

HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Founded 1946 President: Claude Mistely

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www.swiss-philately.co.uk



Secretary: Neville Nelder, 13, Bowbridge Lock, Stroud, Glos. GL5 2JZ Email: seitani@waitrose.com Tel. 01453 766751
Editor: Richard Donithorn, 10 Park Drive, Felpham, West Sussex, PO22 7RD Tel. 01243 583237

THE HEINZ KATCHER MEMORIAL DISPLAY 2015 (PART ONE)

ROBERT WIGHTMAN

Members will recall that we published a very interesting 2-part article by Mr. Wightman on "The Acceptance of Switzerland's Special Stamp and Postal Stationery Issues under the UPU up to 1920" in our Society's Newsletter in March and April 2013. At the Society's Annual Meeting in 2015 he presented a display on this subject. Whilst it concentrated on mail to and from Switzerland, in particular the use of Pro Juventute stamps and their forerunners, it also included some exceptional material from countries outside Switzerland which provided the broader context for the display. The report below seeks to highlight items which add to the information set out in the 2013 article. Thanks to Robert's help, his full display can now be viewed on the Society's Website.

The Pro Juventute Forerunners and the International Usage of the Pro Juventute Stamps up to 1920



Fig. 1 - Limited validity of "Special" stamps which infringed the UPU's Regulation of 1897 - The sender thought that this letter from Switzerland to the UK was correctly franked at 25c with a definitive 10c stamp plus 5c and 10c stamps of the 1916 Pro Juventute issue (within their period of validity). However, this Pro Juventute issue was not accepted in prepayment of mail to the UK as it had only a limited validity period. The Swiss post office marked the offending stamps as invalid and indicated an amount of 30 gold centimes postage due – twice the value of the Pro Juventute franking. On delivery in London, 3d (the equivalent of 30 gold centimes) was charged as postage due.

The UPU Regulation of 1897

The world's first real commemorative stamps issued in 1891 did not give rise to significant negative comment. However by the mid-1890s there was a proliferation of special stamps, in particular an increasing number of long omnibus issues. The first event which was the occasion for stamp issues by a range of countries was the 4th Centenary of the Discovery of America i.e. Christopher Columbus's landfall in the Bahamas on 12th October 1492. One of these was the monumental issue of 16 stamps with a face value of \$16.34 issued by the U.S.A. on 2nd January 1893 for the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago (Fig. 2 on next page). Although the US Columbus issue was widely acclaimed because of its fine engraving, it also attracted criticism as the U.S. Post Office was seen to be profiting from the growing hobby of philately. It marked the beginning of the exploitation of stamp collectors with high value issues of stamps.



Fig. 2 The 1892/93 "Columbus" issues - This 2c envelope was sent registered to Switzerland with a philatelic supplementary franking comprising the first 9 values of the "Columbus" issue from 1c to 50c, which gave a total franking of \$1.28 as against the necessary postage of 5c plus registration fee of 8c. It was cancelled with the date-stamp of Quincy, Adam County, Illinois on 6th January 1894 and bears a New York registration label plus back-stamp of 9th January 1894.

Subsequent issues by other countries – in particular Portugal's omnibus issues – gave rise to increasing criticism. There was considerable concern expressed about this trend, including from the Society for the Suppression of Speculative Stamps (the SSSS) which was formed in London on 6th May 1895. These objections were sympathetically received by Heinrich Von Stephan, the German Post Minister, and by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) domiciled in Bern, (which was legally represented by the Swiss Government). At the 5th UPU Congress in Washington in May/June 1897, Germany proposed a new UPU Regulation (seconded by Switzerland) limiting the international postal validity of such issues. Great Britain, India and Portugal spoke against the proposal, France, Italy and the Netherlands in favour. The proposal was passed by 16 votes to 5.

Under the new Regulation special and commemorative issues of relevance only for the issuing country, and issues with a limited period of validity, were not permitted in prepayment of international mail. The restrictions were first applied on 1st January 1899.

The 1897 Regulation was rescinded in 1920 at the UPU Congress in Madrid – in fact most countries didn't appear to be taking much notice of the Regulation by then anyway! By 1919 only Germany and Switzerland seemed to be still attempting to consistently apply the Regulation.

Charity Labels and Stamps

At the beginning of the 20th Century many adults and children in Denmark suffered from tuberculosis. In 1903, Einar Holbøll, a post office employee in Copenhagen, thought that a small voluntary contribution on every item of post in the Christmas season could bring money for charitable purposes. The idea was accepted and Denmark issued charity labels at Christmas in 1904 (thus known as "Julmærker") to fund the building of a new Sanitorium for T.B. patients (Fig. 3 – see next page). The Danes' initiative was quickly followed by other countries who wished to boost the support of good causes through the sale of labels, poster stamps and stamps without face-values. Among the first were Sweden's and Norway's Christmas labels and the Dutch TB surcharge stamps in 1906, followed by New Zealand, Austria and Russia. Some of the early Christmas labels on cover can be very expensive to purchase today despite the fact that they are not even postage stamps, particularly when compared with postage stamps of the same vintage!

The first stamps with a surcharge for the benefit of tuberculosis victims were issued by the Netherlands on 21st December 1906 and remained on sale until 3rd January 1907; valid only for inland mail and until 31st January 1907 (Fig. 4). The 743,325 stamps sold brought in Gld. 20,565 (ca. CHF 40,000).

Werner Gattiker

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Fig. 3 (left) The Scandinavian "Julmærken" from 1904 - Christmas stickers sold in post offices in Denmark each December. The illustration shows a correctly franked cover of 20th December 1904 from Copenhagen to Hamburg bearing in addition three "Julmærker" which were also cancelled.

Fig. 4 (right) First Dutch TB Stamps - A post-card to Germany cancelled 3rd January 1907: Amsterdam Foreign post-card 5c (Apr. 1879 – Feb. 1921). Correctly franked with a 5c definitive stamp; also bearing the TB stamps.

Swiss Stamps with Charity Supplement

Having supported the implementation of the 1897 UPU Regulation once it was introduced, the Swiss postal authorities were in somewhat of a quandry when the Pro Juventute organisation indicated that they wished to issue their own charity labels. The forerunner-labels were issued in 1912 and Fig. 5 shows a letter bearing one with the text in French. It is not certain whether the Dutch charity stamp issue influenced the introduction of the Pro Juventute (PJ) stamps i.e. rather than just labels/stickers. It was clear to the P.T.T. that these issues would be subject to the restrictions the UPU applied to international mail, particularly as they would be valid only for a few months. To get around the restriction, the P.T.T. apparently contacted the UPU countries in advance to see if, they would accept PJ stamps on mail from Switzerland to their country. Six countries: Bavaria, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Portugal and Russia apparently indicated that they would accept them. Five countries: Belgium, France, Germany Great Britain and the Netherlands formally stated that they would treat the use of such stamps as invalid as per the current Regulation. No clear responses were apparently received from the other UPU members. This variation in approach lead to considerable confusion. The above is based on the published Swiss regulations, but no details of the Swiss communications with the other countries have been seen. The Pro Juventute charity stamps proper were introduced in 1913 and were subsequently issued on the 1st December each year from 1915.

The Application of the UPU 1897 Regulation on Mail to and from Switzerland with Charity Stamps affixed

Much of my display in Oxford consisted of covers from Switzerland sent abroad with Pro Juventute Stamps. Fig. 6 shows an example of mail correctly franked with such stamps and thus accepted by the postal authorities.



Fig. 5 (left): Siere to France, 11th January 1913. Foreign letter rate 25c (Oct. 1907 – Jan. 1921). A letter to Mulhouse correctly franked at 25c with definitive stamps; also bearing the French version of the "Forerunner" of the Pro Juventute stamps.

Fig. 6 (right): St. Gallen to Italy, 21st February 1919. Foreign letter rate 25c (Oct. 1907 – Jan. 1921) . A letter sent to Verese-Cantello correctly franked with the 10c and 15c PJ stamps of the 1918 issue.

Perhaps the most interesting covers are those where postage due was applied because the stamps were considered invalid – the amount of postage due determined did not always appear to be calculated correctly, but perhaps this was not always surprising given the different rules by then applying in different countries! The increasing amount of international mail from so many countries with so many different stamps and postal rates made it increasingly difficult to get the calculations to deal with a particular cover correct.

The Swiss public themselves did not always understand the degree of validity of PJ charity stamps, thus for example they might add extra definitive stamps to cover all or part of the international rate on the assumption that charity stamps on international mail were only of use for decorative purposes. They were not always aware which countries would accept them as valid postage.

Covers with PJ stamps were dealt with by the various postal authorities in very different ways. Some were accepted, either deliberately after studying the stamps affixed or mistakenly through negligence or an incorrect interpretation of the rules by the postal officials. Some postmasters probably didn't know of the Regulation or simply didn't care. Not all the Swiss postal clerks seemed to understand what postage due to apply to covers to those countries that were known to treat PJ stamps as invalid. Fig. 7 shows a card to France originally invalidly franked with PJ stamps which were cancelled at Avenches at 8 am on 30th December 1920. A 10c definitive stamp was stuck over the PJ stamps and similarly cancelled at 7 pm. Did the post office contact the writer and collect an extra 10c or did it bear the extra 10c cost itself?

Fig. 8 is an example of the use of PJ stamps on overseas mail which have infringed the UPU's 1897 Regulation. Three further examples are illustrated in my previous article in the Newsletter April 2013 Page 30.



Fig. 7 (left): Avenches to France, 30 December 1920. Over-franked for the 10c foreign postcard rate with a pair of 7 ½ c PJ stamps of the 1920 issue cancelled at 8 am. These were, however, invalid for mail to France, so a 10c definitive stamp was added and cancelled at 7 pm.

Fig. 8 (right): Zurich to USA, 20th February 1921. Foreign letter rate 40c (Feb. 1921 – Sept. 1924). A letter franked with definitives to 22½c plus 7½c + 15c PJ stamps (1920 issue); the PJ stamps were not accepted and 2 x the missing 17½c marked (“T35”); this was recalculated in New York (but on the basis of the old rate of 25c) and 2 x the missing 2½c marked (= 5 gold centimes = 1 US Cent giving “Due 1 Cent”).

During the period that the Regulation was in force, the postage due calculation and the application of the amount due on Swiss mail going abroad appeared to be almost always undertaken by a Swiss postal employee. The degree to which it was collected at the other end of the journey is often unclear. Postage due was unlikely to be applied by countries it passed through in transit, as the mail was normally forwarded from the origin country to its destination in a closed bag. In practice, it appeared that if the Swiss postal authorities didn't mark an item to show that postage was due it was unlikely that the postal officials in the destination country would carry out any further checks.

Other interesting covers in my collection include several with stamps from the 1919 'Peace' special issue which were considered invalid for postage abroad – they are illustrated and described in my previous article in the Newsletter April 2013 Page 31. *(The final part of this article will appear in the next edition of the Newsletter.)*



Helvetia error in a 88A



Paper crease in a 72A



73D 1899-1901 series. Retouch 3.39/IB in a 73D Stage 5 from position 266 on the printing plate.

A homely, new venue discovered by Bob Medland, and a well-known speaker from "The North" attracted a large audience of 20 members and friends to the charming Wiltshire village of Whaddon, south of Salisbury. Our main speaker was David Colman whose fascinating display extended over 135 sheets, containing much rarely seen material. It comprised two rounds: the first dedicated to the Standing Helvetia series, the second to tête-bêche/se tenant configurations.

The Development and Printing of the Standing Helvetias 1882-1907

The Standing Helvetia round opened with a number of alternative suggested designs produced in 1880/81 for a new definitive issue leading up to the adoption of the Standing Helvetia design. David showed the second "Fantasy Essay", so-called by P. Guinand, G. Valko, J. Doorenbos and M. Hertsch in their classic book 'Stehende Helvetia/Helvetia Debout' published with both French and German by Zumstein + Cie 1982. Also displayed were the Libertas, Medallion and Rütli essays, all possessing common elements with the selected design, namely with a circle of stars, small value figures in the top corners and the word "Franco" in the scrolls at either side of the large value figure at the bottom of the design.

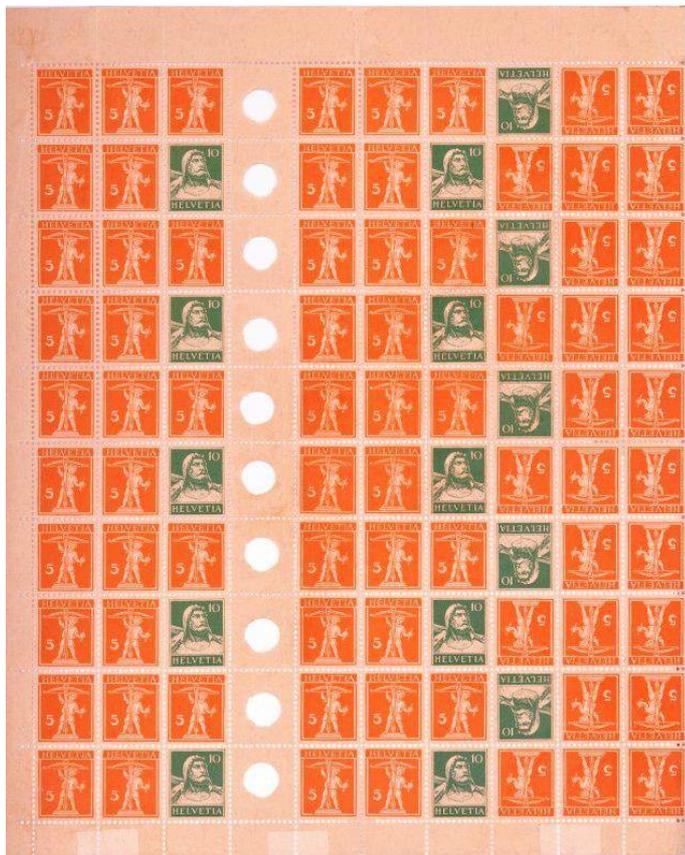
David then showed mint versions of the complete range of the known Standing Helvetias excepting the very rare and expensive 72C, 72F and 100A Fr3 stamps. Subsequent frames were devoted to various known 'errors' on individual stamps and covers (examples are shown in the illustrations above). These usually resulted from gradual deterioration in the recessed printing plate/cylinders and the resultant, often rather crude, re-engraving, by-hand of the effected area(s) of the plate. His examples included major retouches, illustrations of how a long scratch affected several stamps from a plate, double-entries and the so-called "Green Flag" error which resulted from ink collecting in a worn recessed area which could not be corrected by re-engraving. Errors transferred from one printing to others as printing plates were reused. Three large blocks of the 30 cent 86A and the 50 cent 90C stamps were shown displaying large accumulations of re-engravings— a spectacular high-point for avid collectors - plus examples on cover.

Other interesting stamps showed "complete offsets" where the Standing Helvetia is printed in reverse on the back of the stamp as a result of the image being left on the roller; and examples of the "paper crease error" which leaves a blank area on the stamp when the stamp is opened up and teased out flat.

There was lengthy discussion around the two items which appeared in HPS Newsletter July 2015 (p. 64), one a cover with a bisected 20c Standing Helvetia and a postage due, the other a parcel coupon with 500c postage dues and Standing Helvetias. The issue raised by these is why Swiss postage due stamps are unlikely to be found on covers franked with Standing Helvetia stamps.

The first round ended with examples of 'Sprechende', Dumb and Customs cancels, plus plain concentric ring cancels used either as temporary replacements whilst the official metal cancel was repaired or for use on awkwardly shaped parcels or fragile items. Discussion revealed that the latter are sometimes found on international return cards – cancelled by the incoming Swiss PO to show that no postage due was chargeable. Also displayed were a variety of Box cancels and cancels used by Swiss Postal Agencies in France and Italy.

Tête-bêche/Se tenant Configurations up to the mid-1950s



The second round of the display was a study of the origins and use on cover of tête-bêche and se-tenant pairs and multiples. It was started with the 16 sheet display which won the Silver Cup at the 2014 Annual Meeting of HPS, concerning the use of the 1921 10 cent green Tell (Z153) stamp in the four stamp booklets 20, 21, 22 and 23. A complete 90 stamp sheet for booklets of Z153 was shown plus a second of the combination of Z153 with the orange 5 cent Tellboy Z152. In the second of these sheets (see illustration) there are 15 of the green Tell stamps and 75 Tellboys printed in three column blocks so as to make 15 booklet sheets each with five Tellboys and one Tell. There is an interspace at column 4, the se tenant combination between columns 2 and 3 and 5 and 6 and the tête-bêche inversion between columns 7 and 8. Booklet 20 for which this sheet was designed has 5xTellboys, 13xTells and 12 of the 20 cent Tell Z154. There was much discussion of whether any logic could be proffered for the 5:13 division which has led to so much philatelic pleasure. Surely it cannot have been driven by such a specific pattern of usage. It seems more obviously a product designed to stimulate philatelic demand. Did the Swiss come up

with this first? If not, which country did? As noted in David's piece in our Newsletter (July 2007) tête-bêche and gutter pairs cannot have come from the booklets themselves, but only from complete sheets made available to philatelic bureau counters and to dealers. That explains why so many of the covers to be found with these combinations are from the Sekulas, Zumstein et Cie and other dealers. The Sekulas specialised in producing such philatelic covers in every combination imaginable. A range of such covers was presented as well as some originating from private individuals and institutions.

The final frames included covers with combinations of stamps from the sheets of the 'Salvage', '1939 National Festival' crossbows and 1953 PJ 'Butterfly/Insects' stamp sets. Also inter-space pairs and strips from the 'Landscapes' and 'Landscape and Technology' issues – some of them on FDCs.

Other Members' Displays

As usual, a number of members brought along interesting items to entertain the audience:

- Paul Jenkins – a follow up to his display at the Annual Meeting of early C20th colour postcards of views of Switzerland – in this case 54 from Cantons Aarau, Basel and Appenzell.
- Fred Hoadley – the complete range of Airmail stamps issued, including overprints, paper varieties and hints on identifying forgeries.
- Ted Stern – essays of Cantonals and Standing Helvetias sold to collectors as facsimiles.
- Wendy Lamble - programmes for shooting matches in 1907 and unusual censored covers.
- Bob Medland – his HPS Competition winning entry of 'Cinderellas' and unusual Postage Due covers acquired at Europhilix (including a 1c PD on cover, a strip of 5 x 2c PDs and 500c of PDs for bulk mailing delivery).
- Richard Donithorn – stamps related to Blind persons and a mini-collection related to the World Heritage Site of La Chaux-de-Fonds and two of their residents, Le Corbusier and Charles L'Eplattenier.
- Marc Burgess made his debut at a HPS meeting. His display and that of Eric Lienhard will be subjects of future articles in the Newsletter.

Vote of Thanks – our President, Claude Mistely, thanked all those who had given displays, in particular to David Colman for the clarity of his presentation and the unusual nature and quality of his material. Thanks too to Bob Medland and Werner Gattiker for all their hard work to ensure the event was such a success.

A HELVETIA P. S. MEETING AT AUTUMN STAMPEX 2015 – A REMINDER

DAVID HOPE

The Society has booked Meeting Room A of the Business Design Centre (BDC) from 2pm to 4pm on Saturday 19th September in Islington. Entry to Autumn Stampex is free including a complimentary catalogue. If you are visiting STAMPEX on that day please join us. Short displays on various aspects of Swiss philately will be given. Why not bring something along yourself? We look forward to seeing you there. Further details – www.philatelic-traders-society.co.uk Tel. 023 9283 2289.

Directions – the Business Design Centre is at 52, Upper Street, Islington Green, London N1 0QH. Nearest Underground: Angel (Northern Line). Bus routes: 4, 19, 30, 38, 43, 56, 73, 153, 205, 214, 274, 341, 394, and 476. If in a car, there are some AA signposts to the BDC. Or why not hire a taxi!

FORTHCOMING REGIONAL MEETINGS

The Southern Group – Saturday 3rd October commencing at 10.30.a.m. at "The Three Crowns" public house at Whaddon which is just off the A36, 4 miles south east of Salisbury. The main speaker will be our own Marc Burgess who will entertain us with some of the treasures from his Swiss Collection, linked to his family history. The following dates are pencilled in for 2016: February 27th and October 8th, and suggestions for topics and speakers would be most welcome. The date for a mid-year meeting has not yet been fixed as we do not want it to clash with the possible HPS Jubilee trip to Lucerne. Further information, including details of the location of the venue in Whaddon, is on the Society's Website or direct from Werner Gattiker - business e-mail address werner@swisstamps.co.uk, Tel. Office: 01273 845501 and Home: 01273 842135.

The Northern Group will resume activities in November after the summer break. Details of the 2015/16 Programme will appear in a future Newsletter. Further details from David Hope Tel. 0161 3030091.

CORINPHILA AUKTIONEN

This auction house based in Zürich has sent the Society the list of prices realised at its Rarities Auction at Philatex on 16th May and the International Corinphila auction on 26th -30th May this year. They conclude that: "the results show that there is strong demand for high-quality philatelic and postal history material!" They are now seeking "interesting auction consignments for their international collector and dealer clientele: rare single stamps and covers, well developed country- and specialised collections, deceased estates and dealers' stocks". The closing date for submissions is 4th September 2015. Contacts: E-Mail: info@corinphila.ch Website: www.corinphila.ch

A VERY WELCOME CD-ROM FROM THE AMERICAN HELVETIA P.S.

EDITOR

The AHPS, and in particular Richard Hall, have been busy producing a Second Edition (in CD-ROM format) of their hard-back publication: 'Philately of Switzerland - an Introductory Handbook'. The first edition of this book was published in 2010 and won a Large Gold at NABA Stans in 2012.

It is beautifully produced with 345 glossy pages, 32 chapters providing a very comprehensive introduction (and more) to collecting "Swiss". It is particularly strong on coloured illustrations which reveal the full beauty of Swiss stamp designs, both traditional and modern. It is a great way of showing newcomers to the hobby how much there is to stamp collecting and encouraging them to join us in the adventure. Whatever your level, there is much to learn from within its pages, including a detailed 11-page glossary of terms found in Swiss Philately, a Multi-lingual Dictionary of these terms (in German, French and Italian with English equivalents), a 12-page schedule of key reference works and subject bibliographies at the end of each chapter. Most collecting interests are catered for, although, no doubt, specialists will always claim that "there is more that could be said". All in all a very enjoyable read – highly recommended. A copy is in the Society's library.

If you would like a copy of the CD-ROM, it is available for \$10 US postpaid to anywhere in the world. You may pay by PayPal (please add 30c to cover their fees) to: treasurer@swiss-stamps.org or they could accept "a £10 banknote sent in the mail". Send orders to: The Secretary, The American Helvetia Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 15053, Asheville, North Carolina 28813-0053, U.S.A.

GIACOMETTI - A show of Alberto Giacometti's portraits commences on 15th October at our National Portrait Gallery. Look out for more information on the Giacometti family on Swiss stamps in a future newsletter. (Editor)



Twice recently an eBay seller has provided me with information about the item I purchased from him/her. Once I asked for a little help and received very much help from a Dutch dealer. And, for the example shown here, the information was simply forthcoming. This can make a common item suddenly very interesting.

The letter is from Lausanne to Widnes, Lancashire, dated 1st July 1942. It is properly paid at 30 centimes for the letter plus 20 centimes airmail surcharge = 50 centimes total. At this time the Swiss mail for Great Britain was still being sent from Geneva, across Vichy France, to Lisbon.

What attracted me to this simple item is the double GB censorship and the fact that the letter had been totally opened flat for examination. During the war this treatment is often seen on letters with a possible Polish connection, such as the addressee Monsieur Krzyszkowski. It seems that the principal British examiner was Number 1610 and the added helper was Number 1132. One perhaps spoke Polish but this is impossible to determine with certainty.

The GB censorship records show both examiners were active in London at the time the letter was resealed on three sides and the lower right corner with a small piece of crown tape. This is an odd use of the continuous brown tape with crowns, Morenweiser Type 2D. The usual procedure for letters that were opened on three sides was to seal the entire piece with the crown tape.

When the dealer listed the item on eBay he received an email from an elderly lady who is the daughter of Mrs. Martindale, the sub-addressee of the letter. This lady noted that Mr. Krzyszkowski was a refugee from the Nazi invasion of Poland who stayed on in GB and worked at a local factory for the next 25 years.

Suddenly this simple little cover had a very important human side, thanks to an eBay dealer. It never hurts to ask.

THE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL - If anyone who receives the Newsletter by post, would like to have a sample electronic copy sent to them, please send your email address to the Editor.

CONTACTS THROUGH THE WEB OR INTERNET - Could I please have some feedback on how useful the various websites and email addresses published in the Newsletter are to you. If you are unable to access them and want the postal or telephone contacts I am happy to send them to you (where known) on request. (Editor)

RÖLLI PHILATELY

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THE HELVETIA CUP COMPETITION WINNING DISPLAY 2015 – CINDERELLAS

BOB MEDLAND



This year’s winning display was on the unusual subject of ‘Cinderellas’ – possibly a “first” in the history of the competition! The informal title covers a wide range of postal administration and instructional labels etc. found on mail items that were subject to a supplementary delivery service, had been redirected or could not be delivered for reason stated. It is a subject matter sometimes derided by conservative philatelists but it is becoming of increasing fascination to postal historians. Members attending the Annual National Meeting who judged the competition evidently found the labels to be of interest.

The display opened with an unusual, official wartime cover sent by the Department of Economic Affairs to Croatia, with typical Registration, Airmail and Express labels (Figure 1 above). Another unusual, official item was part of a parcel wrapper sent to Liechtenstein under domestic postal rates with parcels registration label (Fig. 2). The post office used a bewildering variety of small, instructional labels - rouletted or perforated - advising of the reason for non-delivery. These are listed comprehensively in an excellent catalogue ‘Les Etiquettes Postales Suisses 1876-1997’ by Guignard and Vuille (1998).



Figure 2

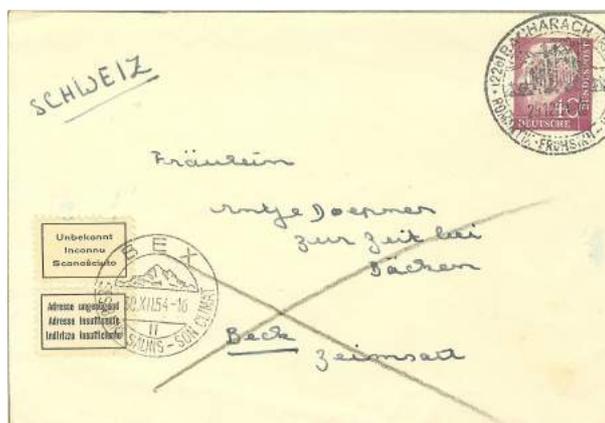


Figure 3

Whether a letter was insufficiently or incorrectly addressed, refused, unpaid CoD, the addressee was unknown, departed or deceased or a business had closed down . . . there was an official label provided for the eventuality (Fig. 3). How very Swiss. Items in the display included examples of the earliest known versions (green printing), one from 1889 possibly being the earliest known example (Fig. 4). A more modern but equally scarce item was a label attached to a postcard posted in 1948 for return to sender (Fig. 5). The label advised that the item was being returned as the address was incomplete – but that it would be delivered without the need for further postage if the correct address was inserted and the label was left attached. In this case, evidently the item went no further.



Figure 4



Figure 5

Swiss Postal Stationery Collectors Society



Inquiries or Membership:

Albrik J. Wiederkehr, Rue du Carroz 5, CH-1278 La Rippe

E-mail: albrikwi@bluewin.ch

Website: <http://www.ganzsachen.ch>

'A RARE FIND' – A RESPONSE

WERNER GATTIKER

The interesting article (HPSN July 2015 P. 63) about the rare find at Cavendish Auctions of a 5 Rappen blue Strubel made me look up what Urs Hermann has written on the subject in his monumental 2006 Strubel Handbook. He devotes 16 pages to this fascinating subject, covering the history of the discovery, the various interpretations and theories about the origin and the status of this rare stamp. The final conclusions reached by Urs Hermann after studying all the available evidence are summarized as follows:

The Blue 5 Rappen Strubel:

- They exist in two distinctive shades of blue (milky-blue and deeper Prussian-blue), but with many nuances
 - There are no original 10 Rappen Strubel which display the same shades, papers and printing peculiarities as the blue 5 Rappen Strubel.
 - Therefore, they are not errors of colour, nor prints from 5 Rp clichés wrongly inserted into a 10 Rp plate.
 - They are instead trial prints from the Munich 5 Rp colour trials which were discarded due to their poor quality.
 - Some of the darker blue coloured 5 Rp Strubel probably originate from Dr. Custer's cancellation trials.
 - Some of these colour trials must have entered the postal system improperly and were used postally
- Today there are 22 of these rare blue 5 Rp. Strubel recorded, including 4 on covers.

In contradiction, in Zumstein's Specialized Catalogue 2000 we find this blue 5 Rp. listed as issued error of colour: Z. 22A.1.01

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