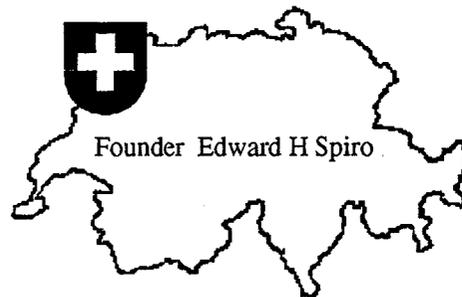


# HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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

Hon. Secretary: J A Cordingley, Ysgubor Wen, 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. 1 January 2000

ASPECTS OF THE JET AGE

D Cairns

Let me state at the outset that I cannot work up any great enthusiasm for modern first day covers and those air covers, commemorating new routes or even a new type of aircraft, which now emanate from Switzerland are no exception. Of course, they are, in many ways, attractive art forms but they are produced in their thousands, all of a uniform size, cancelled to order and usually pre-addressed to various philatelic groups for distribution to those who care to buy them. Unlike earlier items of airmail up to about 1950, these modern covers convey no sense of adventure!

However, as those members who have undertaken displays will realise, the preparation of such a presentation does concentrate one's mind in a remarkable fashion. That was the situation in which I found myself when, last year, I agreed to fill a spot in the Northern Group's programme and in a weak moment decided to give it the title "Aspects of the Jet Age". It was only when I started to take a serious look at what jet-age material was in my collection, that I began to realise that the field was much wider than simply mail carried on national or international jet flights and that even some of those items had marks which told an interesting story.

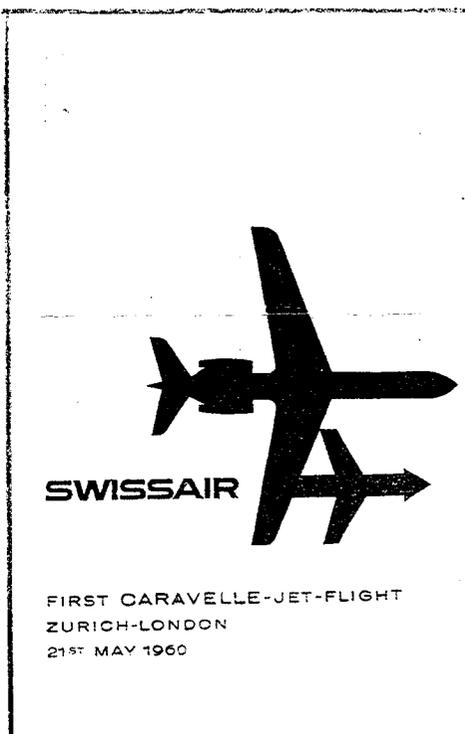


Figure 1



Figure 2

For Swissair, the jet-age began on the 21st May, 1960, when the French-built "Caravelle" was introduced on the Zürich-London service. British European Airways had already been using the "Comet 4B" on this route since the end of March. The first day cover prepared for the Caravelle flight was a very simple affair, (Fig.1); an envelope with the standard Swissair logo in red with an overprint in blue of the plane in silhouette and the caption "First Caravelle Jet Flight, Zürich-London, 21st May 1960". A few weeks later, on the 15th July, the same type of aircraft was introduced on the service from Zürich/Geneva to Athens. The cover for this first jet flight now carried the embossed outline of a "Caravelle" but the occasion for the flight was indicated simply by a hand applied boxed cachet. Whilst the number of items of mail carried on the early jet flights was comparatively small, an unknown quantity to London and just 2,050 to Athens (950 of these being from Liechtenstein), within a few years numbers rapidly increased with the introduction of the more elaborate covers intended for the philatelic market. Most of the mail carried on these first Swissair jet flights originated in Switzerland but there was often to be found a number of items posted in neighbouring states such as Liechtenstein, Austria and Vatican City as well as others. When Swissair introduced the Douglas DC-8 to the Montreal/Chicago service from Zürich on the 17th May, 1962, a quite ornate first day cover was offered within Switzerland but I find the simplicity of an item from the Vatican (Fig.2) much more pleasing. On the reverse of this cover are to be found two strikes; a Zürich transit c.d.s. of the 16th and a large circle receiving mark "MONTREAL A.M.F. NO.12, 17.V.1962".

By the mid 1960s virtually all the major carriers were using jet-powered aircraft and in addition to the special covers prepared for first flights with new machines or new routes, commemorative cancellations are often to be found, particularly on mail coming into Switzerland. Fig.3 illustrates such a case with the Portuguese TAP "Caravelle" flight from Lisbon on the 5th April, 1967. As I commented at the beginning of the article some of these philatelic covers do bear marks which illustrate that there are aspects of flight and postal planning that are outside the control of the air operators. One such case I mentioned in another article which appeared in the "Newsletter" some years ago but is worth repeating. This concerned the opening of Swissair's service from Zürich to Dublin by DC-9 on the 1st April, 1979 - a most appropriate date! With just under 10,000 items of mail already postmarked with that date, along comes the prolonged Irish postal strike of that year! Not until three months later on the 2nd July, was it possible to deliver those covers as the green cachet that was added to the postal items indicates, (Fig.4). In December of the following year, Swissair had to modify its plans for a new service by Douglas DC-10 to Baghdad because of the war between Iraq and Iran. Instead the service flew to Amman in Jordan and the special cover carries an inscription to that effect, "OPERATION ZÜRICH-AMMAN STATT ZÜRICH-BAGHDAD WEGEN KRIEG IRAK-IRAN DC-10, SR 392".

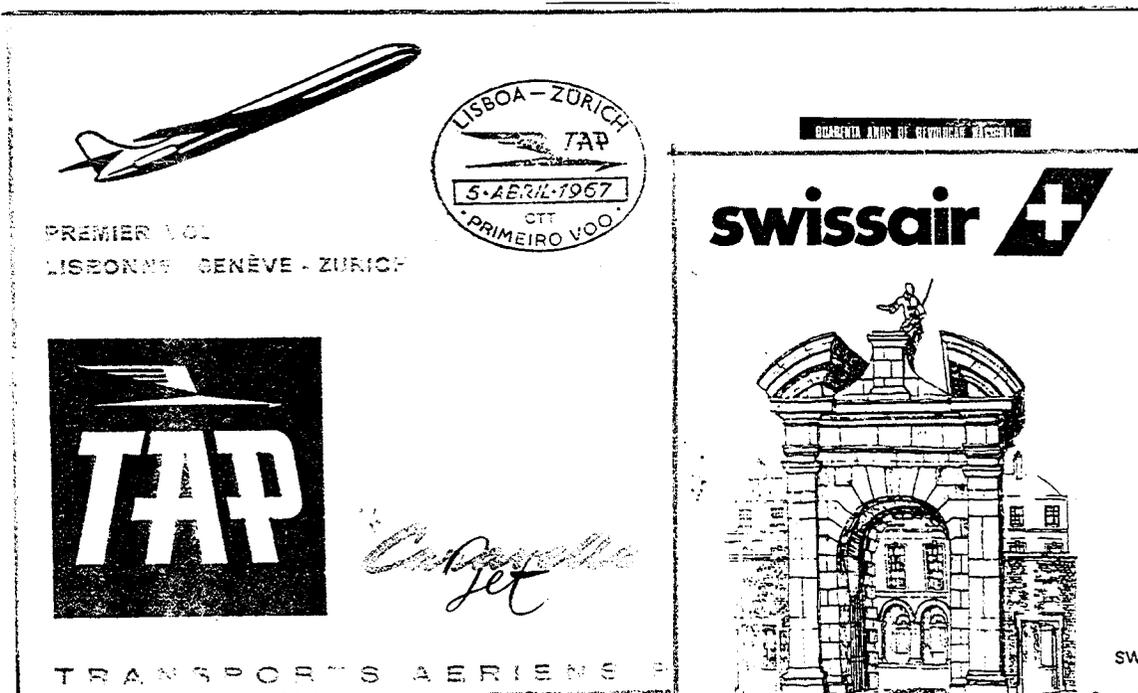


Figure 3



Figure 4

When Swissair celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1981, a wealth of aerophilatelic material was produced both in Switzerland and in many of those countries having direct air services into Geneva and Zürich. For me, one of the most attractive and historically evocative items was a private cover produced by the Leeds-based group, Air Education & Recreation Organisation, and flown by Swissair to Zürich (Fig.5). This informative cover illustrated the extremes of rapid air transport from the introduction of the Lockheed "Orion", (205 mph) in late 1931 to the then latest jet liner, the Douglas DC-9-81, (470 mph) plus a simple map illustrating the route taken to Vienna on the first express flight by the "Orion" on the 2nd May, 1932.

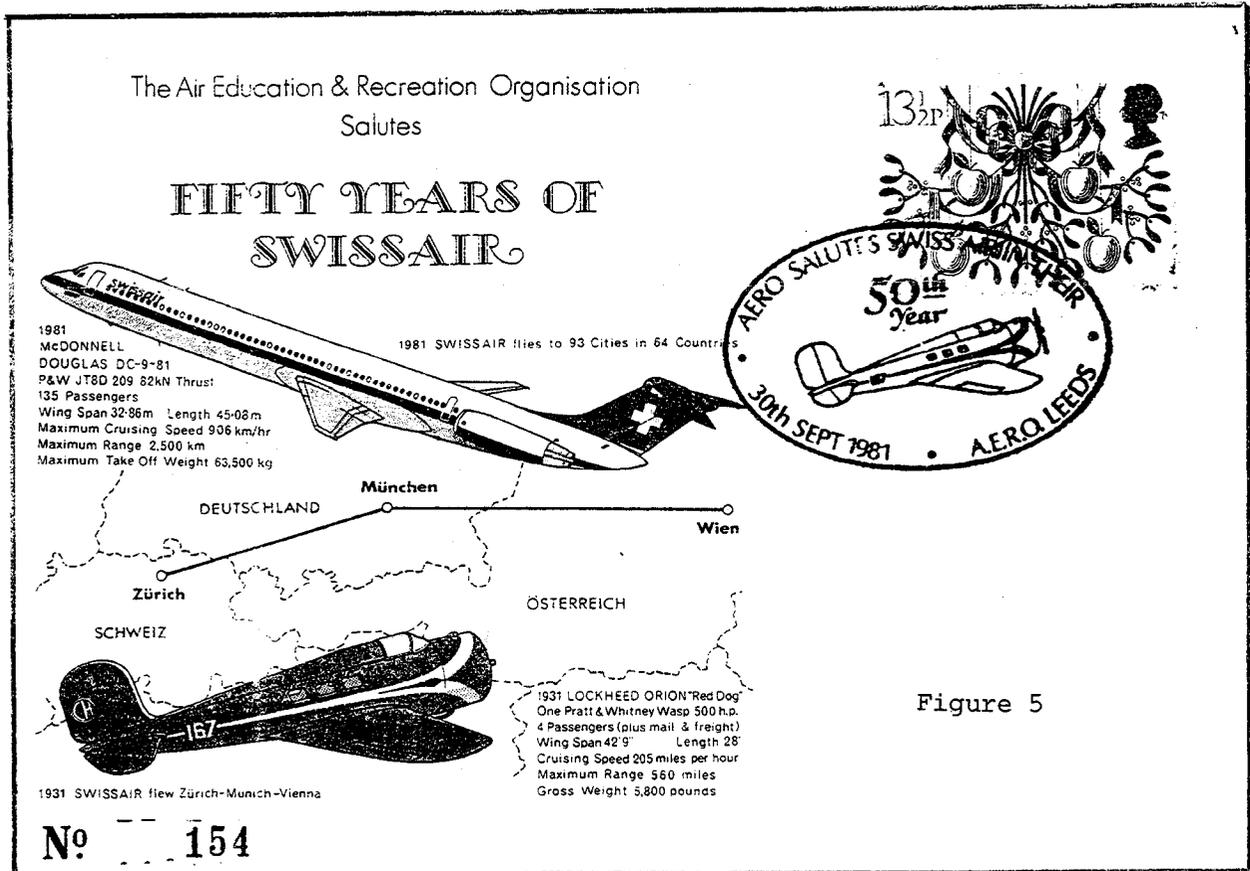


Figure 5

A less publicised and therefore less well-known aspect of the jet age as far as British philatelists are concerned, is one that actually commenced within this era. The introduction of the "Aerophilatelic Day(s)" or "Tag der Aerophilatelie" was suggested by the International Federation of Aerophilatelic Societies (FISA) and developed by the Swiss Aerophilatelic Society (SAV) in 1967. The first such event was held on the 29th April of that year at Samedan, Canton Graubunden and from thereon this has become an annual occasion always, with but an odd exception, held on the last Saturday or the last full weekend in April. The venue for this gathering changes each year but has to be where there is at least a small airfield from or to which a special flight is usually made. The occasion may be a comparatively small affair involving a local philatelic group or a much larger event such as the one in 1975 held in Luzern (Fig.6). This was a dual occasion to mark the 50th Anniversary of SAV and "LUPO'75", the FISA Congress. A great variety of material was produced for this event along with a number of special flights. Always there is a special cancellation for the event, inscribed in the language of the area, German, French, Italian or Romanisch and quite often the venue in a particular year reflects an anniversary peculiar to that locality. 1980 saw the 70th Anniversary of the first flight between Avenches and Payerne by Ernest Failloubaz who, at 18, was the youngest pilot in the country. This Aerophilatelic Day was held at Lausanne on the 26th April from where a commemorative flight was made over the two towns (Fig.7). The following year, the event was held at Lodrino in the Tessin from which place in February, 1951 a JU52 military transport flew with emergency supplies to be dropped in isolated villages in the Valle Maggia. Quite often when the Aerophilatelic Day is being held at locations in the Tessin or Graubunden, the postal authorities in Italy, the Vatican and San Marino get in on the act and usually produce more material to be carried on special flights to the Swiss locations than do the Swiss themselves! But most of the Swiss material for these occasions does reflect a sense of history in the development of that



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE  
DES SOCIÉTÉS AÉROPHILATELIQUES



GIORNATA DELL'AEROFILATELIA  
JOURNÉE DE L'AÉROPHILATELIE  
TAG DER AEROPHILATELIE  
DAYS OF AEROPHILATELY

Schweiz. Aerophilatelistenverein Zürich

Figure 6



Vol commémoratif  
(Lausanne)  
AVENCHES-PAYERNE

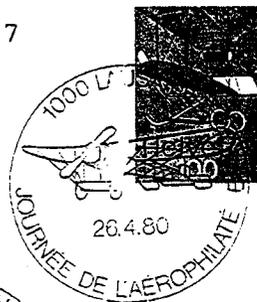
Figure 7

PREMIER VOL INTERVILLE SUISSE  
AVENCHES-PAYERNE 1910



JOURNÉE DE L'AÉROPHILATELIE  
LAUSANNE 1980

Société Aérophilatelique Suisse, Zurich

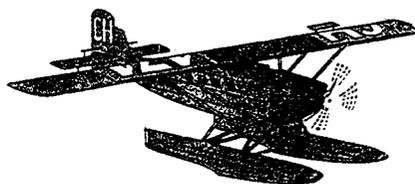


Société Aérophilatelique  
Richard P. Dünk  
Poste restante  
1530 Payerne

country's air transport. In 1919, just two planes constituted Switzerland's first commercial air company, Comte-Mittelholzer. This was formed by Alfred Comte, an air instructor during World War One and one of his ex-pupils, Walter Mittelholzer. The latter was remembered on the 1977 Aerophilatelic Day in Zürich with the cover depicting the Dornier "Merkur" plane in which he made his first Africa Flight (Fig.8), whilst six years later, in 1983, the less well-known Comte was honoured in his birthplace with the special cover designed for the annual event in Delémont. (Fig.9).



Figure 8



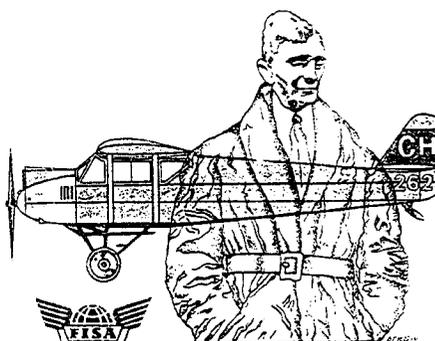
ZÜRICH-FLUGHAFEN 1977  
TAG DER AEROPHILATELIE

Schweiz. Aerophilatelistenverein Zürich

COURRIER AÉRIEN

Delémont / Courroux - Courteiry  
Avion : Piper L-4

EN COMMÉMORATION DU DELÉMONTAIN  
ALFRED COMTE



JOURNÉE DE L'AÉROPHILATELIE / DELÉMONT 1983  
Société Aérophilatelique Suisse, Zurich

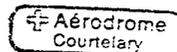


Figure 9



There are numerous other aspects of aerophilately which are to be found in Switzerland's first forty years of the jet age and what suits one collector might just as easily be rejected by another, for it is often said that philately is what the individual wishes to make of it. Presenting the display I referred to at the beginning of the article hasn't changed my opinion towards the vast majority of first day covers but where aerophilately is concerned, if there is a direct link between some of my early material and a modern issue then I will consider giving the latter album space!

HUNGARIAN LETTER CARD - p77 October &amp; p83 November

Stuart MacKenzie

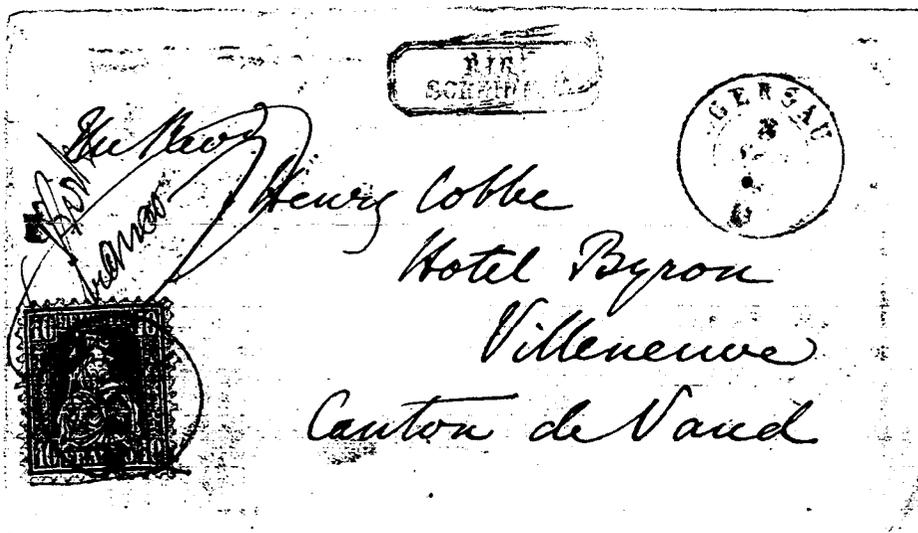
With reference to the query by Mr Micotti in the October Newsletter and the replies in the November issue I am afraid most of the information given was wrong - including my own! Having spoken to Mr Micotti regarding certain aspects of his card I can confirm that it travelled by way of Austria (Vienna), and by Bavaria (Munich). The card has evidently been sent in error by the postal clerk at Vienna; normally mail for this part of Switzerland would not travel this route.

Hungary at this particular time was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire which in turn was one of the original 13 member states of the UPU (1st July 1875) and postal matters were handled by the Austrian Postal Administration; therefore mail from Hungary only had to show surcharges in manuscript (as mentioned by Mr Williams).

The Letter Card arrived in Austria (Vienna) from Budapest without a surcharge for external rate. This was noticed at Vienna and the Austrian type T struck; again no surcharge endorsed. On arrival in Bavaria the first boxed type Taxe is struck (22 x 10mm) and a 12½c surcharge endorsed in black crayon (not Austria as I mentioned). The German States i.e., Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria and latterly Germany were the only countries using ¼s and ½s fractions i.e., 6¼ and 12½ (Austria 7½). They were endorsed in manuscript in black crayon (later blue crayon was used) and also came in a variety of stamped cachets struck in black and violet. The letter evidently reached Tarasp where the correct surcharge of 25c was calculated; again no surcharge was endorsed but the postage due was collected before the card was redirected to Schuls with no further charge.

The routing of the card from Bavaria would be due south by way of Innsbruck to Landeck and Tarasp (as suggested by Peter Hobbs). In all an interesting piece of Postage Due postal history.

A QUERY looking for an answer from the Hotel Post specialists, from Martin Mantell. This small envelope of 1864 has a Rigi-Scheideck cachet in blue (smudged). It has the Gersau cancel on the stamp and at top right of 8th Sep. On the rear are cancels of Luzern BR EX of 8 IX 64 VII and Ambulant Circulaire T? 9? and a faint cancel of Villeneuve for 9 Sep 64. On the left of the front of the cover the word Franco has been added in the same ink (and hand?) as the address but just above it is, possibly, a signature in a different ink. Did this cachet indicate the cover was paid to Gersau? Was the 10c paid and the stamp affixed at the Hotel or in Gersau and by whom? Suggestions please to the Editor for publication in the Newsletter.



QUERY for those members who served with BAOR in 1946. Mr C K Karsten has an OAS cover sent from Field Post Office 328 on 22 JY 46 addressed to: Switzerland / Schweizer Spende / Deutschlandbureau / Bern / Postfach Transit. The sender's address on the back is: Don Suisse c/o. RS/125 Quaker Relief, 808 Mil.Gov.Det. / B.A.O.R. What was this charity or office doing in the British zone of occupation and why did they use the FPO?

QUERY ON PAPERS also for Mr Karsten but of interest to all members. How do you tell the difference between used copies of Zu595HI and Zu595HII? (Is this a case of having to buy a CTO stamp which has never been correctly used, or to buy a mint copy and use it on a cover to be sure it is the matt gum type? Ed.)

In spite of having to contend with a noisy children's party in the large hall adjacent to the room in which we meet, the **Northern Group** had one of the best meetings for some time on Saturday, 4th December. Not deterred by the appalling weather, snow, rain and wind, and remembering that most who do come to Leeds travel quite a considerable distance, a larger than usual attendance produced a wealth of material under the heading "**Not More Than 10 Cents**". Seven members made a contribution which covered many aspects within the 10c limitation imposed. As might be expected, much of the material displayed was from the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries - I do realise that this will be read in the 21st Century, (see p 7, bottom) One member, attending for the first time, delighted us with some twelve sheets of authenticated examples of Cantonal, Transitional and Federal Issues (he excluded his 15Rp. Rayon III's!) and ending with a sheet of all twelve Kocher stamps in mint condition. Whilst much of the other material had, inevitably, appeared on previous occasions as parts of different displays, nevertheless there was prolonged discussion over numerous items. The 3c black Sitting Helvetia (29b) on a Ticinese newspaper - who was the sender, who the recipient? The use of mixed franking of the same period to make up such small amounts of 5c and 10c. On covers and cards bearing TPO and SL cancellations, the question of routes came up for discussion ensuring that we had more than a good 10 cents worth of opinions! One display we had not seen before was of cards used by the SBB informing the recipient of goods awaiting collection, within 24 hours, at the local station or depot. The card then had to be handed in on receipt of the goods and would appear to have had another handstamp applied as an indication that the transaction had been completed. Alongwith this selection of cards were the complete sets of the SBB Centenary cards of 1947, depicting the two different sizes of print underneath the illustration. A range of stationery cards from 1870 onwards covered the long period of stability in postage rates, both internally and to UPU countries up to the Great War with the subsequent changes following that event. There was emphasis by various members on some of the commemorative stationery which was issued; the UPU items of 1900, the 1914 National Exhibition at Bern, as well as covers and cards with imprinted franking used by commercial firms from 1907 onwards. At the end of the afternoon, it was realised that there was much that had not been covered; the various types of newspaper wrappers and the Bundesfeier postcards to name but two. However, there's always a next time!

D.C.

There were 9 members present for the meeting of the LONDON Group held on 15th December in the usual venue of the Victory Services Club in Seymour Street. Under the Chairmanship of Claude Mistely the meeting on *10c and Less* provided the opportunity to display some very unusual material - seven members producing sheets and covers and again one stalwart submitting photocopied items by post!

Postal stationery (ps) was bound to feature with such a title. The folded letter cards produced for the 1914 National Exhibition in Bern were accompanied by a superb selection of cards printed for the 100th anniversary of Geneva's entry into the Confederation. Your note taker had not seen the 1891 cards for the 600 anniversary of the foundation of the Confederation or the 1893 St Croix and College cards so this was an unexpected treat. With ps cards and envelopes printed on the reverse including a delightful envelope for 'Allegemeine' travel insurance members saw an exceptional display. Your Secretary also produced a range of ps items - a collection of the 1935 purple 10c rate postcards showing a variety of postbus views, extra cancellations, censor markings, and with various destinations. The 1938 Edelweiss design newspaper wrapper provided an interesting mini display with its various cancellations, some postage paid (PP), censor and postage due markings.

Several members provided different selections that showed the full postal range from 0c to 10c - Franco covers and Feldpost items representing the zero rate. It was also argued that the postage dues really represented minus values of postal rates and could be included within the evening's subject - more examples were produced. Within these displays there were some extraordinary items. How about a Ticino canton JZ perfin on the 1912 10c Helvetia ps card? Or a 1890 5c ps card with additional 5c cross and numeral stamp: not exceptional until you saw the cachet 'postcards to this address/cannot be forwarded' - a London applied mark on a card addressed to Capetown, South Africa, a country not within the UPU at that time! And have you seen many or even any newspaper wrappers used in multiples - not in 2s, or 3s but a strip of 5 x 2c? There was one on display! In 1846 Canton Geneva produced a ps envelope with a green 5c value difficult to find unused let alone used. Exceptionally from 1st June 1849 this design was accepted when cut out from the envelope and subsequently applied to other correspondence. One was displayed on an envelope complete with a Geneva cds 4 Feb 51!

With the sets of publicity song and advertising cards from Suchard together with Tobler publicity labels a chocolate theme was included. Even more postcards featured stamps on the picture sides resulting in the variety of cancellations on the address side - cancellations in German/French, French/German and two copies of the quite illusive Italian language 'Franco retro/Affranchissement au verso' But there were stamps: sheets of low value denominations from a wide variety of issues, and a delightful small study surrounding the 1941 issue for the 750 anniversary of the establishment of Bern - 'spider on hammer' variety and an unperforated version.

Again displays full of items that most of those present would have loved to have had in their own collections. It seems quite extraordinary that so many members can show so much different material meeting after meeting. There must have been something that would have appealed to every collector of Swiss material. Those who did not attend missed another treat.

JAC

# DID YOU KNOW?

M Rutherford

- that the "Day of the Stamp" Exhibition in Luzern, 3, 4 & 5th of December was a great success; organized by the Philatelic Society of Luzern with the help of the Röllli family. Free entry, catalogue CHF 2.-, with an overlay of Carnival emblems, at times much noise. There were 117 "normal" exhibitors, and 34 "One frame" exhibits, which could be either 100% philatelic material or up to 50% "Open class" material, ie, photos, drawings (even a penguin feather), etc. This was confusing to the judging public, who had a two-thirds say, with the other third by the jury. Ian Gilchrist was there and gained a Gold with his Red Cross exhibit; Harlan Stone had three exhibits but made only Vermeil (under-rated?). Once again I personally learnt a lot from his exhibits.
- that Karl Gebert received at this exhibition a well-deserved prize for his remarkable "Postchronik" book. The "Fund for Philately" it seems realized that they had made a mistake by not supporting him from the start. (Now on disk - see elsewhere in this issue.)
- that the SP produced, un-announced, a new version of the two Pingu stamps of 9.3.99, for issue on 6.12.99. The only difference is that the parcels are shown not tied with string, in accordance with the new - unpopular - rule. Most exciting.
- that it is rumoured that soon the parcel rates will also be tiered into A and B. The previous "Colis Prioritaire" was dropped recently when all parcels were late. Some say that "A" parcels will be sorted by hand and "B" parcels automatically by computer.
- that a previous rumour has been, unfortunately, confirmed. Internally the SP has not found a way in which its own slogans can be paid for. Therefore all postal advertising, Group 1, is being stopped at the end of 1999. That means no more slogans such as "Post early for Christmas" and others. The Swisscom had stopped all telephone publicity a year or so ago, too expensive. Now all charities are being asked to pay for this advertising, so following the "good" example of the SP itself, they are also discontinuing the use of slogans. About 80 to 90 slogans have been withdrawn so far. Another unmentioned aspect is that the SP is not prepared to pay for staff who can supervise the quality of the slogans in use. A great pity, and difficult to justify.
- that I recently came across the name SAVO (see figure 1 below). This was the Austrian journal for international pre-philately - Sammler Vorphilatelie. Their 1933 monthly was used often by Jean Winkler to announce his finds. In 1938, after Austria had willingly joined their neighbours to the north, all Jewish and other non-Aryans, had to leave the club, then the monthly magazine was forbidden, as all such publications were too difficult to censor, and then they had to close down completely. A tragedy to philately, and to the members. Now a German group have re-founded the SAVO.
- that the new Luftpost Handbuch will come out for the Aerophilately Day in Dübendorf in April 2000, for CHF 75.
- that the slogan below, figure 2, No. 4.6.273 was used during May in Vaduz and Schaan, and showed the identification "Die Post FL" for Liechtenstein.
- that figure 3 shows the instructions for posting a millenium bar of chocolate, 100g, inside Switzerland. Why are the rates correct, and not those that might apply in 2000?



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Whether we were entering the new Millenium in the year 2000 or 2001 also entered into our deliberations, so just to play safe the Northern Group merely sends Season's Greetings to one and all!

D.C.

## T.P.O. ROUTES UPDATE

by D. Houtris

In my piece on T.P.O's in the February 1999 Newsletter I made reference to the number of routes throughout the period August 1889 to April 1910. After studying the schedules again I've produced the following table which is a great deal more accurate than my statement in February.

Throughout the period there were 43 schedules, which I've numbered to aid the listing of my collection. When first sorting the covers that I'd accumulated I wondered why there were no pieces for certain dates, on studying the table members will probably see why. I hope this information will assist other T.P.O. collectors.

A	B	C	A	B	C
1	1 AUG 1889 - 14 OCT 1889	33 - 40	22	1 JUN 1899 - 30 SEPT 1899	40
2	15 OCT 1889 - 31 MAY 1890	33 - 40	23	1 OCT 1899 - 31 MAY 1900	40
3	1 JUN 1890 - 30 SEPT 1890	33 - 40	24	1 JUN 1900 - 30 SEPT 1900	40
4	1 OCT 1890 - 31 MAY 1891	33 - 40	25	1 OCT 1900 - 31 MAY 1901	40
5	1 JUN 1891 - 30 SEPT 1891	34 - 40	26	1 JUN 1901 - 30 SEPT 1901	40
6	1 OCT 1891 - 19 JAN 1892	34 - 40	27	1 OCT 1901 - 30 APR 1902	40
7	20 JAN 1892 - 31 MAY 1892	34 - 40	28	1 MAY 1902 - 30 SEPT 1902	40
8	1 JUN 1892 - 30 SEPT 1892	36 - 40	29	1 OCT 1902 - 30 APR 1903	40
9	1 OCT 1892 - 31 MAY 1893	36 - 40	30	1 MAY 1903 - 30 SEPT 1903	-
10	1 JUN 1893 - 30 SEPT 1893	39 & 40	31	1 OCT 1903 - 30 APR 1904	-
11	1 OCT 1893 - 31 MAY 1894	39 & 40	32	1 MAY 1904 - 30 SEPT 1904	24 & 37
12	1 JUN 1894 - 30 SEPT 1894	40	33	1 OCT 1904 - 30 APR 1905	24 & 37
13	1 OCT 1894 - 31 MAY 1895	40	34	1 MAY 1905 - 30 SEPT 1905	24 & 37
14	1 JUN 1895 - 30 SEPT 1895	29 & 40	35	1 OCT 1905 - 30 APR 1906	24 & 37
15	1 OCT 1895 - 31 MAY 1896	29 & 40	36	1 MAY 1906 - 30 SEPT 1906	24 & 37
16	1 JUN 1896 - 30 SEPT 1896	29 & 40	37	1 OCT 1906 - 30 APR 1907	24 & 37
17	1 OCT 1896 - 31 MAY 1897	29 & 40	38	1 MAY 1907 - 30 SEPT 1907	24 & 37
18	1 JUN 1897 - 30 SEPT 1897	40	39	1 OCT 1907 - 30 APR 1908	24 & 37
19	1 OCT 1897 - 31 MAY 1898	40	40	1 MAY 1908 - 30 SEPT 1908	24 & 37
20	1 JUN 1898 - 30 SEPT 1898	40	41	1 OCT 1908 - 30 APR 1909	24 & 37
21	1 OCT 1898 - 31 MAY 1899	40	42	1 MAY 1909 - 30 SEPT 1909	24 & 37
			43	1 OCT 1909 - 30 APR 1910	37

A - SCHEDULES

B - SCHEDULE DATES

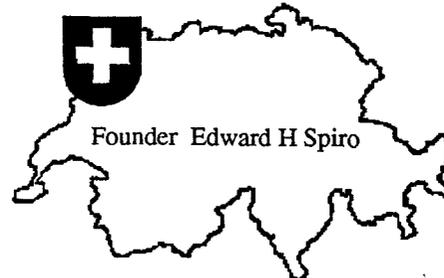
C - ROUTES NOT IN SERVICE

SALISBURY 2000 - Saturday 6th May is your opportunity to meet other members and discuss Swiss philately. The Wessex Group have booked a room at the Clovelly Hotel, Mill Road, Salisbury, near the railway station, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Displays by well-known members and participants will make this an interesting day for those who cannot get to the London meetings. Refreshments and cold lunch are available in the hotel and other restaurants are nearby. Don't wait! Book now with Don Symonds, Whitecot, Furze Hill, Wimbourne BH21 4HD; Tel: 01 202 88 36 09.

"POSTSTELLENCHRONIK SCHWEIZ 1849-1999". This important reference work covers all Post Offices which existed during these 150 years in Switzerland, but is now out of print due to the great interest it caused among collectors, especially postal historians. As many would-be buyers were disappointed the author, Karl Gebert, has decided to make the information, fully up-dated, available as a 3½" RTF (Rich Text Format) disk, which can be used with any PC text program. Single pages can be printed out and additions can be made according to the information given in the fortnightly Swiss PO "Stempel News" directly. Our member Charles LaBlonde has tried the disk in MS Word under both Windows 95 & 98, and reports that it works very well.

Members in the UK can obtain a copy by sending a CHF 20.- banknote to: Karl Gebert, Kapplerstrasse 27, CH-9642 Ebnat-Kappel, Switzerland. Overseas members should send US\$ 12.- or DM 20.- in notes.

# HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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

Hon. Secretary: J A Cordingley, Ysgubor Wen, Bryncreg, Tywyn, Gwynedd LL36 9PU Tel: 01654 710020

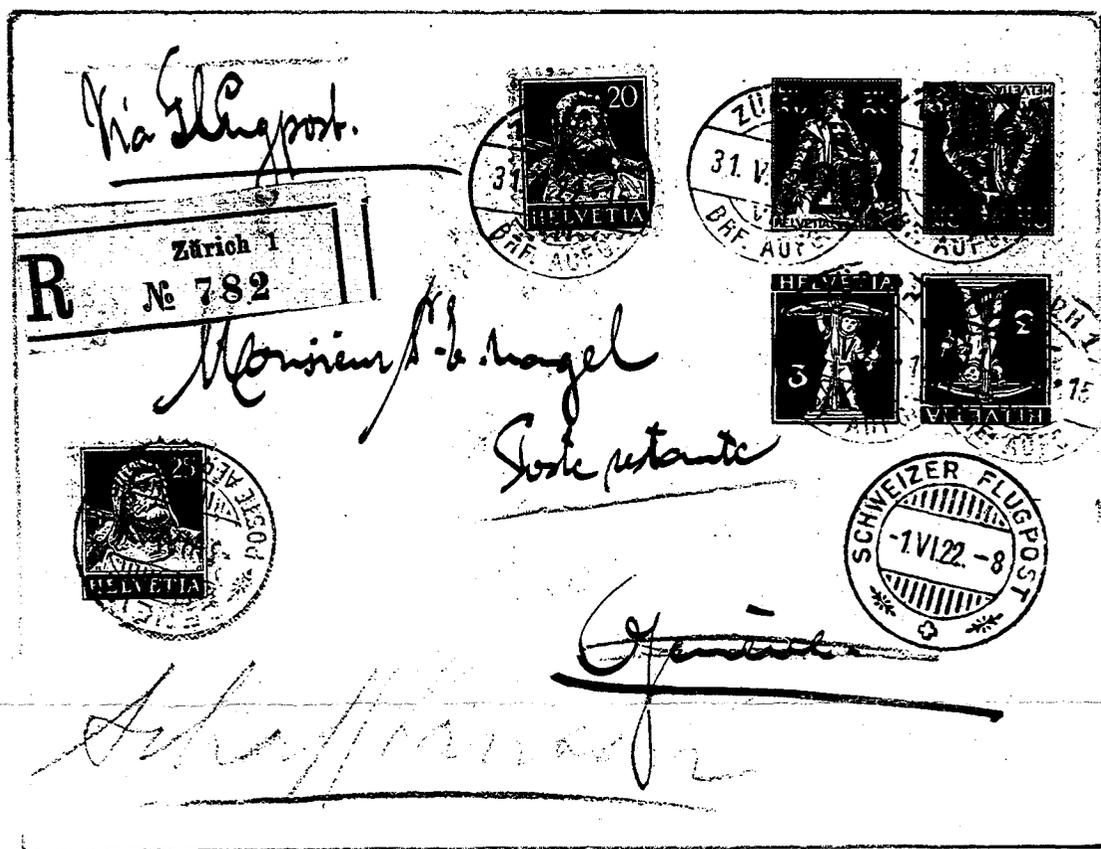
Hon. Editor: Peter Hobbs, Six Tynning End, Widcombe Hill, Bath BA2 6AN Tel: 01 225-31 09 71

## No. 2 February 2000

IS THIS ONE OF SWITZERLAND'S RAREST FLIGHT COVERS?

Martin Mantell

This cover was acquired recently along with various others and initially put aside as being no more than a 'decent' tête-bêche pair on cover. However, on further investigation a different story has emerged which I can not fully explain. I hope other members can help.



On 1st June 1922 the 'Ad Astra' airline inaugurated a new route Geneva via Zürich to Nürnberg and return. Only 21 items of mail were put on board at Geneva and only 15 at Zürich. At Zürich Dubendorf airport a two-line cachet (Flugpost, Genève - Zürich - Nürnberg) was supposed to be applied to outward mail only (not on the return leg). This was the first 'overseas' service for Swiss aircraft from Zürich. The cover is postmarked 31.V.22-15 Zürich Brf Aufg, and franked with 66c. It is addressed 'Poste Restante, Geneva'. The 25c Tell was added in Geneva to re-direct the envelope to Schaffhausen.

I believe this cover was intended for the 'outward' leg to Nürnberg for these reasons: It is clearly philatelic franked with tête-bêche pairs and sent Poste Restante. It is marked 'Flugpost', though not endorsed 'Nürnberg' and seemingly urgent, hence the registration.

(continued overleaf)

The 66c rate is also of some significance, but here some conjecture is required. The registered rate for inland letters (airmail) was 20c and the letter rate a further 20c, total 40c. Therefore this cover has too much postage for an internal flight from Zürich to Geneva. For overseas postage the registration rate is 30c, the Zumstein Specialised catalogue gives the letter rate as 20c (internal) airmail plus 25c, ie, 45c. Curiously the 'Schweiz Luftpost Handbuch' gives the overseas rate as 40c, which is correct?

As these rates total 70c or 75c depending on which catalogue is correct, again the cover is not correctly franked. However, one possible explanation may be that as this is the first overseas flight from Zürich, the postal clerk may have made an error and only charged the 'standard' 20c airmail registration; this with the Zumstein rate of 45c would explain the franking.

The crucial 'Schweizer Flugpost' cancel of 1.VI.22 must be the Zürich airport cancel of this type and the time reel '18' would surely indicate that this cover was there in time to catch the outward Nürnberg flight. So why does it not have the 'official' two-line cachet? It is hardly likely that it was overlooked among only 15 covers. If it went to Nürnberg should any cancellation have been added there? This cover does not have one.

The arrival cds at Geneva is 2.VI.22-6, did this indicate the mail got back to Geneva late on the 1st and mail was sorted the next day? This would seem fairly likely as Geneva - Nürnberg and return is a 1000km round trip, quite a journey for such early aircraft in one day.

My own conclusion is that, although this cover was intended for the outward trip, without the official cachet or any Nürnberg receiving cancel (I don't know if any were supposed to be applied in Nürnberg), it somehow managed to miss this part of the trip and instead was put on the flight for the final leg from Zürich to Geneva, which would explain the Geneva cds of the 2nd.

I would greatly welcome other members comments on this cover and, in particular, does anyone know the time of departure and arrival for this flight, and why there was so little mail on board?

The five cancellations on the reverse of the cover are shown below.



#### UPDATE ON SALISBURY 2000

We now have a dealer in place so bring along your 'Wants Lists' and meet Werner Gattiker of Leo Baresch Ltd on the 6th of May. Details of speakers will be announced next month D S

#### SLOGAN POSTMARK COLLECTION

FOR SALE - Over 500 items on piece, nearly all different. Nothing after the late 50s. Also some 'K' cancels and 100s of others including CDSs on loose stamps. £50- or best offer.

Martin Mantell  
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TROWBRIDGE BA14 OHU 01 225 76 05 97

#### Switzerland Stamps and Postal History

You will have seen that I am again distributing my **Sales Lists** through the Helvetia News Letter. I also produce other lists on different subjects of Swiss Philately and Postal History. Please let me know if you would like to be on my **mailing list**. From my data base I am able to produce a **customised list** to your specific requirements. Please let me know your wants and I will send a list just for you.

#### New Lists Available

#### BUNDESFEIER CARDS

#### COLLECTIONS and large LOTS

I have recently purchased a considerable quantity of **Commercial Mail**. I can send on **Approval** a selection of covers to suit your needs, from the 1930s to 1990s. Covering General Issues Charities Post Marks etc.

#### Buying

Postal History

Collections

SCADTA Covers

Ian Gilchrist, I. G. Stamps, PO Box 15,  
Harrogate HG1 1SL. Tel 01423 523152  
E Mail IGilchrist @ compuserve.com

**Northern Group Meeting.** Some regular members who had succumbed to the prevailing 'flu bug over Christmas and the New Year had regained sufficient Helvetic enthusiasm to stagger to the meeting which was held on the 7th January. Adding to our numbers was Fred Pickard from the London Group whom we are always delighted to see. Before getting down to the topic of the day, the Chairman, David Hope, congratulated Ian Gilchrist on having been awarded a Gold at the "Day of the Stamp" Exhibition in Luzern in December. Ian has worked for many years on his collection of Red Cross material which, at last, has finally received the recognition it deserves.

For the third successive year Tony Hoyle presented a display relating to Alpine Passes, this part being equally as attractive and informative as the first two presentations. As Tony explained in his introduction, this latest offering dealt mainly with those passes which lead into and out of the Canton of Graubunden; S. Bernadino, Splügen, Julier, Flüela, Oberalp, Maloja and Bernina. Each one in turn was illustrated not simply with philatelic material past and present but by photographs, many of which were taken by the presenter himself, modern postcards, but particularly vintage cards. The latter, many depicting the early types of conveyances used over the passes, combined with postal material bearing cancellations of offices and hotels which have long ago ceased to exist, conveyed the sense of adventure which must have been felt by earlier travellers. Relating to the Splügen Pass was a rare official letter to Wergenstein, dated April 25, 1842, with "Splügen" in blue script and a postcard of 1913 to St. Gallen from the tiny Italian settlement of Monte Spluga. The Julier Pass offered numerous examples of SL cancellations and Winteralpenpost strikes with cachets indicating delays due to adverse weather conditions. From the Maloja Pass was a 5c card of 1899 with the first type of canceller to be used, a SL "MALOYABERG" in blue with other items with "MALOJA KULM" and "MALOJA KURSAAL" cancellations. An item posted at the Flüela Hospiz bore the SL cancel of that name plus the c.d.s. "DAVOS DORF", whilst from the doctor at the military post at the summit of the Oberalp Pass was a cover requiring no postage but with the canceller "OBERALPSEE 2-IX-09" and the cachet "Der Chefarzt Der Gotthard Befestigungen". The Bernina Pass into Italy produced numerous items with hotel and mountain hut cachets and also an example of the rare SL "BERNINA-HAUS" strike, this hyphenated variety being used between 1915 and 1925; then into Italy, an entire of 1846 with the "TIRANO" SL cancel. Moving much further westwards to the Joch Pass south of Engelberg was the private SL "ENGSTLENALP (Bern)" of the Trubsee Hotel, whilst on the frontier with France by the Col de la Forclaz was a postcard to Grimsby with 2c x 5 Cross & Numeral stamps cancelled with the c.d.s. "CHÂTELARD-FRONTIÈRE 20-VIII-02". The whole presentation was such that one immediately became absorbed, not merely in the philatelic aspect of the display but actually in the atmosphere and lives of those who lived, worked and travelled in what were, up to quite recent times, quite remote areas of this mountainous country. Over these three presentations, Mr. Hoyle must have displayed at least 500 sheets of meticulously mounted and written up material. A remarkable feat by any standard. Thank you, Tony!

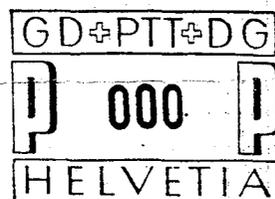
D C

*Empreintes de  
machines à affranchir marquées par  
la Direction générale PTT*

24 mars 1939



*Direction générale des  
postes, télégraphes et téléphones  
suisses*



Who can tell us what about this plain post card with an imprint in red, but no franking value. Discovered in a lot by a member who is as puzzled as the Editor.

PIONEER FLIGHTS 1913 by Evert Poel. Reprinted, with permission, from Jungfraupost, the journal of the 'Studiegroep Zwitserland', Nederland and translated from the Dutch by R S Johnson. (continued from September 1998, p68.)

OLTEN and the flights that did not take place

Introduction The town of Olten, the second largest in Canton Solothurn, was ready in 1913 to organize a first mail flight on behalf of the 'National Flugspende', but it was proud of this time being ahead of its great brother and the cantonal capital Solothurn. The town of Olten with its splendid wooden bridge over the river Aare is now well known for its railway junction but it has always been politically and economically somewhat subordinate.

The flight was not to be. The archives contain no flights and no airmail flights. Twice the organization was set up and twice the flight did not take place. The first time (5th May) because the pilot Rech had an accident on the way to Olten, and then 4 months later (31st August) because pilot Borrer withdrew at the last moment.

Yet 'Olten' exists for the 'aerophilatelist'. Because something philatelic has come from the preparations, although scarce. For this reason a report about 'Olten' can be written. For the air festivities on the 4th and 5th May the famous flyer Oscar Bider had been approached to carry out the airmail flight from Olten to nearby Oensingen on 5th May but he had already agreed to carry out the first airmail flight from Langnau im Emmenthal to the capital Bern on that day. The pilot Ernst Rech offered himself though still very young but not wholly unknown. It was agreed.

There would be no special airmail vignette for use on the mail carried, but the PTT had provided a special cancel with the inscription 'Flugpost Olten-Oensingen 5.V.13. Then there was the circular cachet of the committee with the Olten coat of arms and the text 'Flugtag Olten 4 & 5 Mai 1913'. This cachet had already been struck on about 100 postcards for sale.

Then came the report of a calamity. Rech, on the way to Olten, encountered a gust of wind and crashed just before the start in Dubendorf. All activities ceased at once. The organizing committee announced that a new 'Flugtag' would be arranged. Only five or six 'proofs' of the special cancel are known (the original is in the PTT Museum in Bern).

At the same time there were three picture postcards of Rech and his machine - regarded as Airmail cards, about 100 of which had been struck with the cachet of the organizing committee. On the days that followed a few of them were used postally. All in all there was thus very little philatelic material left. But there was a second flight coming!

FLUTAG OLTEN II 31 August 1913 - The organizing committee kept their promise. A new airmail flight was organized that year over the same route and on 31st August. This time there was an airmail vignette designed for the airmail fee. The design showed a Bleriot, flying over the town with the spire and, naturally, the wooden bridge over the Aare. Alas this festival did not happen. The exact reason is not quite clear. There are two versions. The official one is that the pilot contracted by the organization, Th Borrer, found the start and landing conditions inadequate. Thus he did not venture on the flight. This version is given in Zumstein's Handbook of 1924 (page 259) as follows: "On the initiative of the Traffic and Embellishment organization of Olten, a second airmail flight was to take place with the pilot Borrer . . . . The preparations were agreed in all detail when the pilot declared the conditions for taking off and landing at the chosen place were not favourable. As, considering the short notice no better place could be found, this second airmail flight did not take place, and further printing of stamps became impossible by the destruction of the design on the stones."

The second version, given among others by the airmail pioneer specialist Max Kronstein, is that it was hoped that Borrer would come, but he had not promised definitely to come and he finally chose on that day to carry out the airmail flight Grenchen-Solothurn, also organized for the benefit of the Nationale Flugspende. The fact is that Borrer had made a kind of double agreement and finally chose the airmail flight in Grenchen. Drama in Olten, again no air demonstration, again no airmail flight in spite of all expectations.

The printer Rentsch in Trimbach-Olten had already made proofs of an airmail vignette. One in black (first print), 16 examples in blue-green, 13 in yellow and blue-green and, on another kind of paper, 24 in light green and 32 in dark green. These latter were to be considered as the definitive design (approved for printing). This latter is from the Schweiz Luftpost Handbook. In total 86 examples. That is all the philatelic material of the intended flight!

(continued on the next page)