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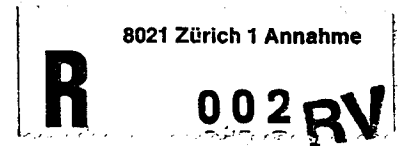
No. 1

J A N U A R Y 1 9 9 6

50th year

'RV' - A SPECIAL TYPE OF REGISTRATION

M Rutherford



Almost unknown to philatelists there is a special registration service available in Switzerland only, to big firms, banks, insurance companies and others for sending cash and documents at a cheaper rate than 'Insured'. This service can also be used by individuals, but is rare; I have one on a white C6 cover.

The most obvious sign for this service is that the plain white 'R' label has a 'V' or 'RV' added, either printed, stamped or by hand, usually in black as shown in the three figures above. Note that the green 'R' for 'PP' labels is also possible for bulk mailings above 50 pieces (figure 4). The old red 'R' is now being replaced by the new black 'R'.

What does 'V' stand for? It depends who you ask: Valeur=Insured, Vermerkt=Listed, Versiegelt=Sealed. This brings in the second indicator, the letter must be sealed on the back with sealing wax impressed with the firm's official seal, that is the same as Insured letters. About 10 years ago the PTT allowed a new heat-sensitive dark-blue sealing strip to be used, also impressed with the official seal. This has the great advantage of being flat and can be exhibited under glass, which is seldom possible with lumpy sealing wax. One seal I found had only a four-figure number, it was the same as their franking machine number! Thirdly the envelope is mainly heavy yellow/orange-coloured, as is usually used for many large-sized registered letters, or it is buff. Sizes are usually B6 up to C4. The colour also shows that 'RV' lies between 'V' for insured and 'R' for registered.

There is no extra charge for this service and the usual rates for registration apply. The franking is usually by a red frank, often on a sticker as the sealed cover would be too bulky to go through the office franking machine. The compensation on loss is also the same, now a maximum of CHF 450.- (raised from CHF 300.- in February 1992), even

though the cover might well contain thousands of francs in notes.

Although the letter is handled as a normal 'R' letter, it is actually listed numerically during the transfer from sending to receiving PO, which is not the case for ordinary 'R' letters. In a way this is more like the UK system of Insured where the Swiss 'R' is more like the old UK Recorded Delivery system.

So 'RV' is cheaper but the risk is higher. However, cash transfer via the postman is more expensive and the risk of the postman being robbed is to be considered.

These labels should never be removed from the cover however, if the top and both sides are cut through the rear will remain attached to the front for exhibition purposes, to show the seals.

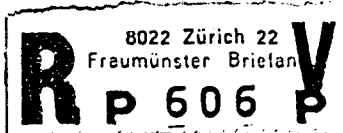


Figure 4 - Printed on white R P 606 P in green. V is handstamped in violet and the PO name is in black.

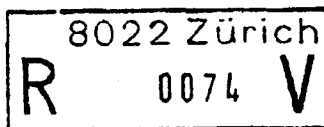


Figure 5 - Handstamped on the cover. R and its frame in red, the rest in black including the frame.

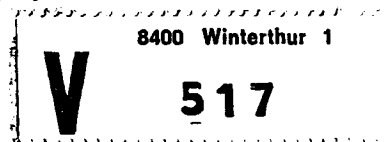


Figure 6 - Insured label, in pink, with the printing in black.

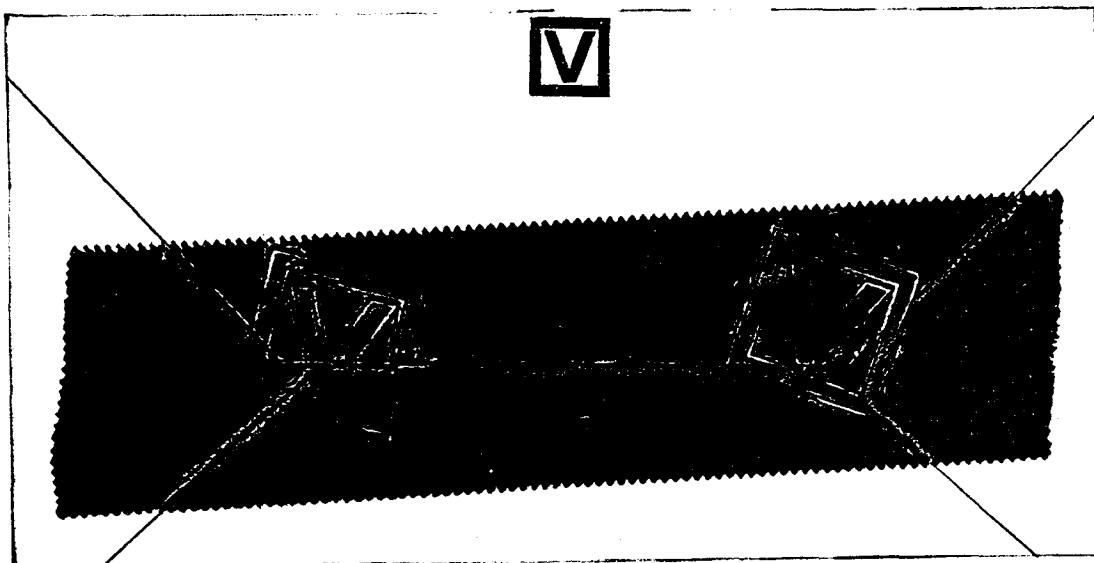
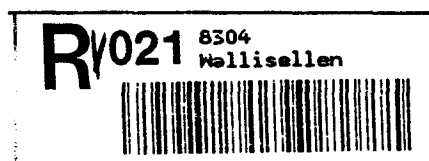


Figure 7 - Dark-blue sealing strip applied with heat, then struck with the firm's seal, in this case the 'V', as also printed on the cover, stands for 'Volksbank'.

* STOP PRESS * One of the new bar-coded labels as an 'RV'.



Prop: Geoff Hubbard

EUROSTAMPS

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NW6 2JP



Meet me at the following venues:- 6 Jan. SWINDON, 7 Jan. BLETCHLEY, 13 Jan. CHINGFORD, 14 Jan. WOKINGHAM, 28 Jan. DUNSTABLE and 4 Feb. HATFIELD. Whilst many prices have increased due to the strong Franc, I have been able to hold my prices and some have gone down !!

POSTAL CHARGES ON JUDICIAL DOCUMENTS

Felix Winterstein

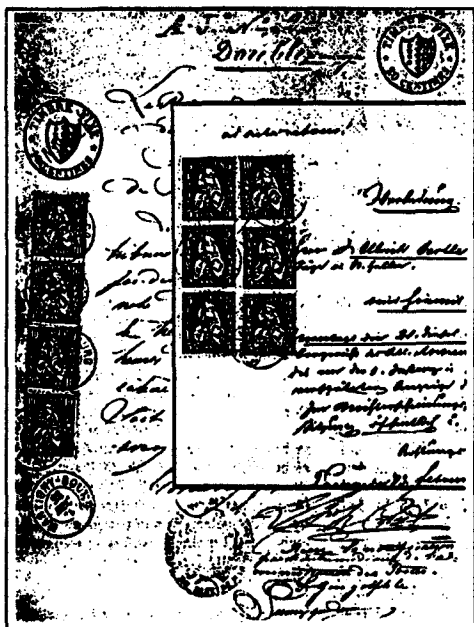
Following member D A Dixie's query in the October 1995 issue of the Newsletter, p 78, concerning the 45c charge on a court summons Fred Pickard has supplied the following information. This was first published in the SBZ of December 1983 and translated by Henry Alsberg for publication in Tell in November 1993.

The delivery of all kinds of judicial papers by post commenced on 1st November 1875, and is still in use today, making it possible for a court authority to pay the postage, in advance, for the return of, for example, an accepted summons. Certain conditions applied, the following being the most important:

1. Two identical copies were to be presented at the Post Office, one of which was to be delivered to the addressee, the other being returned to the sender with the declaration of successful delivery, i.e., it had been signed for.
2. The postage charged was that of an internal registered letter with return receipt. This was to be attached in stamps to the copy to be returned to the sender. This was made up for either local or the rest of Switzerland, a registered surcharge of 10c plus a 20c fee for the internal return receipt (instituted on 1st September 1871).
3. Delivery was by normal postal personnel using their customary routes according to the regulations for the delivery of registered letters. The Post Office gave the same guarantees concerning liability which applied to other registered letters.

With the exception of later tarif changes, these regulations remained ▷

The illustration below shows an 'Acte judiciaire' No. 2 which was sent from Martigny in the Valais to St. Gingolph and returned with a declaration of successful delivery. The 40c rate was only possible for 10 months. Note also the 'fiscal'. Dated 23 December 1875.

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practically unchanged for decades. On 1st January 1918 the simultaneous increase in both the letter and registered rates by 5c brought the totals to 45c and 50c. A further increase occurred 3 years later.

This table shows how the charges were calculated and varied during the early period from 1871 to 1884.

| <u>In force</u> | <u>Distance</u> | <u>Letters*</u> | <u>R surcharge</u> | <u>Return receipt</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1.9.1871 | local | 5c | 10c | 20c | 35c** |
| | rest Switz. | 10c | 10c | 20c | 40c** |
| 1.9.1876 | local | 5c | 20c | 20c | 45c |
| | rest Switz. | 10c | 20c | 20c | 50c |
| 1.11.1884 | local | 5c | 10c | 20c | 35c |
| | rest Switz. | 10c | 10c | 20c | 40c |

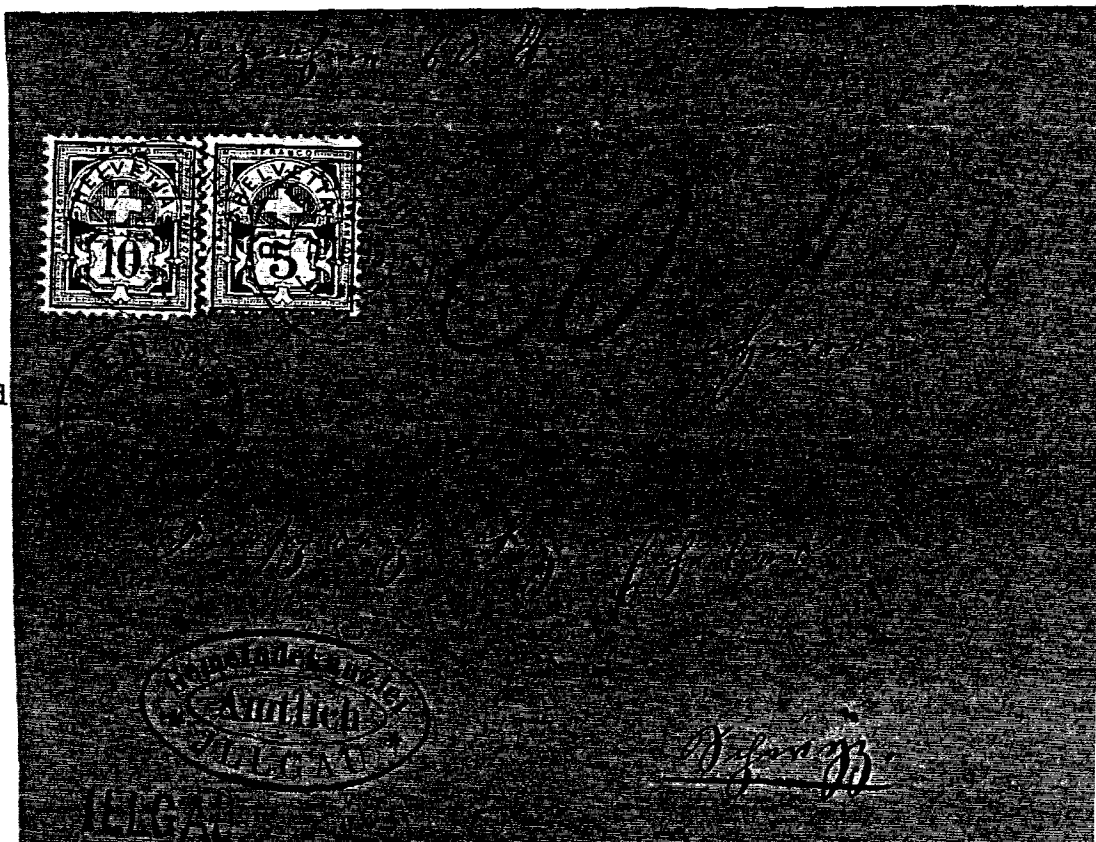
*While the weight limit for simple letters was raised from 15g to 250g at the beginning of the 1890s, this weight was already valid for judicial papers from 25th July 1877 (decree No. 179/1877).

**Only from the 1st November 1875.

Very few examples have been preserved from the first short period and no pre-printed forms are known, perhaps this new facility spread only slowly. From 1876 to 1884 mixed frankings occur frequently in many combinations, including those stamps from the 1882 issue which could only have been used for about 2½ years. After 1884, the franking now reduced by 10c are not rare.

After 1907 Basel courts had a special private printing for judicial documents destined only for local use charged at 35c and 45c (see the Zumstein Ganzsachen catalogue). No regulations have yet been found concerning 'multiple addressing' i.e., one document addressed to more than one person. A few of these documents have come to light which appear to have been sent on a regular basis so the system must have worked.

WHO CAN HELP now we have solved the query above? K W Varlow of Kent would like to know why the Nachnamen charge was 60c on this cover sent from Illgau and postmarked Ried on 13.III.95, received in Schwyz 10 km away the same day. The recipient was a business called 'Ehrler' but the first two words of their title are not clear. Information to the Editor please for publication in



Forthcoming meetings

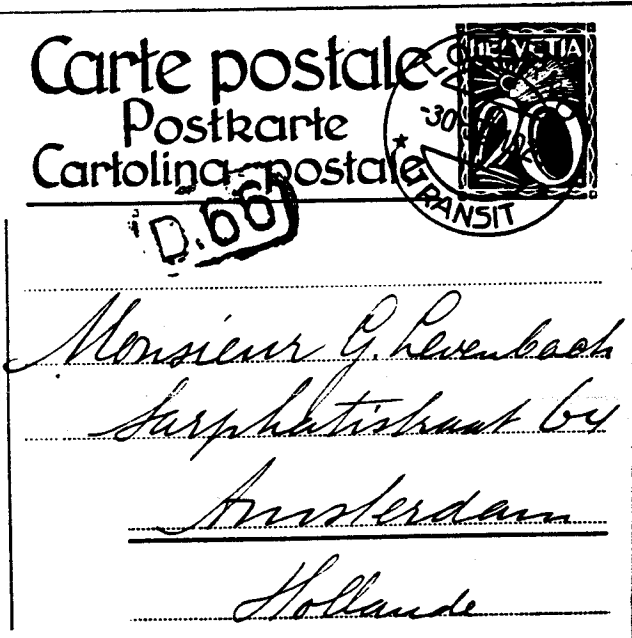
Northern Group - February 3rd - Annual Competition.
 London - February 14th - Mixed Frankings - All members.
 Sussex - March 16th - A Trip round Ticino - R S Johnson.

FRENCH MAIL CANCELLED IN SWITZERLAND?

On the 15th December the Postmaster of Geneva Montbrillant was interviewed on the 'France Inter' radio programme to explain why he had accepted 28 tonnes of French mail for processing in his Post Office. He explained that this was done to help a fellow member of the UPU as the post in France was on strike. Did the French supply a 'crown' to be used in the Swiss franking machine? Was the French mail cancelled as if posted in Switzerland? Is the only way to see if a French cover was processed in Switzerland the tell-tale bar code marks at the bottom. Keep your eyes open for something from this 28 tonnes. Any information to the Editor please.

DUTCH MAIL CANCELLED IN TICINO! from Bob Johnson.

This postal stationery item from 1926 bears a LOCARNO TRANSIT postmark which is unusual in that it is '-30-III-1926'. The cancel is very clear and sharp and almost looks as if it has been printed on the card. On the back of the card is a sales message from a hatter in Amsterdam about Stetsons and Borsalino hats, and addressed to a customer in Amsterdam. Was this a gimmick to post it in a foreign country or was the postage less from Locarno than the Dutch domestic rate? All the comments you may have to the Editor please.

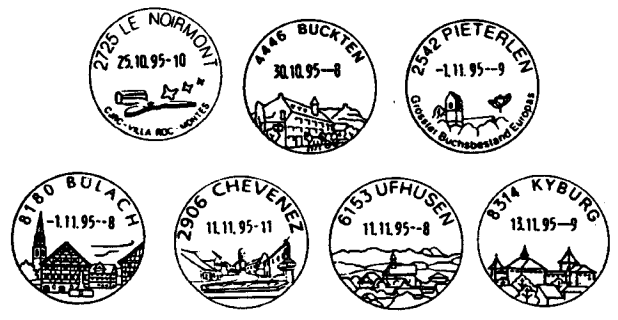


Amsterdam, Mrt. 1926.
Wel Ed. Geb. Heer,
der geteekende bericht U de ontvangst
vroote sorteerling Stetson (Philadelphia)
rsalino (Italië) hoeden.
ij voor levering beleeft in Uw zeer gewaar-
wnst aanbevelend heeft hij de eer te zijn
Uw d.w. dienaar
N. de Haan
Heerenhoeden Magazijn t. Beurspoortje
nr 43835
30 Rokin 30

K-cancels and corrections courtesy of the SVPS-ASCEP

2947 Charmoille is K 1457 (not 1458); 6999 Astano is K 1458 (not 1457).

| | | | |
|--------|-----------------------|----|----------|
| K 1460 | 2725 Le Noirmont | JU | 25.10.95 |
| K 1461 | 4446 Buckten | BL | 30.10.95 |
| K 1462 | 2542 Pieterlen | BE | 01.11.95 |
| K 311a | 8180 Bülach | ZH | 01.11.95 |
| K 1463 | 2906 Chevenez | JU | 11.11.95 |
| K 1464 | 6153 Uhusen | LU | 11.11.95 |
| K 1465 | 8314 Kyburg | ZH | 13.11.95 |
| K 255b | 8058 Zürich Flughafen | ZH | 17.11.95 |
| K 1466 | 8212 Neuhausen 1 | SH | 25.11.95 |
| K 1467 | 6285 Retschwil | LU | 28.11.95 |
| K 1468 | Buchs LU | LU | 30.11.95 |



NORTHERN GROUP. When the title of the display is "Favourite Swiss Town or Region" what criteria does one use to determine what to show in the light of the fact that there are so many beautiful places in that country? The answer came from one member who said that what he was going to present was about the area to which he would return if he knew that that would be his last visit to Switzerland. A sentiment with which there was total agreement. So what was displayed by the three members who had brought along material?

D. Hope elected to show items relating to the Bernese Oberland, with particular reference to the Thunersee and Brienersee. There were a number of covers bearing the cachets of the various vessels which ply along the lakes, although the postal cancellations, of course, were made on shore. Numerous early publicity 'K' cancellations presented a flavour of the many resorts in this region, plus various issues of stamps, photographs and postcards which reflected the scenery and culture of the Bernese Oberland.

Zermatt and the surrounding area was the choice of R. A. Hoyle, starting with mint and used blocks of four of the 5c, 1913 P.J. issue depicting the Matterhorn in the background, followed by complete mint sheets of the 10c. & 30c. issue of 1965 commemorating the Centenary of the 1st Ascent of the Matterhorn. This was followed by a wealth of material which included photographs and postcards centred around what is probably Switzerland's most notable mountain. Included in this section were a 5c. Essay featuring the Matterhorn which had been entered in a Post Office competition in 1933 and a number of Soldiers Stamps also depicting the mountain. To conclude his display Mr. Hoyle showed a few photographs and postal items relating to the Engstlensee, near the Joch Pass and which was featured on the 10c. P.J. issue of 1929, this being an area favoured by Mrs. Hoyle!

Aspects of Lac Lemman was chosen by D. Cairns with material relating to Geneva, Lausanne and Montreux. Only a little of the wealth of philatelic material associated with the lake could be shown but sheets dealt with the Red Cross (Geneva), the Olympic Games (Lausanne), the Rochers-de-Naye Railway and Chateau Chillon (Montreux). Additional items in the form of cards and covers highlighted aspects conference, tourism and the extensive areas of vineyards along the shores of the lake.

It was pure chance that the three members had selected completely different regions but in his vote of thanks Mr. D. Whitworth stated that it had given at least one member who had not been to Switzerland for more than twenty years an appetite for renewing his acquaintance with that country.

D.C.

On December 13th twelve members and a visitor attended the last LONDON MEETING of 1995. Held in the Victory Services Club as usual, the evening began with Claude Mistely reading a letter of appreciation from Tony Hoyle who had been elected a Society Honorary Member at last month's AGM. The entertainment then began with six displays using the evening's theme of, *Letter 'J' - all members*.

As is usual on such occasions members ingenuity was in considerable evidence. Material was displayed under Interlaken, UPU Jubilee, Junk Mail, stamps issued in January, June and July, perfins used by firms with a J in their initial or name, Junkers aircraft, Joint issues with other countries, Jet flights, Jamborees, Jungfrau cards, and Jura Industriel Railway stamps. Of course Pro Juventute featured but not to any great extent probably because members thought everybody would bring such material! And how large a collection of stamps can you display where the initial of the person shown contains a J? Slogans were not forgotten either - St Jacob an der Birs was featured on a variety of Pro Patria cards.

As was only to be expected some items took the notetaker's eye. The unusual postal rates displayed on meter marks was one - where else can you see 36ct for instance. And fancy seeing perfin impressions on pre-printed postcards; the 1909 10ct Helvetia card in this case. And do you always look on the back of the postcards for sale in dealers boxes? Here we had two of the 1900 UPU cards one with small designs in oil paint and the other with an exquisite pen and ink drawing. Not philatelic you might argue but a delightful reflection of the social times. One of our members showed a 5ct UPU card with the three UPU stamps added and posted in Zurich. He explained that he had purchased the accompanying 10ct card some years later - three additional UPU stamps as before, addressed in the same hand to the same person, and stamped Zurich but an hour later and from a different sub post office. It is such finds that make collecting so enjoyable.

In ending the meeting Claude said we had seen some scarce and attractive material, and had a lot of fun into the bargain. Having wished us a happy Christmas he reminded us that the next meeting was *Switzerland 1920 - 1929* - there must be something I can take along!

JAC

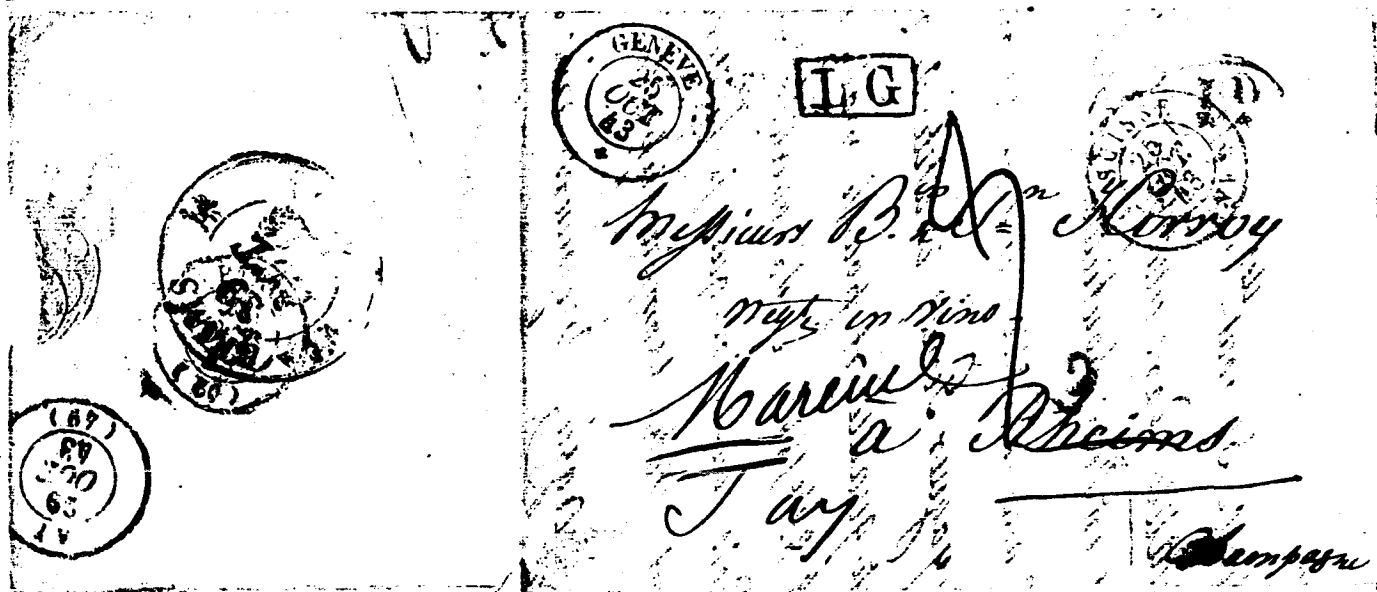
Did you know?

M Rutherford

- that on 1.1.96 the inland and foreign rates went up, although at the time of writing the PTA announcement has been made, but there are none of the usual tables or booklets available giving all rates in detail. Basically the A & B mail go up 10c to 90 & 70 inland and 110 & 90 for Europe, and overseas is 180 (no change) & 110. Inland registered letter now CHF 5.- (including 90c A mail), while for all foreign the additional charge is up from 3 to 4 CHF. Large covers B4 and above are called Maxi but more on this subject later.
- that a completely new rule has been introduced aimed directly at the philatelists, in that loose stamps for cancelling must have a value of at least 20c. This is because of the number of people who collect K and other special cancels on loose 5c ATMs. No mention is made of such low value stamps being stuck on cards or covers, as is done in the SVPS New Issue Service (to cut costs), so I expect that is still acceptable.
- that another important change which affects stamp clubs and others, is that the previous minimum number of 100 Newsletters, Bulletins etc., handed in at the same time is raised to 1000. This means that about 3000 such clubs, music, gymnastic, shooting and others will have to pay the normal B mail rate, i.e., about a 400% increase.
- that when I tried to order new booklets for the 70 and 90c stamps, with sheet number and printing date, the Philatelic Service in Bern wrote to me 'not available', though they told our member in Boston, USA, that they were available, FD cancelled only. We will see.
- that not only the 'old' 80c A stamp is not officially listed, but also the 80c booklet, the 60c postcard, and the 3 and 3.50 labels. The Philatelic Service told me they are to remain on sale until exhausted at all counters. A funny way to sell things.
- that I came across this gem while looking for something else. During her stay in Luzern in 1868 Queen Victoria went up Pilatus, on the pony she had brought from England! The lake steamer 'Winkelried' was put at the disposal of the royal party for their various trips. Where are the letters sent back to England now, with this ship cancellation?
- that I have been looking through more 50c Postman stamps and have found that, with a 10x magnifying glass and good light, there are vestiges of the 'stroke in T' on all sheet stamps too, but I think this is only a curiosity. On coil stamps it is clear and complete, on booklet stamps upper and lower bits only, on the second printing. The first booklet printing and sheet stamps, including the red surcharge of 1987, show vestiges.
- that the PTT Museum has updated its Junior Action Area with the installation of four computers. On two of them you can design your own stamps, from a vast store of views and objects which can be placed in the standard Helvetia format in any size and layout, in colour, but the print-out shows a large single and a cancelled block of four in black and white only. On the other two computers are listed some of the remarkable covers and other items to be found in the Museum, with their data, and a quiz can be answered (with the help of the Zumstein catalogue on the table, if necessary). For those reaching maximum points, for beginners and advanced, a certificate is printed out. Very well done and an additional attraction, with the aim to learn how to use the catalogue and exhibits. German, French, Italian or English can be selected by the user.

MORE HELP NEEDED ON ROUTES AND RATES by our member John Millener

The entire shown here raises questions not only of the markings but of the contents of the letter. Some of the questions are answered by previous articles in the Newsletter but not all.



The letter was written by someone called Ribiollett in Frontenex près Genève, on 25 8bre 1843 (October was the 8th month) to a wine merchant in Reims (spelt Rheims on the address) ordering a panier of 50 bottles of 1st quality sparkling white wine of Champagne. A quarter were to be in $\frac{1}{2}$ bottles (you work it out). It is cancelled Genève 25 OCT 43 in red, boxed LG in red, Suisse Ferney 25 OCT 43 in red and 2 in red. If the 2 represents the refund of postage to Switzerland from Geneva to the border was it in French decimes or Swiss Kreuzer? The 1d in an oval struck in black is the French Rural Decime presumably for the redirection from Rheims to Ay. On the reverse it has Paris 28 OCT 43 in blue, Reims 29 OCT 43 in black and Ay 29 OCT 43 in black. On the face is a manuscript mark which could be a 9. The article on p 19 of the Newsletter, March '91, explains the workings of the Rural Decime which it seems should have been struck in red not black but even Larousse can not explain why the town of Ay to where the letter was sent is written clearly as 'Jay'. M. Ribiollett says that if the wine is not as good as that which the representative offered to taste when he called then they could take it back again! I hope he was satisfied.

A STRANGE CANCEL from Michael Rutherford



This is the most peculiar cancel I have ever seen. It should not have been classified as a 'K' as it will certainly be used for only a year. Basel 32 is located in the factory area of La Roche the chemical company and is not public.



Can anyone help D Ripley with this mark? These 'Chiffres Taxes' marks were used in the pre-Federal post period 1840-50. This was struck in 1858. Was it used to show that postage had been pre-paid or what? Suggestions to the Editor please.



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No. 2

FEBRUARY 1996

50th year

A SWISS LABEL FOR WARTIME SHIPPING

M Rutherford

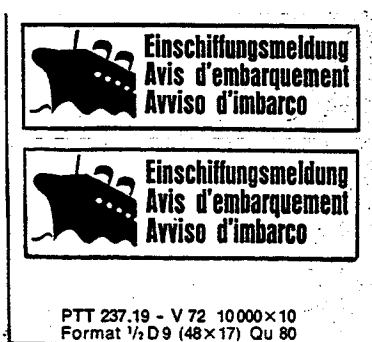
About 20 years ago I asked at the Winterthur HPO (following Ivan Tillen's advice) for a sample of all their labels, and collected a pile the next day. Among them was the first label shown below. This was new to me and so I asked at the counter. Eventually an older staff member was found who could tell me that this label was used on foreign parcels only, during the war. It enabled the sender to have the name of the ship carrying his parcel passed on to him, so that he would know what had happened to his parcel if the ship was sunk.

Then a few weeks ago I saw this label again in the extensive label collection of Max H Wehrli in Zürich. He was able to confirm the reason for this label and, in addition, he had an unused example of the post-card which had to accompany the parcel to the port of shipment.

In the PTT Library I then found, by accident, the other label shown, almost identical, the same brown colour, but rouletted not perforated. The printing date of the first label was January 1941, but that of the second was May 1972! Who was sinking ships in 1972?

Further checking could reveal no other printings, but the postcard, first printed in January 1941, was reprinted twice in 1941, 100 000 each time, and again in 1946, indicating usage after the war had ended.

In the PTA for 31.1.41 I then found the start of the story. At that time only Portugal would co-operate; the service cost 60c, to be paid in advance on the parcel papers. The questions are: has anyone else heard or seen anything of the service? were other countries involved? until when was the service in use?



These labels are in the usual strips of ten and, as can be seen from the printing details, have changed their number from 801 to 237.19 over the years. The rest of the details on the tab are obvious except for the 'Qu 80' on the 1972 version. What does this mean? The second ship seems to have lost its anchor!

PIONEER FLIGHTS 1913 by Evert Poel

Reprinted, with permission, from Jungfrau-post, journal of the 'Studiegroep Zwitserland, Nederland, and translated by R S Johnson

THE BAD LUCK OF THE POSTAL FLIGHT FROM HERISAU - MARCH 1913

The flight - The National Committee of the Flugspende (the foundation for establishment of a military airforce) honoured the town of Herisau with the task of organising the second postal flight in Switzerland (the first was the Basel flight of 9th March). Herisau lies in the immediate neighbourhood of St. Gallen in the north east of the country. The motive was two-fold - a flying meeting had been organised for Easter (23rd and 24th March) in St. Gallen and a number of top pilots (Taddeoli, Favre, Maffei) were available to carry out the postal flight on the 24th of March. How the 'Flieger-tag in Herisau' was to be organised is, to my knowledge, no longer known. Due to bad

weather it did not take place. This postal flight suffered right from the start by being under an unlucky star and was delayed time after time. On the new date of 30th March the weather was miserable and finally Favre was ready to carry the items collected together (2179 in total) on his proposed flight on 31st March from St. Gallen to Genève. (Meanwhile the date of the postal canceller was 30.III.13!)

This flight did not have a happy ending because the pilot encountered bad luck with his motor near Zürich (Niederglatt) and had to give up his flight. The mail was taken on to a post office in Zürich.

Philatelic Specialities - The special cancel put on the 2179 letters and cards contained two historical faults. The first has been mentioned (wrong date) and the second concerned the wording 'II Schweiz. Flugpost'. The delay resulted in this flight finally being the fourth postal flight. However, the special stamp referred to the second postal flight (obtainable for 50c). The stamp has no date as for the Basel stamp; probably this flying stamp was printed for the planned flight of 24th March. There are two issues of this stamp and thereby two different types. Type A, on white paper, is on all the flown mail; Type B, on chamois paper, is not on any of the items. Probably the organisers were afraid that the first issue would be insufficient (the total is not known, but estimated at about 5000) and decided quickly to make a second issue. This was never used postally.

The usual (imperforate) trial print (second issue; with unclear print) exists. The Zumstein Handbook mentions 'Handpresseabzug' (hand press proof impression).

Philatelic scarcities - Too early, items prepared for the flight and probably put in the wrong box so getting the ordinary cancel 30.III.13. Stamps with the lower side imperforate. Stamps with the left corner not printed, due to a fold in the paper. A letter with the special stamp and cancel - scarce because almost all the flown items were on the official card (see the illustration opposite).

