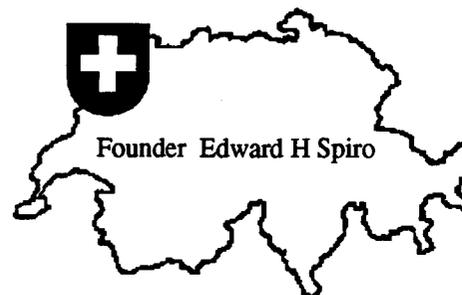


HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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

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

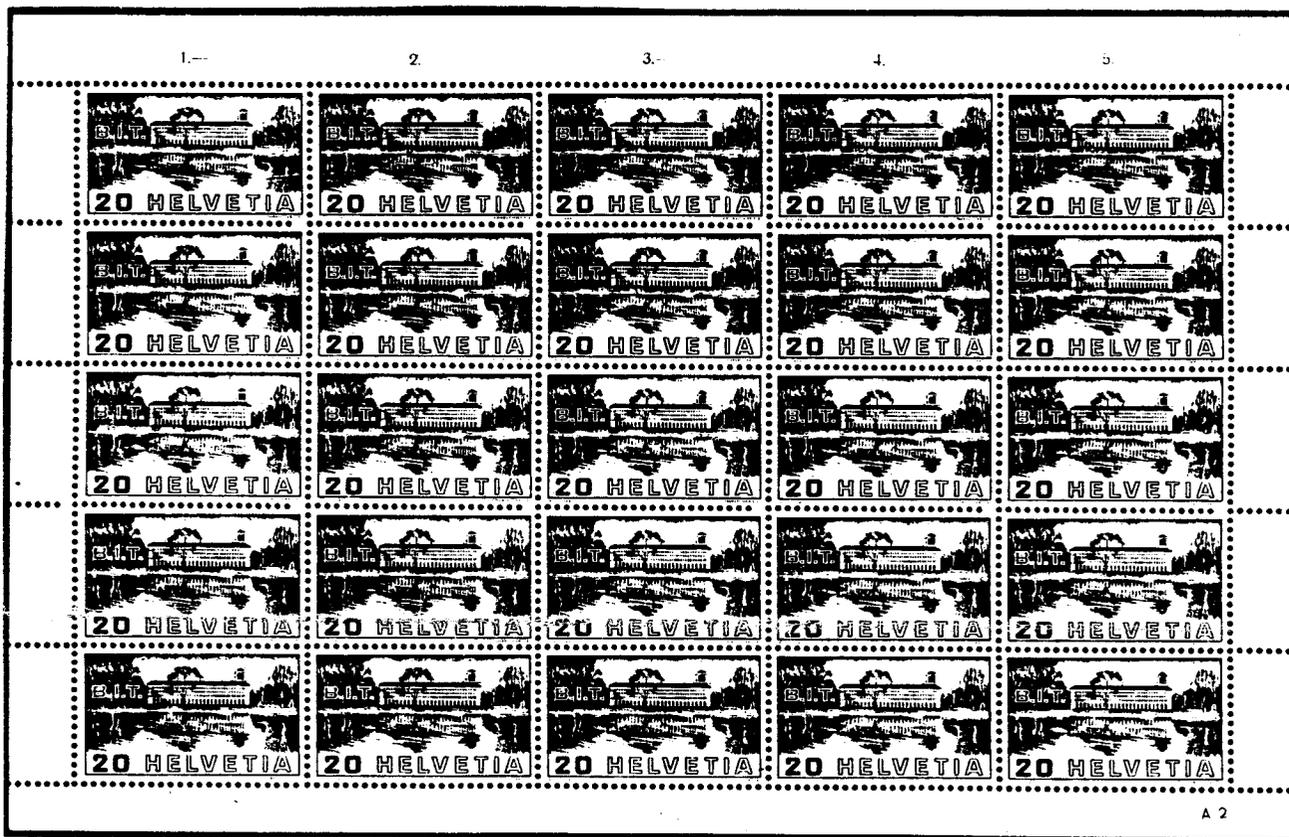
Hon. Editor: Peter Hobbs, Six Tynning End, Widcombe Hill, Bath BA2 6AN Tel: 01 225-31 09 71

No.1 January 1997

NEW VARIETY - missing perforation pin Z 211

F Pickard

A recent purchase of a complete sheet, pane A 2, of the 20c from the 1938 SDN/ BIT issue revealed this unlisted variety. The missing holes are at the bottom RH corners of the fifth and fifteenth stamps. Examination under a microscope shows no sign of an impression. Zumstein have added the variety to their list for the next Specialised catalogue as 211.1.12 Blindzahn in der unteren Ecke.



Your committee has met twice during the current year. Matters discussed have included Rules of the Society, finance, timing and venue of London meetings. Outstanding is the question of the Society Library. At the AGM Ray Hafner did indicate that he would be relinquishing the post of librarian at the end of the year. We need to find an enthusiastic member who would be able to take over this position. It has been suggested that somebody in the London or Home Counties might be best placed but what is essential is that they have sufficient storage space. If anybody is interested in investigating the possibility of becoming

LIBRARIAN

would they please contact our Chairman, Claude Mistely Tel: 01737 551689

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The next meeting will be at 5.55pm for 6.00pm before the London Meeting on February 12th, 1997

A FEW HOURS IN ZERMATT

Derrick Slate

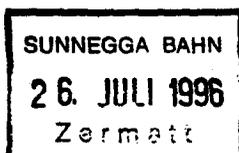
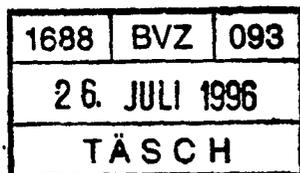
We were staying a week at Baveno (Lake Maggiore) and decided to go on the excursion to Zermatt, over the Simplon road and I thought it would be lovely to go up the Gornergrat railway! On the journey we were told we would have 3 hours there and if anyone was quick they could go up the Rothorn. "What about the Gornergrat?" I enquired, "No, sorry there would not be enough time and sometimes the trains break down" and he looked at me with a very serious face. (Swiss trains break down, I thought?!) So Rothorn here we come. Then we arrived at Täsch.

Unless you have special police permission you can't go into Zermatt other than by train. All cars and coaches park here and you continue on the BVZ railway. I raced into the BVZ office, looked for the nicest female, and with a large smile asked for my envelope to be cancelled. "Oh yes", she said "we have two cancels" - I beamed. Then on to Zermatt.

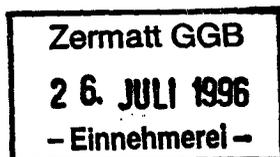
Zermatt to Rothorn - First there is a rack and pinion railway, the Sunnegga Express, and then two cable cars. The express rack and pinion train travels inside the mountain at high speed taking 5 minutes to reach Sunnegga at 2300m. From Sunnegga the first cable car took us to Blauherd at 2601m and then another to Rothorn at 3103m. At the top is a restaurant named Unter Rothorn (this restaurant is at the very top so why 'Unter'?). Marvellous views of Monte Rosa and Matterhorn and we had clear blue skies.

When we returned to Zermatt we had half an hour to look at the old town so after a croissant with nuts and paste filling it was a quick dash to Gornergrat GGB station for a cancel!

PS I reckon we could have just about gone up the Gornergrat railway . . . "but then the "Swiss railways break down" . . . oh well, next time. Addendum - The Simplon pass had lovely fast roads and tunnels, not like it was years ago.



Sunnegga
2300 m ü. M.



Zermatter Rothornbahn AG.
3920 Zermatt

Restaurant *Mach Freunide*
brub Karten
Unter Rothorn
3920 Zermatt



SIMPLON-HOSPITZ
(WALLIS)

Prop: Geoff Hubbard

EUROSTAMPS

Tel: 071-794 8078



P.O. BOX 940
LONDON
NW6 2JP



Geoff Hubbard wishes all his customers, members and friends the very best for 1997. The postal side of the business is now in operation again. Wants lists welcome. New stock of Swiss and German available. Accessories and catalogues also supplied. Start the New Year with a new angle on your collecting.



Switzerland:

Catalogue numbers quoted are from our Catalogue (i.e. Zumstein), followed by S. Gibbons (where listed).

**For those who "HAVE ARRIVED",
must have the rarest & best and can afford it!**

- 1843 "DOUBLE GENEVA" (4L & 4R) on piece, joined in absolutely perfectly matching colour. (SG 2 x 2 to make G1) the right stamp perfect, the left with (invisible) faults. Signed Reuterskiold*£5500
 Ditto, left half (4L, G2) luxury copy on piece*£7250
 Ditto, right half (4R, G2) luxury copy with excessive margins*£7250
 1846 GENEVA LARGE EAGLE (6, G4), fine corner copy on small piece*£1050
 1845 BASEL DOVE unused (8, B1) slight faults (thinnings) but full margined, deeply embossed and brilliantly fresh*£3700
 Ditto, superb faultless copy from upper sheet margin, lightly cancelled on piece. Exceptionally deep embossing!*£8000
 1850 VAUD 5 (10a, L2) superb faultless copy on small piece*£1200
 Ditto, on very fine cover front£1295
 1851 NEUCHATEL (11, L3) luxury copy on small piece*£2950
 1850 Superb cover with mixed frankings (14I + 16IIg, 3+10) both stamps from sheet margin*£2200
 1855 STRUBEL (22B/A1, 25b) the outstandingly rare ERROR OF COLOUR in milky blue. Switzerland's second rarest stamp - of the 5 copies known in this colour the only one to be seen on the market this century*£36,000
 Ditto (26A+26C, 28+37) mixed franking of two different stamps of the same denomination! Superb in every respect and probably unique*£15,750
 1856/7 STRUBEL (22Fa, 42) the rare thin paper in Luxury vertical strip of 3 from left sheet margin. Great Strubel rarity, probably the finest multiple known*£12,000
 1862 STRUBEL (21G+23G, 46+48) very rare combination franking on c.o.d. newsrapper*£1050
 1862 SITTING HELVETIA 60c Bronze (35, 59) overprinted SPECIMEN in blue. Only two copies known!*£1675
 1888 NUMERAL 15c orange (63Ad, 132c) unused & faultless example of this very rare stamp*£6500
 1878 POSTAGE DUE (4A, D108A with background of D105) UNIQUE ERROR discovered in 1979, named "RAYED STAR" Switzerland's rarest stamp ranking equally with the famous 1c British Guyana and Sweden's 3 Skilling Banco*£135,000
 1882 POSTAGE DUE (12N, D118A) fine mint*£2000
 1932 AIRMAIL (16I, 349) double print fine mint (negligible small stain in gum)*£1150
 1940 AIRMAIL (4y/1.09, 317ac) missing background colour, extremely rare. Superb mint*£2250
 1908/33 TELL BOY Gutter Pair, large punched hole in Interspace, superb mint (S19) very rare£1500
 TELL & TELL BOY with small punched hole in Interspace (S25), superb mint and extremely rare*£3750
 TELL BOY 3c overprinted 2½ pair with BLANK Interspace, unmounted mint (SXXIII) only 10 believed to exist*£1200
 1856 HOTEL POST Delightful small cover to Prussia with octagonal Rigi Kaltbad strike. Forerunner prior to issued Hotel stamp, used in conjunction with Strubels 23C and pair of 25B (32+35), cancelled straight-line WEGGIS (Valley Post Office). Outstanding rarity£2250
 1864 HOTEL POST RIGI KALTBAD No. 2a on superb small cover with Sitting Helvetia No. 38*£1950
 1895 HOTEL POST KURORT STOOS (6a) on superb FIRST DAY COVER, Hotel cancellation and Valley Morschach postmark on 2 copies of No. 60. Probably unique£2950
 1922/95 INTERNATIONAL OFFICES COLLECTION in stock book absolutely complete (428 stamps), League of Nations and all other Offices are included, many stamps of which only a few thousand were issued. Top quality used condition£2695

*Items with Swiss Certificates

→ continued

For those who are "STILL TRAVELLING", but also like the best and have good taste, with a slightly limited pocket.

- 1856/7 STRUBEL the rare thin paper 5Rp. (22F, 42) superb copy from upper sheet margin, lightly cancelled with circular postmark, unusual on this stamp *£700
- 1863 SITTING HELVETIA Fr.1. - Gold Bronze (36a, 60) superb mint, rare *£950
- 1882 NUMERAL (60A, 128A) IMPERF FINAL PROOF on paper as issued stamp £900
- 1893 NUMERAL 12c (62B, 131B) unmounted mint HALF SHEET of 50 stamps (Post Office counter size) £630
- 1882 STANDING HELVETIA IMPERF PROOFS in issued colours for the 20, 25, 40, 50c & Fr. 1. - values. Superb and scarce *£875
- Ditto, SPECIMEN Overprint reading diagonally downwards on 40c (69A) £165
- Ditto, reading diagonally upwards on Fr.1.- (71A) £175
- Ditto, small horizontal overprint on 50c (70C) £165
- Ditto, on 30c (68C) £175
- 1878 POSTAGE DUE the rare 100c (8IIcN Type II, D112B) fine mint, very elusive! £950
- 1892 POSTAGE DUE 16Db TYPE I superb mint in block of four with 3 copies of Type II (189DI + 3 x III) *£375
- 1900 UPU 25c re-engraved superb mint (79C) *£725
- 1905 NUMERAL (80, 194) unmounted mint HALF SHEET of 50 stamps (Post Office counter size) £420
- Ditto, No. 81 (195) £490
- 1914 Fr.3.- green (129, 284) superb unmounted mint £1100
- Ditto (129, 284) lightly hinged copy from left sheet margin £595
- 1915 PRO JUVENTUTE Tete Beche pair (K11, J1ab) superb, used in Cademario (Ticino) *£700
- 1913 AIRMAIL Pioneer issue IV BURGDORF the extremely rare print on WHITE PAPER, superb mint £975
- 1919 AIRMAIL Propeller overprint on 30c value (1, 298a) superbly cancelled with clearly fully dated postmark. Signed £950
- 1924 AIRMAIL first flight ZURICH/TEHERAN, Pilot Mittelholzer £120
- 1932 LEAGUE OF NATIONS 30c Disarmament Conference (39, LN37) on Official cover sent by the famous Arthur Henderson, leading figure in 1930s politics, to the Society of Friends in Bradford ... £260
- 1876 HOTEL POST BELALP No. 2, luxury copy £175
- 1880(?) HOTEL POST ENGELBERG No. 1, very fine £420
- 1868 HOTEL POST RIGI KALTBAD No. 1, superb used with oblong Hotel strike £420
- 1870 HOTEL POST RIGI KULM No. 4 COMPLETE SHEET of 20, containing the scarce 29 "pearls" variety on Fields 17 and 19. (Ex. Leeman) £420
- 1881 HOTEL POST RIGI SCHEIDECK II vertical strip of 3 horizontally IMPERF. (Ex. Leeman) *£420
- 1888 HOTEL POST KURORT STOOS the scarce No. 9, superb £420

We publish our own SPECIALISED SWITZERLAND CATALOGUE, in English, of course.
The 33rd JUBILEE EDITION is available at £12.75 post free inland (overseas £15 by air).

Our Great Strength is
The Ability to Supply
Items Other Dealers Cannot
(And Also Those They Can)

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WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE

1946



1996

SERVICE
TO SWISS PHILATELY

I am very happy to have been a Philatelist for half a Century, specialising almost exclusively in the stamps of Switzerland – so much so that I am looking forward to more years of satisfyingly "playing" with these fascinating little bits of (Swiss) paper.

APS H. L. KATCHER RPSC
PTS AHPS

The Amateur Collector Ltd

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Phone: 0181-348 0296 Fax: 0181-347 8397

A VISIT TO A SWISS PHILATELIC EXHIBITION

G C Robini

In October last year I spent a 10-day holiday based in Interlaken. Whilst there I noticed that there was to be an exhibition of some standing (Degré II) in Bulle, near Fribourg.

I had an 'unmarked' day and duly ventured forth via rail to Bulle; I'd been in the Bulle area before (some 7 or 8 years ago) so I knew some of the area. I chose the 'pretty' route there, going via Spiez to Zweisimmen, thence changed trains to go to Montbovon. There I changed again to a 'local line' train to Bulle, the stop in Gruyères en route allowed me a glimpse of the castle atop the hill that looks down the valley. The scenery around Bulle was magnificent, especially as the clear blue sky accentuated the autumn colours around.

After arrival in Bulle I proceeded to the local secondary school where the exhibition was being held. I was introduced to some of the local organising committee on arrival and made very welcome.

The exhibition itself was the best I'd ever seen, being spread over the four levels of the stair well. The exhibits covered all aspects and themes with large collections of maxicards, covers and other items included. The content of the exhibits was predominately Swiss, but with a few other countries included. The programme detailed all the exhibits and interesting articles on the local postal history.

After a good look round the exhibition I spent a little time going round the ten dealers present. I found only one item to bring back to the UK which now fills a big gap in my used miniature sheet collection.

Mid afternoon saw my departure from Bulle by bus back to Fribourg and thence by train to Interlaken, after a change in Bern. The journey back was not quite as picturesque as the one out to Bulle but enjoyable all the same.

I purchased a couple of extra envelopes with a 70c stamp and the exhibition cachet and these can be purchased from me at £1.50 each. Telephone me, if interested, on 01 813 97 22 37.

Any members going to Switzerland and wanting to know if there are exhibitions or meetings in the area they will be visiting should contact the Editor. The SBZ publish a list of such events so send a stamped, addressed envelope and 5p for the photocopy in good time!

Alan Young asks what the story is behind the Kohler Gala Peter chocolate labels? He has bought a few from the circulation booklets. The examples he has show Interlaken and the Jungfrau; Genève and Mont Blanc; Lausanne; Chateau de Chillon and the Dents du Midi.

Colin Griffiths has written to say that he has just obtained one of The 'General Guisan Xmas Thank You Cards' as mentioned in the May and June issues of the Newsletter last year, but the numbers puzzle him. His card is No. 22993 and addressed to Herren Th. Kuhn A.G.; the one shown in the May issue is No. 25445 Herrn Ant. Berther Arg; the one from Adriano Gervasi is No. 111674, but is it German or Italian? He asks if the cards were numbered in the order that the donation was received, or were the different language editions numbered separately? The Sulzer catalogue gives no indication of the numbers printed. If they were only for these cards then only by reference to far more cards can any attempt be made to solve this query. Can you help?

Members can send small advertisements for wants to fill small spaces such as this at the bottom of pages. Copy by the 20th of the month.

Did you know (no, this is not Michael Rutherford's column) that in Geneva alone there are over 200 different organisations? Not to mention numerous other organisations spread out across Switzerland. This was David Hope's introduction to the display "International Switzerland" which he gave to the Northern Group at the meeting in Leeds on the 7th December. Not that those present saw everything there is to be seen on such a broad philatelic theme but the 144 sheets certainly gave an interesting view into how this small country has become the home for so many groups which, since the mid 19th Century, have often had a strong influence on world affairs.

Starting with the Red Cross which was founded in 1863, and ending with some of the most recent material issued by the United Nations Geneva Office, i.e. 1995 50th Anniversary issues, David gave us an insight into the research he has undertaken as he described and illustrated the functions of a number of the agencies which operated, or still operate, under the umbrella of the League of Nations and, in post war years, the United Nations Organisation. As well as the various special issues of stamps, of particular interest were covers sent by or addressed to the Red Cross during the two World Wars and some of the Swiss definitives overprinted "Société des Nations", including the high values. There were similar stamps used by the International Labour Office. Many of the cards or covers carried special cancellations for various international conferences and attention was drawn to that used today by the United Nations, the "Geneva 10" office. A very personal touch was illustrated in the form of a letter, with the accompanying cover, written on the first day of the World Disarmament Conference, 2nd February, 1932. This was from a lady delegate writing to a boy in Edinburgh promising to send him as many stamps as she could from the conference centre. I wonder if he has still got them? David is to be congratulated in putting together such a wealth of material on a theme not often tackled by collectors. Even though, from time to time, we may question the value of some of the organisations, we were reminded by another member that at that very moment, under the auspices of the World Health Organisation, a massive inoculation programme was under way to protect millions of people in the world's poorer area, against the ravages of poliomyelitis.

Before ending this report, mention should also be made of work undertaken over the last 12 months by our Chairman, Mr. R.A. Hoyle. This is the story of the Northern Group from its inception in 1950 by the late Laurie Moore to the present time. Compiled from the Group's Minute Books, old programmes, Newsletter reports and photographs, he has put together a fascinating collection of material in one volume which, on Saturday, he presented to the Group's Library. Now we know why, last year, he asked each of the regular attenders to let him have a short autobiography!! Thank you Tony! D.C.

The LONDON MEETING of 11th December was held in the usual venue of the Victory Services Club with a smaller attendance than usual of 11 members. Apologies were sent by 5 others who were unable to be present. One of these was Geoff Hubbard, the Society Vice-Chairman, who was still in hospital. However by the time members read these notes Geoff will be back at home although in a somewhat incapacitated state. All present wished him well and hoped he would be back in business and at our meetings before too long. With regret your Secretary had to report the death of two members Kenneth Varlow and Major Grotsh. It is anticipated that Kenneth's extensive Swiss collection will be auctioned in the near future after being valued by Messers Harmers.

Claude Mistely then introduced the topic for the evening '*Odds and Ends*', this being the opportunity for members to show new acquisitions, present small displays of a few sheets and produce those odd items that provide questions and queries.

One member said he had been attempting to make sense of his 1900 UPU material that was 'surplus' to his exhibition material. Having produced an album labelled Vol 1 he 'frightened' us with the prospect that he thought he probably had enough material to get to Vol 10 - and all on this one issue!! What we then saw was an extensive display that included stamp blocks showing registration marks, plate proofs, double impressions, offsets and the printed cards. Several of these showed the special BERN cancellation, day of issue cancellations, and material used on the last day of validity. Outstanding was a special last day of validity cover headed 1st Swiss Federal Train from Aarau, 31 Dec 1900/ 1 Jan 1901 Midnight, with 2 Aarau razor blade dispatch cancellations dated 31. XII. 00 - 12. - possibly the first time members had seen an item like this.

Our second display contained a series of Pro Patria first day of issue covers that had been individually produced. These were clearly of a philatelic nature but had suffered normal wear and tear in the post - nevertheless a change from covers serviced by the PTT. A small collection from the Ticino featured mail from just Piora and Piotta. Notable was a commercially illustrated card to Fusio from the Hotel & Pensione Piora - a short distance on the map but considerable by road through Airola where it had received a transit cancellation. Another postally used but odd card on display contained a cutout into which a photographer had inserted a portrait photo.

The evening concluded with a display of nearly 50 cards showing the Rhine falls at Schaffhausen, a Colman's mustard label used to seal a double card, early PTT Christmas cards, a collection of Zurich publicity cards and a selection of vignettes. The latter included sheets of publicity labels and evoked considerable interest and comment. Once again members produced a fascinating variety of material from their collections. It is a constant surprise to the writer of these notes how varied members interests are and what a mass of material they have!

Did you know?

M Rutherford

- that the Swiss parliament took 2 days to discuss the chopping up of the PTT. The Telecom becomes a private firm with 51% of the shares held by the state, and the Post has to battle along without the subsidy from the telephones. In addition their monopoly for parcels drops from 5 to 2 kg; they keep addressed letters. If the upper house modify this, as is possible, then a referendum will be demanded. To give time for the collection of signatures to demand this, every Swiss law is held in abeyance for 6 months.
- that one good thing has come out of this in that the minimum number of club newsletters is back again at 100, from the 1000 required in January 1996, which means that postage of 15c about, comes back after having been at 70c. This will save many clubs.
- that you can now buy the 70c rabbit, B mail, and the 90c 'A', in rolls of 1000 or 10 000 un-numbered stamps. However, the official statement says that the 70c cannot be used for bulk sendings of 3000 and over. When I asked at the 'Information' at the Bern HPO "then why print the 70c stamps in rolls at all?", they said I should come back in the afternoon. But even then they had not been able to find a logical reason. The reason they had received from 'higher up' was that 'B' letters are to take 2-3 days for delivery, bulk mailings 5-6 days, therefore, if the latter had a rabbit on it it might be delivered too fast! I cannot believe that the big bulk (junk) mailing firms will not use them in their automatic 'stamp sticking-on machines'. We will see. An article on bulk mailing rates is in preparation.
- that there are no private railway closings planned for 1997, as far as I can see. Only the SBB Läuferfinger line, west of the main Olten-Basel line is closing at the end of March, to be replaced by buses. This is part of the original route laid out by George Stephenson when he recommended that at Olten the N-S and E-W axes should cross.
- that there has been a 'Great Train Robbery' copy near Lausanne where a St Gallen to Genève express was stopped and 20, selected, mailbags stolen and put into cars under a bridge. Were they looking for some perfectly cancelled letters, also rare these days.
- that two interesting books have appeared. '125 years of the SLM' in German, 142 pages, CHF 50-; this is the story of the firm started by Charles Brown in 1871, the father of the Brown of Brown Boveri, an Englishman who had a tremendous influence on four major Swiss engineering firms. The other is the official book on 150 years of Swiss Railways 'Bahnsaga Schweiz', 320 big pages, lots of photos, mostly in colour, CHF98-, in German. Both worth it.
- that in the the BBZ for December 1996 there is an interesting article on the first Swiss airmails by Alexander S Newall (UK), and this will be followed by a second article on the first flights to Germany.
- that the new self-adhesive stamps are proving popular and, I believe, a second printing is being considered. They do wash off perfectly. The shiny surface does make for a smudgy cancel at times.
- that I came across a private metal cancel, not for stamps, but for advertising on postcards, made in 1907 for the Bürgenstock lift which goes up the 150m to the Hammetschwand peak in 48s. When the lift was built in 1905, by Schindler of Luzern, it took 2½ min.



Versuchsdrucke
Impressions d'essai
Saggi di stampa
Test prints



TEST PRINTS FROM THE PTT

F Pickard

A new, white card folder for these has been introduced. Multi-lingual, it replaces the earlier version in separate language form. English text illustrated. Size 115mm x 148mm. Folded twice with the usual pocket inside and containing the test prints, but no surprises here, only the usual prints listed by Derrick Slate in his book. Samples may be obtained FREE by writing to:
 GD PTT, Wertzeichenverkaufsstelle, CH-3030 BERN.

When testing rotary presses after an exchange of parts or experimenting with new types of paper and ink, we use special printing cylinders with (non-stamp) motifs illustrating the versatility of the steel-engraver's art. We have pleasure in enclosing some of these test prints free of charge. Please note that they are NOT philatelic items and that neither the numbers printed nor the dates, etc are on record. We are unable, therefore, to enter into correspondence on the subject.

PTT General Directorate
 Postage Stamps

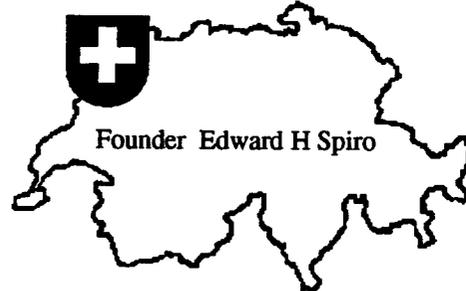
1997 Preliminary Stamp Programme

Value (c.) This list is subject to change.

11.3.1997	Specials «150 years of Swiss railways» 70 Loc. 2000 90 Red Arrow 140 Pullman coach 170 Spanisch-Brötli Railway
	Specials «Gallo-Roman works of art» 70 Marble statue; Pierre Gianadda Foundation 90 Bronze bust; Pro Augusta Raurica Foundation 110 Ceramic fragment; Pro Iulimago Foundation 180 Floor mosaic; Pro Vallon Foundation
	Special 180 50th Anniversary of Swissair's North Atlantic Service
13.5.1997	Pro Patria Stamps «Heritage and Landscapes» 70+35 Soubey Church 70+35 Culture Mill, Lützelflüh 90+40 Ittingen Charterhouse 110+50 Municipal Building, Russo
	Europe «Fables and legends» 90 Devil's Bridge
	Specials 70 Centenary of the Swiss Farmers' Union 90 Centenary of the Swiss Municipalities' Union
9.9.1997	Specials «Energy 2000» 70 Air 90 Fire 110 Water 180 Earth
13.11.1997	Joint stamp issue Switzerland/Sweden «Nobel Prize» 90 Paul Karrer 110 Alfred Nobel
20.11.1997	Pro Juventute Stamps «Animals living in or near the water - Ponds and marshes» 70+35 Christmas motif 70+35 Three-spined stickleback 90+45 Yellow-bellied toad 110+55 Ruff

THE EDITOR'S COLUMN - a bit like the old Stop Press when we had real Newspapers, properly printed. If you have decided to continue as members this year then can you try and recruit new members, anyone you meet at fairs buying Swiss, ask if they are members. If not then you know what to do. Get their address and send it to the Hon. Secretary. I think you get your value from the Newsletter but it depends on you to send in items such as you have in this issue. Queries, new finds, your holiday trips all make news for me and the other members. Who knows a quiet hotel in Montreux/Vevey? We still have a lot of unanswered items in previous issues; look back and see if you can help. The Faulhorn Post is one that has come up again. My books on the area only mention a hotel and a few chalets in the area, but what we need is a PTT reference to this service, if it can be called such as the mule in the picture, July 1995, page 56, has Faulhorn Hotel on its harness, and the man does not have a PTT hat or uniform. Baedeker in 1891 describes the Inn on the summit as 'unpretending'. Cook's and the Blue Guide are equally unimpressed.

HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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

Hon. Secretary: J A Cordingley, Ysguborwen, Bryncreg, 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.2 February 1997

THE OLDEST PICTURE POSTCARD?

from Stuart R Mackenzie

This is a very early Hotel card and is inscribed 'Correspondenz-Carte'. In 1879 it would have been used by the Hotel Schreiber at Rigi-Staffel to confirm a booking or for orders. No doubt others will turn up!



Insurance and the Sales Packet

Members are probably aware that the insurance costs of sales packets are calculated as a percentage of the maximum sales possible rather than as a percentage of the sales realised. Your committee believes that the insurance of members materials being circulated in a packet should be more equitably shared by members submitting material. With the system used until now, the insurance costs have been bourn disproportionately by members whose material has sold well. For instance, for a packet valued at £100 with sales of £80, a commission of £8 has been levied, whilst for a similar packet with sales of £20 only £2 has been charged, even though insurance costs to the Society have been the same in each case. Your committee believes that the insurance costs should be more related to the value of the material being circulated rather than the material being sold. Indeed the risk of loss is greater for material that remains longest in the packet rather than that which sells easily. As a result a 3% charge, based on the projected total sale value of booklets, will be made to members when they submit material for circulation. Members should include this amount with the booklets when they send them to the Sales Packet Secretary. The Sales Packet Secretary reserves the right to return booklets that are not accompanied with this payment. When booklets complete their circulation through the Society a charge of 7% commission on sales will be made rather than the 10% levied up to date.

Committee believes that this is a more appropriate set of charges. This new arrangement brings the Society into line with many others circulating packets.

JAC

SWISS COUNCILLOR TO ABOLISH LAW OF ELIZABETH I Pierrat Defounex

In the far west of Switzerland a Geneva Local Councillor has promulgated a draft law to abolish the 'Droit des Pauvres'. This is an entertainment tax which is levied in all cantons except Zürich, Schwyz, Obwalden, Glarus, Aargau and Thurgau.

Historically this tax, or 'Loi des Pauvres', was imposed in England by Elizabeth I in 1601, in favour of the poor in nearly all the parishes of England. It seems to have its origins in an 'ordonance' of Charles VII of France in 1407 which was extended under Louis XIV, abolished following the Revolution in 1789, and re-introduced some 5 years later. New Relief Committees were set up and replaced the Charity Offices of the Old Regime. They still exist in about half of French communes, and in others have been replaced by assistance offices. Their task is to study local conditions and distribute to the needy help as money or in kind. Depending on local circumstances this can include public health protection, children's holiday camps and even dispensaries.

In Switzerland it is levied either as a cantonal or municipal tax or both, and as in France it is a tax on performances or shows. It is levied on the ticket price or as a lump sum tax, usually 10% of the entrance fees or gross receipts. In Geneva it is 13% and is collected by the Department of Justice, Police and Transport as a tax on every ticket sold in the canton for sporting events, shows, cinemas, concerts, theatres and conferences. Many organisers have taken to arranging their events in other cantons to take advantage of inter-cantonal differences. In Geneva it is proposed to levy a tax on all forms of gambling and games of chance in place of the 13% 'Droit des Pauvres', with the hope of introducing 'one arm bandits' to make up the difference.

The tax in Geneva goes to support the Hospice Général and the Public Health Department. In other cantons the tax is decided on a local basis and imposed as needs demand, in a similar way to in France where in some places a tax on equestrian events is for the benefit of horses.

In Switzerland the communes in the French-speaking area have issued their own tax stamps to affix to tickets and these are marked variously as 'Droit des Pauvres', 'Taxe de Police sur les Divertissements', 'Taxe sur les Spectacles', 'Caisse des Pauvres' and 'Timbre assistance'. In German this is found as 'Billet steuer'. These terms can also be found printed on many receipts and tickets in Switzerland.

Despite incorrect stories in north America these are definitely not 'food stamps' or even 'ration coupons' but genuine fiscal adhesives.

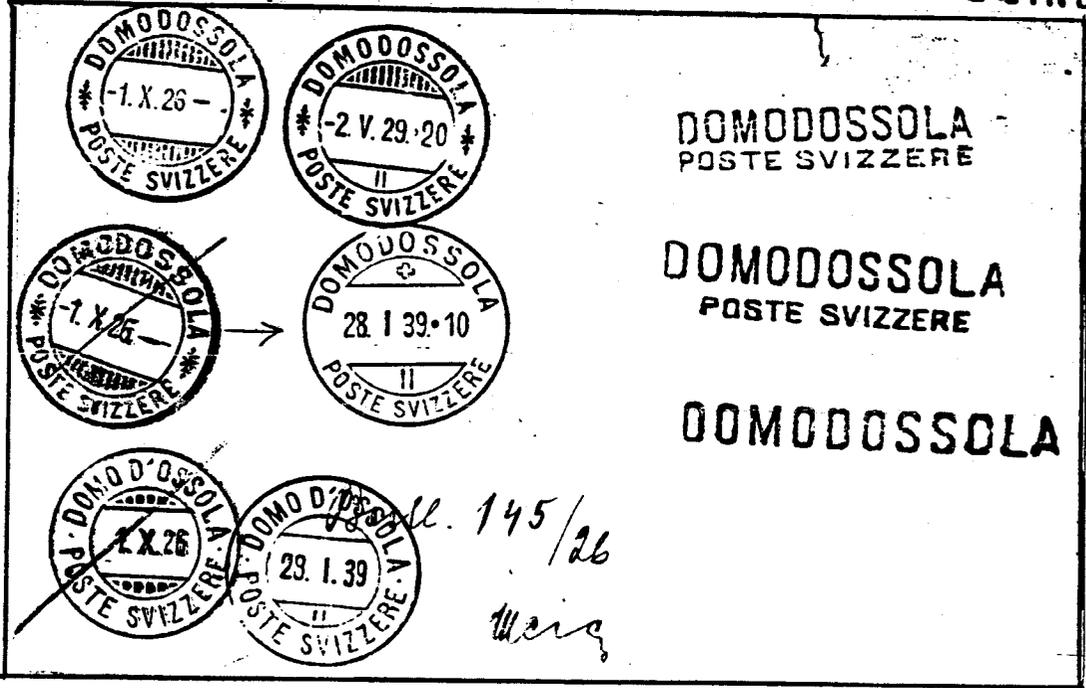
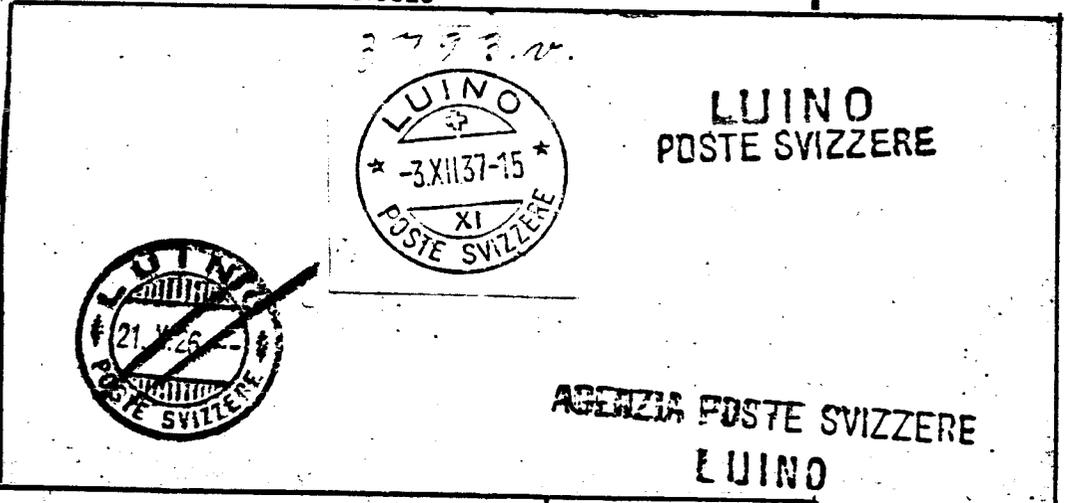


A few of the communes which have issued fiscal adhesive stamps for the benefit of the poor include: L'Abbaye (VD); Aigle (VD); Aubonne (VD); Brig (VS); Bulle (FR); Le Chenit (VD); Echallens (VD); Ecublens (VD); Grandson (VD); Granges-près-Marnand (VD); Lausanne (VD); Le Lieu (VD); Martigny (VS); Monthey (VS); Morges (VD); Moudon (VD); Neuchatel (NE); Payerne (VD); Planches-Montreux (VD); Rennens (VD); Rolle (VD); Ste Croix (VD); La Sarraz (VD); Vallorbe (VD); Vernayaz (VD); Yverdon (VD).

POSTAL AGENCIES OUTSIDE SWITZERLAND

Michael Rutherford

I came across these three filing cards, which were sent to all Swiss POs in 1926, on which the cancellers in use were to be impressed. Afterwards all newly issued cancellers were impressed on delivery. Note that the two cancellers for Domodossola were both modified.



Prop: Geoff Hubbard

EUROSTAMPS

Tel: 071-794 8078



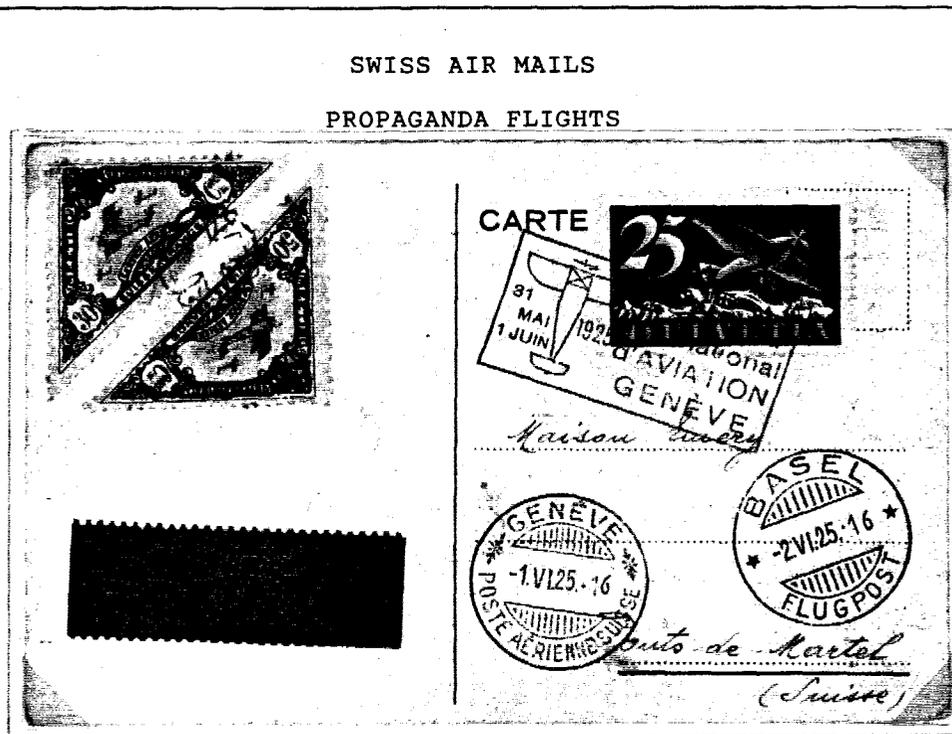
P.O. BOX 940
LONDON
NW6 2JP



The postal side of the business is 'up & running' (well nearly) but I can deal with your Wants Lists and anything in the way of accessories, catalogues and your needs for Swiss and German.

LEAVES FROM AN ALBUM

As the Editor needs a continuous supply of material to make this a proper Newsletter we have the item shown below which is part of a 16-page entry for a Federation Competition. Ken Reeves, who sent this, says that the information he used for the pages was largely gleaned from articles which have appeared from time to time in the Newsletter. Competition rules though insist that the information must be brief and to the point for rapid understanding. The telegram style means that lots you would have used for a display would be considered excessive. There must be someone who could offer tips on displays and competition entries. In this way Swiss stamps displayed at local level would attract new members for the Society!



Many flights were organized in connection with 'Aviation Days', special occasions when the early 'flying machines' were on view to the public. Mail was carried as a means of propaganda and to help raise funds for the promotion of flying.



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