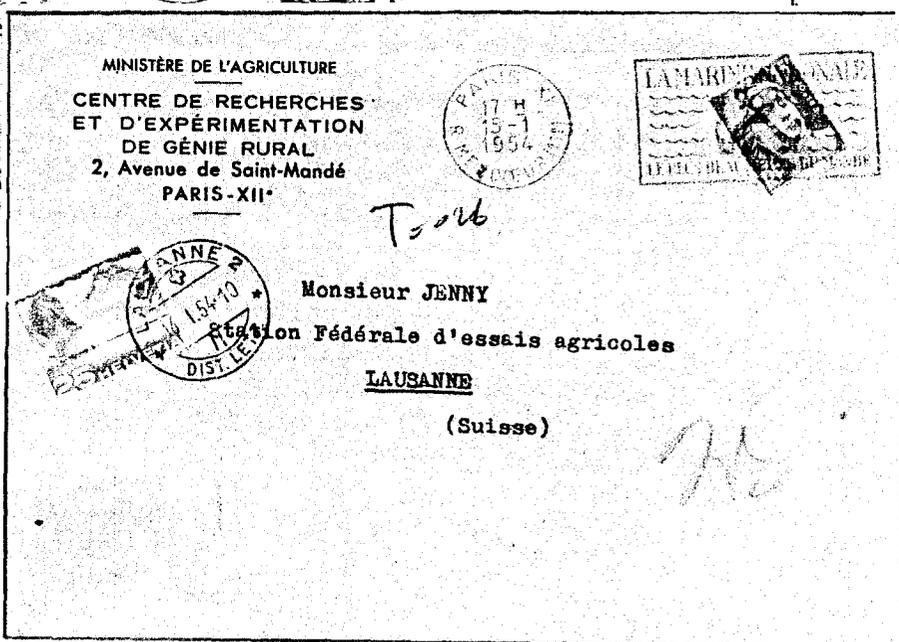


Figure 3 - 1954

**The hunt for the one centime postage due - continued**

from Bob Medland

Reading back-numbers of the Newsletter is invariably a rewarding activity. Recently, whilst searching for something else, I chanced upon Stuart MacKenzie's article 'Hunt for the One Centime' (HNL 1988:25-26 & 51-52): the theme of the article was the rarity of a single 1c postage due stamp on cover and their general scarcity even in multiples. A quick check of the Index revealed that there have been two responses to date with examples on cover (HNL 1989:43 and 2004:44) but no further singletons found. I resolved to look for further examples of interest.

Figure 1 is an underpaid cover sent from Lausanne to nearby Chardonney (VD). Three z59B were affixed (comprising 9 centimes franking) and the stamps were cancelled with the Lausanne Exp. Lett. (despatch office) cds at 11pm on 21/6/1898. The shortfall was noted with a blue-crayoned figure 1 on the cover. The letter arrived at Bussy post office the next day where a single 1c blue postage due (zP1) was affixed. The deficiency was duly collected, confirmed by cancellation of the postage due stamp by the Bussy cds of 22/6/98. Interestingly, according to Karl Gebert's *'Postelchronik'* that post office was opened as Bussy-Chardonney in 1874 but it became plain Bussy in August the same year. In 1902 it was renamed Bussy sur Morges but reverted to its original name in 1962. *'Plus ça change'*, it seems. This cover has similarities to the second item shown in the 1988 article: in both cases it seems odd that only 9c worth of stamps were used when the senders must have been aware that such an amount was not the correct rate for postage. Neither appears to be a philatelic 'creation'.

I have not yet come across a cover with a single 1c postage due stamp from any of the subsequent issues and, as nothing has been mentioned in the Newsletter subsequent to the original article it appears that the hunt is still on. The next best thing that I have is Figure 2, an envelope with two 1c postage dues. Posted at Bovernier (VS) on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1895, again with only 9 centimes franking, it was neatly marked on despatch with a blue-crayoned '2' for payment of double the deficiency. This was incorrect at the time as the double-deficiency penalty system had been withdrawn in 1891. Nonetheless, on its arrival at St Gallen the following day the cover received two 1c postage due stamps (zP15GcN) and their cancellation by the St Gallen Brf. Distr. cds confirmed that the double-deficiency was duly collected the next day. Incidentally, the back-stamp on the cover confirmed arrival by midday, the day after posting: considering that it travelled between diametrically opposed corners of the country, this is a nice example of the efficiency of the Swiss postal service 111 years ago.

Figure 3 is a cover addressed to Luzern with single 3c and 5c 'Tell boy' stamps, a 2c shortfall in franking. It was received at Bern Briefexpedition (sorting/despatch) office by 3 am on 11/2/1918. This time the figure 2 in the dreaded blue crayon correctly indicated the postage due payable. Luzern post office affixed two 1c 'Jungfrau' (or 'Alpenrosen') postage dues (z29) and the Luzern Briefträger cds confirmed collection of the amount due by 5pm the same day. Such efficiency! - and at the time that the First World war was nearing its end.

Finally, Figure 4 is an interesting item that suggests Chiasso post office was keen to use up unwanted stocks of z29 in 1921 - perhaps they had little use for them? A block of 20 was affixed to the reverse of an accounting card ('Anrechnungskarte') - apparently being only part of the total Fr1.60 due to be collected. Unfortunately some stamps have been removed from the front of the card.

Figures on the facing page.

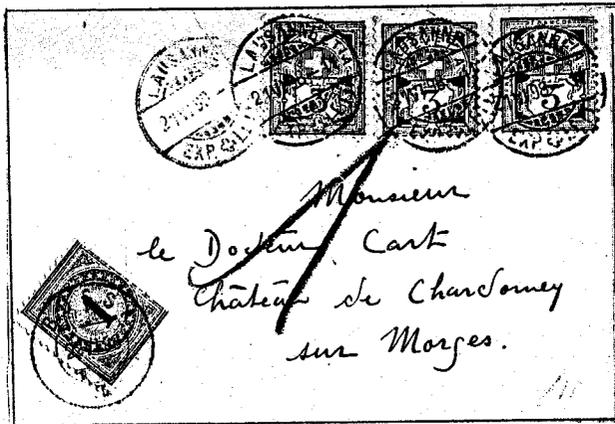


Figure 1



Figure 2

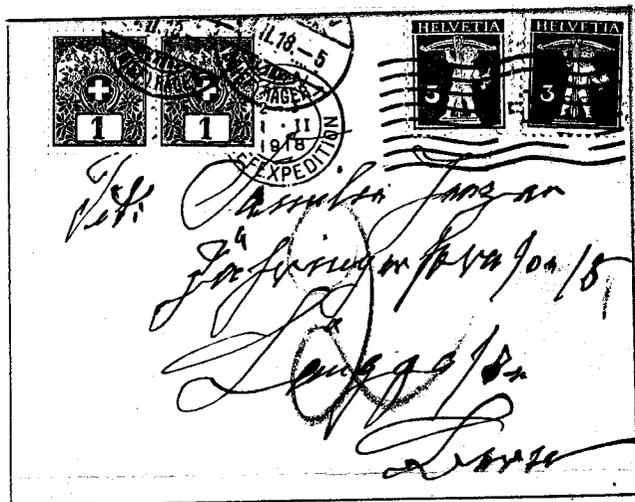


Figure 3

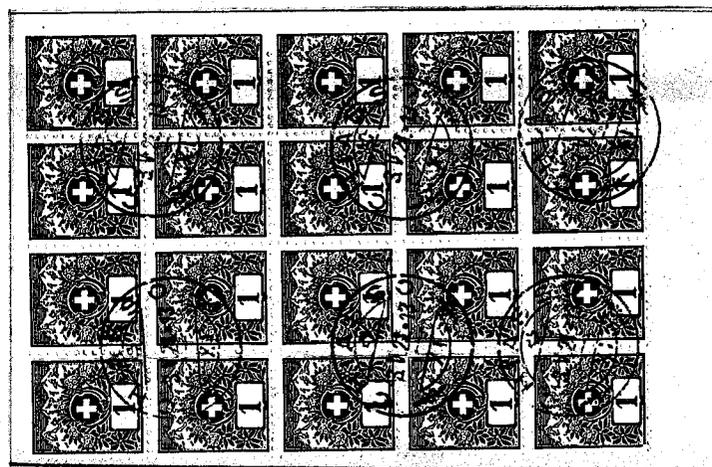


Figure 4

**I.G.STAMPS  
SWITZERLAND**  
Please visit my Web site  
<http://www.igstamps.com>

Over 6000 offers of Swiss stamps and Postal history.  
Each item has a brief description and picture.  
You can search for your particular collecting interest.  
As not all my stock will be listed I welcome your wants list.  
Those members who do not have a computer please contact me.  
I will send you a printed copy of your collecting interests.

Ian Gilchrist, I.G.Stamps, PO Box 15, Harrogate HG1 1SL,  
England  
E Mail [admin@igstamps.com](mailto:admin@igstamps.com)

**Northern Group report:** 'From Post Coach to Jet Plane' was the topic chosen by Dennis Cairns for the December meeting. Dennis began with a selection of postcards showing horse-drawn mail vehicles. Then followed examples of the mail carried by post coach. These came with a variety of strikes and included a section on Canton Ticino with examples of the 'ovals'. Also here were examples of Verbano ship marks of Lake Maggiore. This led nicely into the next section dealing with the ship cancellations and cachets of lakes Lucerne, Zürich and Bodensee. Dennis pointed out that before the railways the lake steamers were important for the carriage of mail and goods. The coming of the railways was then shown and illustrated with a variety of TPO marks. The Gotthard route was looked at in some detail while examples were shown from the private railways. The introduction of the Mobile Post Offices was then covered with a variety of cachets shown for various events. A small section then showed the various stamps issued on the transport theme. The final section of Dennis's display dealt with airmail. Included here were examples of pioneer flights from the early days of mail carrying. Noted was a nice used on cover example of the propeller overprint on the 50c. Helvetia with Sword of 1919. After this came the various airmail stamps issued and their use on a variety covers including first and special flights. Also shown were photographs of Swissair aircraft used for mail carrying. Overall this was a wide ranging display superbly illustrated with a wide variety of material much appreciated by all present. Dennis was thanked by Chairman David Colman. DH

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The next meeting in Salisbury will take place on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February, at the Clovelly Hotel; from 10:30 to 4pm. Martin Mantell will entertain us with "The Zeppelin Story". A display not to be missed!

Those attending the meeting are invited to bring items from their collection for a "members display", consisting of one or two frames (9 sheets per frame)

An Instant Auction will take place during the afternoon. Would members please remember to bring their completed vendor forms together with their sale items. Anyone without a vendor form should contact Fred Hoadley 01403 711987 (email: [Fred.hoadley@btinternet.com](mailto:Fred.hoadley@btinternet.com))

Teas, coffees, and a light buffet lunch will be available.

Summer and autumn meetings at Salisbury will be held on 16<sup>th</sup> June and 27<sup>th</sup> October. Watch the Newsletter for further detail.

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### Annual Meeting 2007

Norton Wragg Treasurer on behalf of the Northern Group

Following the success of the meeting held in Salisbury in 2006 and the changes agreed at the AGM plans have now been made for next year.

The meeting will be held at the Wheatlands Lodge Hotel on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May. There will be a full programme of displays and an auction which will include railways material. Ian Gilchrist has agreed to provide a sales table. The inclusive cost will be £10 per delegate covering Tea and Coffee and Lunch. We are also arranging a meal in the evening to which wives and partners will be invited. Full details will be available next month together with a booking form.

The hotel is situated approximately 10 minutes walk from York Station on the south west side of the city. York is a popular holiday and shopping destination with many interesting places to visit in the area. So why not make it a weekend break! I have reserved some rooms at the hotel for the Friday and Saturday evening at a cost of £35 per person per night including Breakfast. If you would like to book accommodation please contact the hotel direct on 01904 654318. Please mention the society when booking.

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NEW MEMBER - The Society is pleased to welcome Mr Lucas Witte-Vermeulen of Sharnbrook.

## Did You Know ?

M.Rutherford

THAT I managed to find out some more about the NOM label mentioned last month. This service is available only to firms, not individuals (like philatelists) and is in fact the new electronic version of the old "AR" return signed postcard system, which remains, as it provides an actual signature of receipt and is still cheaper. The receiving post office sends an electronic message to the sender firm that the correct person has taken over the item. This is sufficient for most purposes and is theoretically world-wide.

THAT a new Swiss Railway Atlas has appeared, 80 pages (A4 plus) in colour, but only in German. If you are interested you can obtain a 16-page listing of all available railway books from [www.minirex.ch](http://www.minirex.ch), of Luzern. Price 49.00 Frs, excl. P&P. A number of British publications are included in this list too.

THAT a 1935 letter from Wallenstadtberg to Luzern, shown to me the other day, was returned to the sender marked with a black text, see figure 1, which is new to me and to others. Perhaps a Member has one in his "box", without realising its significance. The text could be read as "Unsuccessfully called out", but how?

THAT in an old auction catalogue I have come across another "fake" PJ 1912 label, naturally on the Italian one, see figure 2. The remnants of the Swiss Cross in the upper segment are enough proof that the cancel was made after 1914. However a neat proof is the large dot (instead of a dash) ahead of the time of day, 10 am. This dot was introduced in 1919 when the time reels of all cancellers had to be successively modified to indicate time in the 24 hour system (replacing the old: Roman for A.M. and Arabic for P.M.). This had become the norm for the railways in Europe, and as the Swiss Post Office and the Swiss National Railways were in the same Ministry, and as they had to cooperate intimately in any case, it was logical to have the same time-indicating system.

THAT for the 10<sup>th</sup> time the SP will send during the Christmas Season any parcel addressed to the Swiss Red Cross free, as part of their "Twice Christmas" programme to help needy children, ie, originally for presents not needed by their first recipients. Now parcels of new items for the winter, for school or food, can be handed in at any PO. This year will probably exceed the average of 300 tons, which 500 volunteers in Bern will sort out for distribution in Switzerland and Eastern Europe. The idea came from the Swiss Radio in 1997.

THAT the first example of the new-style Letterbox, (see figure 5 on page 57, Nov 2006), has been spotted in Zürich! By 2010 all 20 000 old boxes, of 13 different types, will be replaced by this new thief-proof pillarbox. The SP mention however that the distribution is being rationalised, many will be moved to better locations, and some will vanish. Only last collection times will be shown. As in other countries the customers are groaning, but the SP says "We have the lowest number of potential users per box than anywhere else in the world"

THAT as in previous years Zumstein includes a CD with each catalogue, which is a simplified version of their complete active CD-ROM, but as I have now found out for myself, the "free" version is very good and useful for most purposes. Try it!

THAT recently the SP has issued some interesting stamps in a new series ProSpecieRara, for 2, 3 and 4 CHF, for re-introduced fruits. This important scientific work has also resurrected a number of animals, pigs and goats for instance, as well as old wheat varieties, to maintain a broader gene bank. Will they be able to give the Neanderthals another chance one day?

THAT during the Olten "Day of the Stamp" Exhibition I had the chance to get one of the new labels from expert Markus Seitz of Luzern, see figure 3, printed at his stand. One million of these new Do It Yourself "stamps" have been printed at home or office, with all manner of subjects, often photographs, till now. The old type with a four-part 2-D matrix will very soon be phased out. So far a great success story. Price per letter?

THAT there were about twice as many Open Class exhibits as the organisers had expected, showing an increasing interest in this field. The creator of the prize-winning stamp, B.Castellani was present for some hours on 2 days, and during this time signed hundreds of covers, cards and some peculiar creations with good humour. The Philatelic Bureau was also very pleased, as the stamps bought will seldom be handled by PostMail.

Erfolgos ausgerufen  
Inconnu à l'appel

Figure 1



Figure 2

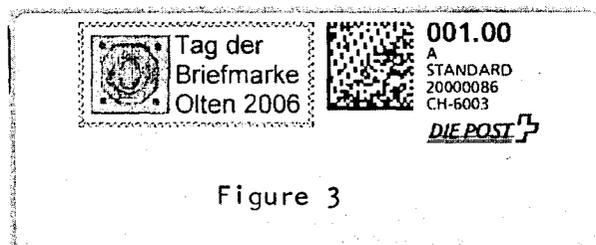


Figure 3

NOT JUST ANOTHER 1c (see pages 4&5) but seven - from John Millener

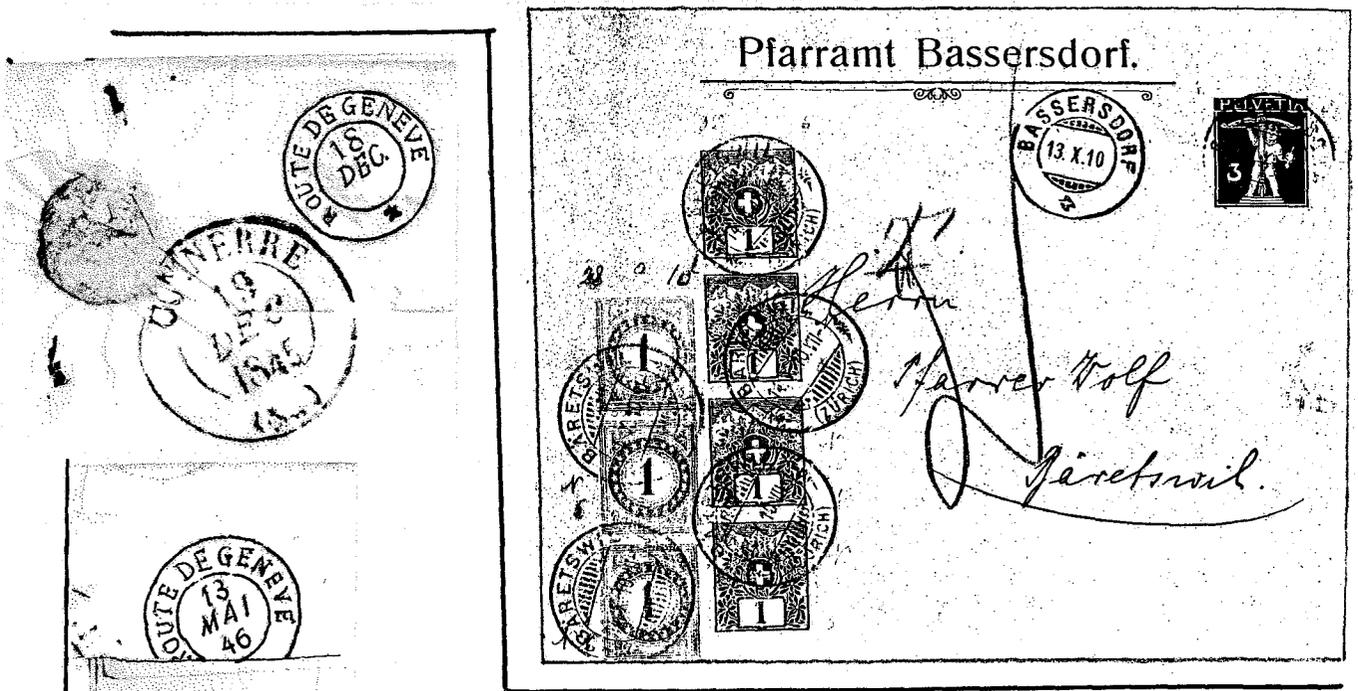
I enclose a photocopy of an understamped cover put into the post on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1910 at Bassersdorf and addressed to Baretswil, both in Canton Zürich. I bought this at the recent exhibition and fair at Torquay and thought it might be of interest to readers of Newsletter. The sender, Pfarramt Bassersdorf is, so far as I can ascertain, an official Priest's Office where, I assume, arrangements could be made for priestly duties to be performed and taxes or fees paid. I may well be entirely incorrect in this translation.

However, the main point of philatelic interest to me is that the cover is franked with a 3c Tell Boy stamp (in deep violet with cord of crossbow in front of stock - Z118) whereas the rate at the time was 5c for a local letter or 10c for elsewhere in Switzerland. The printed paper rate was 2c. The charge for an understamped letter at that particular time was equal to the deficient postage which in this case, not being a local letter, was calculated at 7c. What especially appealed to me was the combination of postage due labels used on 14<sup>th</sup> October in two separate vertical strips consisting of three of the 1c of the 'figures in circle of stars' issue and four of the 1c of the new 'Cross of the Federation and Jungfrau' issue. As the labels of the new design were only issued on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1910 the use of the two issues together would appear to be genuine rather than a philatelic concoction.

A modest flight of fancy on my part is that the postmaster or his clerk at Baretswil said to himself 'As I don't use a great number of the 1c stamps I will use up the last few remaining stamps of the old issue and then start on the recently received sheet of the new design.' To achieve this he placed the two strips in the only place available on the envelope. Well, that's my story and it fits!

But the question is why should what appears to be a nice commercial cover be understamped? One would think that the sender would know the correct postage rate at the time. Furthermore, how can one make the blue crayon figure written over the address into a '7'? The 'T' tax mark is written in violet crayon.

Any comments would be appreciated.



Cedric Dry has sent these ROUTE DE GENEVE marks; can you shed any light on them?

These two 'enhanced' marks, in light blue as backstamps on letters written to Connerre, France, south west of Paris near Le Mans. The letters originated at Estavayer-le-Lac, received the T.B. mark at Bern, then entered France at Maiche, an unusual route(?). Can you help with this query?

# HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Founded in 1946 by Edward H Spiro

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No. 2 February 2007

## FORGERIES OF THE 1900 UPU ISSUE.

When the late John Mitchell came up to Leeds in November 2003 to give the Northern Group his presentation on this issue, I initiated a correspondence about the known forgeries of this issue and John hoped to produce an article on the subject for this Newsletter. In his display he had crude forgeries of the three values which were exactly the same as three forgeries in my own collection.

He obtained his copies many years ago from Mr. Katcher of the 'Amateur Collector' and was given to understand that they were the only forgeries of this issue to come to light. I got mine from Ian Gilchrist five years ago but the origin of the forgeries is unknown.

The forgeries are very poor quality and it is hard to understand why they were made. John's notes are very precise and I can do no better than précis his remarks.

Each of the values is on original paper with two clear impressed control marks. How this paper came to be in the hands of the forger is a philatelic mystery as is why such a forgery was made with no financial gain possible. One can only presume that the forgery was done just for the pleasure of creating a copy even though it is so crude.

The postmark is dated 30.VI.01 which is some seven months after the UPU issue was invalidated on 31.12.1900. Had the forged stamps been on a card or envelope and posted on 30.VI.01 it would no doubt have been spotted by the postal clerk who would have manually scored it out using a pen, not a canceller. This indicates that the cancellation is also a forgery.

If anyone has any information on this forgery I would be very pleased to have some further light thrown on the subject.



Cedric Dry