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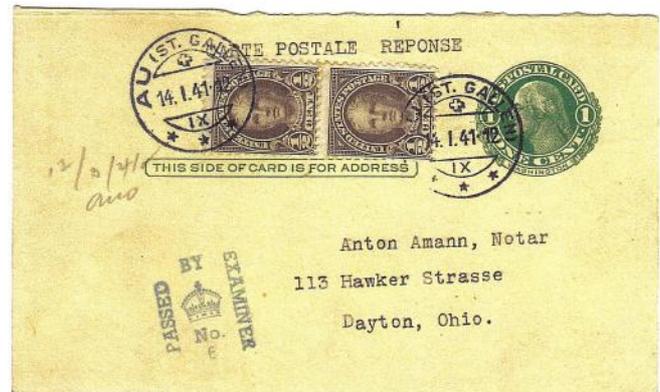
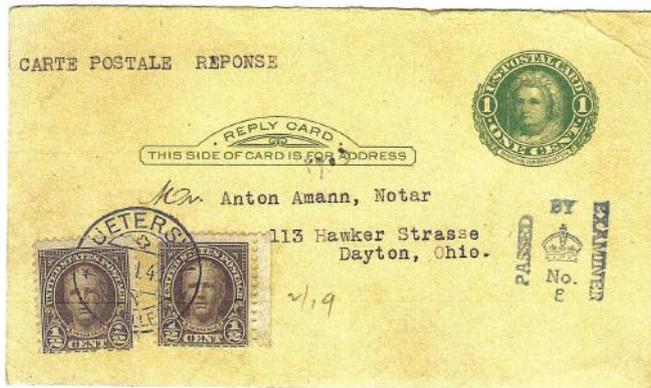


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SCARCE CARD – SCARCE CENSOR MARKINGS

CHARLES J. LaBlonde CphH, FRPSL

With thanks to Lewis Bussey, Karl Klemmer and Wayne Menuz. This article has previously been published in other philatelic journals.



The Cards

These two cards came my way from a philatelic friend. I was not sure what they were but I had never seen such things previously. And the Bermuda censor numbers sealed the deal! Note that both cards have been marked (via typewriter) "CARTE POSTALE REPONSE" to appear as the return portion of an international reply postcard.

The earlier card (left above) was posted on 2nd January 1941 in Rueterswil a small St. Gallen town. The card shows in pencil "2/19" which could be an arrival date. Note that this card is an actual reply card (more on this below). The other card (not really a "reply card") was posted on 14th January 1941 in AU (St. Gallen), a town well-known to philatelists as having the shortest town name in Switzerland. Note that this card shows in pencil the date "12/3/41 ans".

Several collector friends pointed out that the postage on the cards did not seem to be correct. In 1941 the postage for the return portion of a reply postcard was 3 cents. The APRL very kindly supplied the latest 'United States Postal Card Catalog' edited by Lewis E. Bussey. The cards are catalogued as Number MR14 – issue of 1915. The outbound card is George Washington, the attached reply card is Martha Washington.

But I had two reply cards! Adding to the mystery was the fact that the correct postage for a reply card was 3 cents, not 2 cents!

Mr. Bussey provided the following observations:

The cards tried to look legit by having the notation typed in French "carte postale reponse" as was required by the UPU for international postings. However, the rate is incorrect for 1941 as it should have been 3 cents from Switzerland, not the 2 cent printed matter rate, which these were not. Possibly the Swiss were just confused and coming into the US perhaps some employee saw two stamps and didn't penalise the cards. Further it was not uncommon for a person to use the wrong half of a reply card for sending or for the reply, especially as the use of such cards in the international mails after WW1 declined precipitously.

And, adding the proper amount of adhesive stamps for changed rates, or in this case, to convert a domestic reply into an international reply was also within the UPU regulations. I suspect the user didn't know the international rate, guessing it was 2 cents. Or if the sender was a philatelist, perhaps he knew the system wouldn't bother with the missing 1 cent.

The Censors The “real” reply card (Martha Washington) shows Bermuda Censor Number 5. And the other card (George Washington) shows Bermuda Censor Number 6. Peter Burrows, in the CCSG “Section 6 British West Indies” book, notes that these censors were initially located in Gibraltar, until the entry of Italy into the war on the Axis side. This made the Gibraltar censor station unnecessary and many of the censors were transferred to Bermuda. Numbers 2, 3, 5 and 6 are known. Burrows also notes that the numbers clearly did not refer to individual censors, but rather to a section of temporary examiners handling only postcards.

Peter Flynn, in his Bermuda book, notes that the Bermuda censor location was not initially equipped to censor postcards. There was at one time some concern that mail destined for North America had actually been handled in Gibraltar, but subsequent study proved that the former Gibraltar censors were actually working in Bermuda.

Both Burrows and Flynn note that examples of this censorship are quite scarce. Flynn, in his book, reports only seven known examples of these censor handstamps.

References

Burrows, Peter (ed), 'British Empire Civil Censorship Devices, Section 6: British West Indies & Falkland Islands' – Civil Censorship Study Group, 2010, ISBN 978-0-9517444-8-2.

Bussey, Lewis E. (ed), 'United States Postal Card Catalog 2015' - United States Postal Stationery Society, 2015, ISBN 978-0-9886075-7-6.

Flynn, Peter A., 'Intercepted in Bermuda, The Censorship of Transatlantic Mail during the Second World War' – The Collectors Club of Chicago, 2006, ISBN 0916675-15-7.

Wawrukiewicz A. and Beecher W., 'U.S. International Postal Rates 1872-1996' – Cama Publishing Company, Portland, Oregon, 1996.

FORTHCOMING PHILATELIC EVENTS IN SWITZERLAND

- 11th - 13th October 2019 At the Verkehrshaus (Transport Museum) Luzern - on the Museum's Air and Space Days the GWP visitors will be introduced to Astro Philately including a display of some unique Space Artefacts! Members of the Society of Space Friends are particularly welcome. Website: www.g-w-p.ch (the Outer Space Philatelists Society).
- 9th - 10th November 2019 - Basler Collectors' Fair 'MUBAPHIL' with Regiophila at the Messe Basel (Hall 20). Contact: basler-sammierbourse.ch
- 28th November - 1st December - Day of the Stamp 2019 official event - PHILATELICA'19, Philatelic Exhibition (Classes II and III) and bourse at the Espace Gruyère in Bulle. Organised by the Philatelic Club of Bulle.
- Also on 24th/25th October 2019 - International Stamp Fair at Messe Sindelfingen across the border in Germany. Switzerland will be represented by the Swiss Postal History Society.
- and on 22nd - 24th November 2019 – the International Thematic Championships 2019 in Verona, Italy (FEPA). Switzerland will be represented by the Swiss Thematic Collectors Society.

Details of more local and regional philatelic events in Switzerland can be found every month in the Schweizer Briefmarken Zeitung (Swiss Philatelic Journal). Website: www.vspfv.ch Email: sbz.redaktion@schwarzpr.ch



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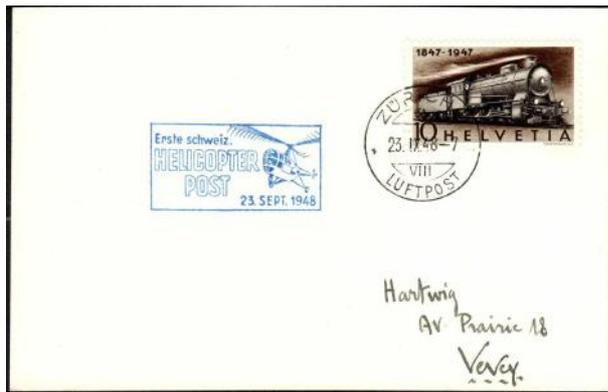
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FIRST SWISS HELICOPTER POST 23rd SEPTEMBER 1948

WERNER GATTIKER



Plain postcard with ZÜRICH LUFTPOST 23.IX.4 – 7 cds and the blue Helicopter cachet Press photo of Presse Diffusion of Lausanne ©

I read Bob's article in the July 2019 edition of the HPSN (pp76/77) with interest and can perhaps add a few additional snippets of information. The helicopter flights linking Zürich's Main Post Office (Sihlpost – Zürich 1) with the old airport at Dübendorf as well as the new airport still under construction at Kloten were meant as trial flights for the faster conveyance of mail between airport and city. The aircraft was a Westland-Sikorsky S 51, registration G-AJHW built in Britain under licence and was piloted by Alan Bristow personally.

The trial flights were obviously well-publicised in advance and philatelists posted a massive 30,000 items to be carried. There was no airmail surcharge and these items of mail were flown at the normal surface rates. They all received the ZÜRICH LUFTPOST 23.IX.48–7 cds and the blue Helicopter cachet (illustration left above), but no arrival postmark, so it is not possible to distinguish the Dübendorf flight from the Kloten flight. Because of the large quantity of mail transported, these helicopter cards and covers are relatively common even today: the current airmail handbook rates them at CHF 10.00 (catalogue no. SF 48.11).

I have a press photo (right above) with a French text attached, reading roughly:

“This morning the Zürich postal directorate has conducted a trial, unprecedented so far in Switzerland. It is the transport of mail from the principal post office to the airports of Dübendorf and Kloten by means of a helicopter. It is a Sikorski machine, American licence, built in Great Britain, piloted by the Englishman BARSTOW (sic), who has convincingly demonstrated the extreme manoeuvrability of this type of aircraft. We see here the helicopter taking off and passing over the mail van which has taken on the mail.”

The regular helicopter transfer of Zürich airmail was not taken up, but the use of helicopters has certainly spread far and wide in Switzerland, quite apart from being a rescue and emergency vehicle. As Bob observed, helis are widely used in construction projects instead of cranes, and in mountain terrain they form part of daily life. They are used to take personnel to and from outlying work, provision remote hamlets with food and drink and remove their rubbish, in forests they remove felled trees, they help string cables from pylon to pylon and so on. How common helicopters are was shown to me on one of my recent high-level hikes in the Valais when I came across the dad of a herdsman looking after goats. He offered coffees to passing wanderers from his hut but he could barely walk, and so I wondered how on earth he climbs the 2-hour steep footpath from the village below, the only access to his alp. “Well, I spend Summer here because I love it here, and when the first snows come I simply ring for a heli to take me down to my village...”. Just like we would ring for a taxi.

Werner Gattiker

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PHILATELIC CELEBRATIONS IN BRIG-BRIGUE: CENTENARY OF THE SIMPLON POST-AUTO

MIKE SHARP



Happy philatelists at the 'Brig-Brigue '19' Exhibition. From left to right – Jean-Louis Emmenegger, Editor in Chief of the philatelic magazine 'Rhône Philatélie', Mike Sharp HPS's Webmaster, Pierre Jeanfauve, president of the 'Entente Philatélic of the Valais/Haut-Léman philatelic societies' and publisher of 'Rhône Philatélie' and Jean-Louis Borter, president of the Philatelic Club of Brig and of the Organising Committee of the exhibition (photo courtesy of J-L. Emmenegger).

A descriptive account of travel on the high passes of Switzerland was published in the recent May edition of the HPS newsletter. This is a timely reminder of the challenges of transalpine communication as it coincides with the centenary of the first postal bus service across the Simplon Pass which took place on 21st June 1919.

A notice placed in the same newsletter about the 37th Philatelic Exhibition of the Entente Philatélic of the Valais/Haut-Léman taking place on 29th & 30th June 2019 prompted me to visit Brig for the weekend. Jean-Louis Emmenegger 'Rédacteur en chef' for the 'Rhône Philatélie' journal kindly sent me in advance both copies of the journal highlighting the forthcoming event and the exhibition programme, the latter a useful bilingual publication. A combination of displays and the advertised Borse with ten dealers and auctioneers was sufficient to whet my appetite. On what may turn out to have been the hottest weekend of the year, after the pleasure of the railway journey from Geneva airport, I arrived in Brig and found comfortable accommodation at the Haus Schönstatt above the Stockalper Palace and only fifteen minutes walk back down the hill to the exhibition in the Simplonhalle.

Fellow philatelists were most welcoming, thanks to the introductions facilitated by Jean-Louis, and the President Jean-Louis Borter was kind enough in his address to acknowledge my presence as a member of the HPS. The exhibition displays included 275 frames and showed considerable diversity.



The postcard above was sold at CHF 3 at the event. The postmark commemorates the 100th anniversary of the first postbus crossing over the Simplon Pass. On the right is a souvenir cover of the Fête des Vignerons complete with the three stamps issued in May 2019.

It is the year of Le Fête des Vignerons at Vevey and Christian Noir took me through his exhibit which included documents and artefacts highlighting the history of this remarkable event held at approximately 20 year intervals since 1797. After returning home, I was delighted to receive a commemorative cover bearing new issues for this years festival by post from Christian Keller, whose illustrated article about the festival was published in the December 2018 edition of the Rhône Philatélie journal.

I attended an excellent presentation by Roman Tscherrig about the postal history of the Wallis prior to entry into the Confederation. His use of bilingual PowerPoint slides to support his delivery was greatly appreciated.

An exhibit which caught my eye was a comprehensive Swiss aerophilately display covering the period 1907 -1948 including crash mail by Edward Martin. As an amateur ornithologist, I also enjoyed 'L'Harfang des Neiges' (the Snowy Owl) a one frame display by Estelle Bouchet Junior which delivered both an informative and attractive description of this remarkable bird.



One of two diligences on display in the courtyard of the Stockalper Palace



The vintage Sauber autobus

Appropriately a highlight of this 100th anniversary celebration of the Simplon Brig - Domodossala post bus service was the presence of a vintage Sauber autobus which transported many of us to a local winery to enjoy wines, raclette and fellowship on the Saturday evening. Much to my surprise, in learning about the history of this service, I discovered that it was only in 1954 that the use of diligences, used only in the winter months, were withdrawn.

In conclusion, my visit to Brig was both a pleasure and informative thanks to the welcome afforded to me by Jean-Louis Emmenegger and the members of the local philatelic societies.

FORTHCOMING REGIONAL MEETINGS

Southern Group – Unfortunately our regular venue in Whaddon is no longer available to us. As a result we **have had to change the DATE, DAY of the WEEK and the VENUE of our next event**. It will be on **Thursday 24th October** commencing at 10.00 for 10.30am and finishing at approx. 4.00pm at Harnham Scout Hall, Lower Street, Salisbury SP2 8HB (on the south west side of the city off Harnham Road). Refreshments will be available, including lunch at a local hostelry. The main theme of the meeting will be 'Airmails' and members attending should bring along items from their collection for display. Displays on other themes will be welcome and shown if time permits. Details of the dates of future meetings will follow. Further information from Werner Gattiker: Tel. 01273 842 135 or werner@swisstamps.co.uk

Midlands and Northern Areas Group – the next meeting will probably be in Birmingham. Further details will follow in the Newsletter when available. Contact: Neville Nelder – email: nevillenelder@gmail.com or by 'phone on 01453-765937.

A NEW MEMBER

EDITOR

Mr. Schalk de Klerk has recently joined our Society. Schalk has informed us that: “my main interest is Walter Mittelholzer and his activities; although I am also quite intrigued by the flights performed by Oskar Bider and Captain Spelterini. Any information on these people would be appreciated. I hope to be able to add to the knowledge base too, if required.” We hope that he will take full advantage of all the benefits of membership and perhaps meet him one day at one of our events.

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REPORT ON THE SOUTHERN REGION MEETINGMARC BURGESS

The broad theme of the meeting in Whaddon on the 1st June was “Over the Alps”.



Werner Gattiker – The Swiss Alpine Club - Werner’s display was dedicated to the memory of Norman Thompson, who died recently aged 96, the last surviving founder member of the Helvetia P. S. and a keen mountaineer in his early life.

The Swiss Alpine Club (SAC) was founded in 1863. It maintains a network of almost 150 refuge- and staging huts in the high alpine regions to assist mountaineers and trekkers wishing to climb mountain peaks or to hike across uninhabited wild alpine regions. In addition there are many privately owned and managed similar huts dotted around the mountains. Early huts were primitive, often without roofs, with climbers having to carry their own tarpaulins, fire wood and water with them. Werner’s extensive display was based on a collection of picture-postcards from the early huts of the 1870s through to the modern day (with all mod cons). The majority incorporated the sought-after hut cachets which were only obtainable by visiting the huts. All the cards were mounted on pages with full descriptions including the name, canton, altitude and access routes of the huts, a picture of any cachet and a detailed map with the position of the hut marked. 52 cards in all from 45 different huts; some 6 interior views; 34 cards with the appropriate hut cachet – some pictorial.

Fred Hoadley – Travel over the Alps by Rail and Air - The first section focused on the postal history associated with the Rhödtische Bahn in Graubunden and its various sections, including the Albula Bahn, the Chur-Arosa Bahn and the Chur-St. Moritz Bahn. The second half of the display highlighted the early fund-raising events to aid the founding of the Swiss Air Force in 1913 with mail carried by the 12 pioneer flights undertaken by 9 pilots, 8 of whom were French speaking. Examples of the 1919 overprinted 30c and 50c airmail stamps were shown (both genuine and forged examples), followed by the 1923, 1933-37, 1935-38 provisional and the 1941 airmail issues, including examples on covers.

Richard Donithorn - An Alpine Miscellany - Richard’s comprehensive display included an array of stamps, postcards, dramatic photos and pictures of paintings by Turner and Hodler of Swiss alpine scenes. Alpine animals and national parks (designated and proposed) were also featured, as well as the panoramic stamp strips of the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau, the new Gotthard rail tunnel and the Churfirsten range. Winter sports and cable cars on stamps and cancellations completed the display. Reference items for perusal included a book of Turner’s tours of the Alps, the ‘Tell’ articles by Richard Hall on the Gotthard and a book featuring the Erivan stamp collection.

Eric Gill – The Importance of the Gotthard Pass (presented by Werner Gattiker on Eric's behalf) - “The configuration of the central European alpine ranges in the form of a cross X locates the Gotthard route at the centre of the cross, thus making it the least complicated north-south crossing of the Alps and therein lies its strategic importance. Nevertheless, the challenges in developing this crossing of the Alps were considerable.” Eric’s display featured the first Basel to Milan partial coach journey taking some 2½ days in duration, but using ship mail on Lakes Lucerne, Maggiore and Como, noting that the first steamers weren’t introduced until the 1850s and the Axenstrasse in Canton Uri wasn’t completed until 1868.

Anthony Atkinson – The Lindau Messenger via the Splügen Pass - This ancient courier service, established in the 14th century provided an important trading route between Lindau on the Bodensee and via the Splügen Pass (2,113m), the Rhone valley and Lake Como to Milan. This trading route was further developed in 1490 via linkages with other northern European messenger services by Maximillian, 1st Holy Roman Emperor. Anthony’s display showed pictures and philatelic items relating to all aspects of these routes, noting the historical progression from foot transport to mule train, thence by coach and finally by rail.



Rosamund Ragg – Soldier Stamps - Rosamund gave a comprehensive display of Alpine-related WWI and WWII soldier stamps and overprints, including soldier stamped cards and censored letters. The highlight was a WWII picture of the gun defending the Gotthard tunnel entrance, this being the most fortified position in the entire conflict.

Eric Lienhard – Alpine Flowers and the Säntis - Eric's display included numerous photos of alpine flowers taken of his rock garden in 1968, which featured some 160 varieties. This was followed by numerous post cards, pictures and philatelic items of his boyhood climbs on his local mountain, the Säntis, the highest peak in Appenzell Innerroden.

Marc Burgess – Pre-Philatelic Gotthard Mail - Marc displayed four trans-Gotthard letters, two dated 1809 and 1811 from Altdorf to Faido, one dated 1815 from Stans to Faido and one dated 1828 from Schaffhausen to Lombardy in Italy. All would have been carried by mule train over the Gotthard, as the first road over the pass wasn't completed until 1830. Furthermore, the latter two letters would have been carried by ship on the Vierwaldstättersee to Fluelen as the Axenstrasse road access to Altdorf wasn't completed until 1868.

Peter Berk – Pro Aero - Peter presented a comprehensive Pro Aero display, including mint examples of most of the attractive vignettes used on mail carried on the various Pro Aero flights.

Wendy Lamble – Swiss Rationing and the Salvage Campaign in WWII - Wendy displayed numerous items of philatelic and historical interest demonstrating the wide conversion to arable lands for increased food production during WWII and the extent of rationing for foodstuffs (excluding fruit or vegetables), including various ration vouchers and the focus of the salvage campaign of 1940.

TURNER AND LUCERNE

EDITOR

Did any of you see William Cook's lengthy article in 'The Independent' of Friday 19th July entitled 'Turner's Fascination with a Small, Sleepy Swiss Town'? The town in question was Lucerne which Turner visited six times during his life, creating many depictions of its dramatic landscape setting. This summer there is an exhibition of Turner's works based on Swiss subjects at the Kunstmuseum, Lucerne: 'Turner: Das Meer und Die Alpen' (The Sea and the Alps) (www.kunstmuseumluzern.ch) until 13th October.

Cook concluded his article as follows: "Yet despite the commercialisation, despite the endless crowds and queues (*of today*), somehow the image of Switzerland that Turner saw, and captured in paint, endures..... A good artist sees the world as it really is. A great artist enables us to see the world in a new and different way. Those lakes and mountains were always there, but we never saw them quite so clearly until we saw them through Turner's eyes."

It is perhaps a pity that none of Turner's works were featured when, in 2007, it was England's turn to design a set of stamps for SwissPost's annual series: 'Switzerland through the Eyes of Foreign Artists'. The distinguished British photographer James Peel, who was commissioned to produce the stamps, chose depictions of Switzerland by British authors (rather than painters). He used some of his beautiful black and white photographs to illustrate the locations of his four subjects - Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein' (the Mönch), William Wordsworth's 'At the Staubach Falls' (Lauterbrunnen), Lord Byron's 'The Prisoner of Chillon' (Lake Léman) and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle - Sherlock Holmes's 'The Final Problem' (the Reichenbach Falls).

A PICTURE POSTCARD'S STORY: THE BRODERBRUNNEN IN ST GALLEN

BOB MEDLAND

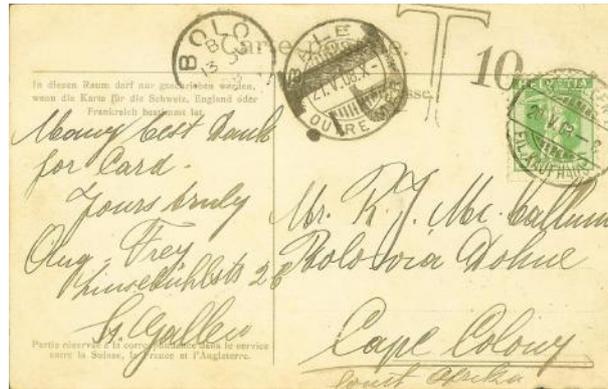


Fig. 1

Today we are witnessing the demise of the traditional postcard, mainly due to the almost ubiquitous use of mobile phone technology. Why spend 50p + 61p postage for something that takes several days (or weeks) to arrive when you can send your own picture free, knowing it will arrive instantly? A century ago, people had more time, it was a more elegant era and picture postcards often bore high-quality photographs taken with large-format, glass plate cameras. Examining such cards closely can be very rewarding for the postal historian.

During my recent visit to Portugal a fellow postage due enthusiast was careless enough to show me such a postcard which had the bonus of being taxed (Figure 1), with the almost inevitable result that it has changed collections (thank you Malcolm Judd from Tavira!). Franked with only 5c it was addressed to "Bolo via Dohne, Cape Colony, South Afrika". The stamp was cancelled with 'St Gallen 1 – Fil. Kaufhaus' sub-post office date-stamp on 20 V 1908 8pm. Mail to South Africa was routed via Basel, hence it was struck with 'Bâle Outre Mer' date-stamp at 10am the next day. It is unusual for a Basel date-stamp to be in French but this canceller was used specifically on outward mail being sent via France.

Next stop was the outward exchange office in Basel where mail was checked for correct franking: not so in this case and a shortfall indicated by the outline 'T' (Taxe) handstamp. The foreign postcard rate was 10c so, in line with UPU regulations, this amount was doubled and noted next to the T with a separate '10' mark i.e. 10 centimes to be paid. This mark was one of a series - the other values being 10, 20, 30 & 50 centimes - used on under-franked mail to other countries between 1908 and 1924. From Basel the postcard would have gone by train to a French channel port, possibly across to Great Britain and thence to South Africa. The postcard arrived in Cape Town where it was struck with a large '1D.' tax handstamp (10c = 1d). Bolo was some 800 miles up country from Cape Town so the card would thence have gone by train via De Aar to Dohne which had a station on the railway line southwards to East London.

So why should someone in St Gallen have sent a picture postcard to such a remote location in South Africa at that time? The Dohne area was settled by German veterans of the Crimean War in the 19th century and named after a missionary. Bolo was a remote agricultural location but evidently busy enough to have its own postal facilities with a date stamp that was used as an arrival mark on 13/6/08. Most likely the tax was paid without any postage due stamp or further marking.



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

The picture side of the card (Figure 2) shows an elegant scene with gentlemen in boaters and ladies with parasols and long skirts – evidently it was a sunny day. By the early 1900s St Gallen was a prosperous town. Much of its wealth derived from the local embroidery industry and its administrative status which attracted investment by the financial sector. The building illustrated was the headquarters of the Schweizerische Bankverein (Unionbank) which was established in 1889 and had become part of the Swiss Bank Corporation in 1897 - but apparently retained its name. Its ornate frontage features on many contemporary postcards, partly because of the 'Broderbrunnen' fountain in front, the centrepiece of the road junction. It was erected in 1895 to commemorate the installation of a fresh water supply to the town having been designed by August Bösch, a well-known Toggenburger sculptor. The cost was funded by a legacy from Hans Broder, a cantonal judge and local benefactor, hence its name. The sculpture is surmounted by a partially-nude figure and its design caused a scandal at the time of construction. By the 1990s the fountain was in poor condition. The original figures had been manufactured using a cheap process of plaster covered with a thin layer of copper sheet so it was restored with its figures replicated in bronze and the work was completed in 2000. There is a fascinating website on the restoration project <http://www.swiss-artfoundry.com/artistsprojects/august-boesch/broderbrunnen/>.

A quick check on Google Streetview (Figure 3) shows that the Broderbrunnen and bank building look much the same today but the area has lost much of its charm – and not a boater to be seen. Different times.

THE AMERICAN PHILATELIC RESEARCH LIBRARY

EDITOR

To keep you informed of some relatively recent publications that you might refer to in your researches, here is a schedule of some of this Library's recent acquisitions as noted in their journal, the 'Philatelic Literature Review' Vol. 68 No. 2 2019:

'Die Strubel-Halbierungen' (Bi-sects) by Erhard Keller. Published in 2010.

'Stehende Helvetia' (Helvetia issues) by Axel Walter Herms and Kurt Loertscher. Published in 2015.

'A Map of Switzerland and Liechtenstein showing their Post Office Sorting Code areas. Published by Kummerley + Frey, Bern in 1985.

'Swiss Postal History of the Old Confederation' by Richard Schafer. Published by Multipress Verlag AG in 2000.

'Postroutenstempel der Schweiz: Organisation, Postboten, Postrouten 1805-1881' (Postal Markings) by Martin Gasser. Published by Lenzburg: Martin Gasser. Schwabisch Gmund: Druck Bahnmayr GmbH in 2010.

'Swiss Postal Contracts, Tariffs and Routes' by Richard Schaffer. Published by Multipress Verlag AG in 2000.

'How the PTT used to deal with letters and cards that could not be distributed and related stories' by Meier-Schobinger and Peter Zurück. Published by Multiprint in 2017.

To access documents in the APR Library refer to their website: www.stamplibrary.org ; email: library@stamps.org

n.b. Back copies of the APRL's journal are available to view from the Society's library. Researchers can also explore the current library listings of the Royal Philatelic Society London through its website www.rpsl.org.uk ; email: secretary@rpsl.org.uk ; telephone: +20 7486 1044.

THE 64th RÖLLI AUCTION - 12th/13th SEPTEMBER 2019

In our September auction we have 2,800 lots on offer. The focus is postal history. We would like to mention the following highlights:

Covers within the **border district** of Switzerland, Germany and Austria

Hotelpost with 40 lots, of which are some rare Hotelpost stamps on cover

Soldier stamps: a collection with rare stamps and proofs - will be detailed

Postal forms and money orders: one of the best documented collections - will be detailed

Covers of the 19th Century to **rare destinations** such as China, the Phillipines, Chile and Australia, to mention only a few.

The Auction Catalogue is available on 'Philasearch', where you will find the details to each auction lot and where you can place your pre-bids or bid live. You can also order your catalogue or check the lots on our website homepage in PDF format – www.roelliphila.net The catalogue will be despatched from mid-August to subscribed customers.

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THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL GLIDER MEETING ON THE JUNGFRAUJOCH

MIKE SHARP

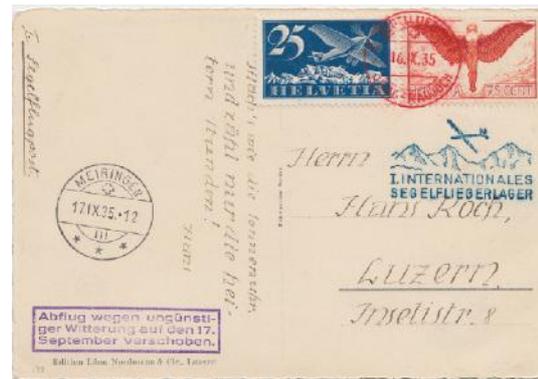


Figure 1: Flight to Interlaken, 2,600 postcards. (19 km, Pilot Robert Gsell)

Figure 2: Flight to Meiringen, 5,500 postcards. (26 km, Pilot Herman Schreiber) – this flight was delayed until 17th September as shown by the violet delay cancel

In Germany in the 1930s, the popularity of gliding encouraged by government support, a legacy of restrictions imposed on the aeronautical industry by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, had made considerable advances in aerodynamic knowledge beneficial to the improvement of manned flight. Across the border in Switzerland, for a fortnight between 4th and 18th September 1935, an international soaring meeting was held by the Swiss Aero Club at the Jungfrauoch, 3,470 metres above sea level, in conjunction with the permanent meteorological station on the mountain. The challenging soaring conditions of the Jungfrauoch locality offered further opportunities in testing conditions. The 17 pilots attracted to the meeting came from Germany (4), Austria (2) Yugoslavia (2) and Switzerland (7).

As in previous flying events, there were competitions for greatest distance, height and duration of glider flights, the winners achieving 145 kms, 4,750 metres and 5½ hours respectively. A detailed report of the competition was given in the December 1935 edition of 'The Sailplane' magazine. An unattributed three-page article published in the HPNS in August 2016 provided full details of the event and the philatelic interest. In June this year, Mike Sharp gave a presentation to the Society's Southern Region group on this subject. His display included 5 postcards carried by the competition gliders, all with glider-post cancels and different combinations of airmail stamps. Two of the cards are illustrated above.

Mike writes: "As undertaken on previous pioneer airplane flights, to raise both public interest and support, postcards were carried on selected flights to the various landing destinations. Each postcard attracted a CHF 1.00 tariff and a variety of contemporary postage stamp combinations can be found (see illustrations). A small number of covers bearing the postage stamps of Austria or Liechtenstein are also encountered.

Notable at this event was the achievement of the best Swiss pilot, Herman Schreiber, not for his flight to Meiringen (see the card the subject of Figure 2) but for a remarkable achievement on 7th September (not referred to in the previous article in the HPSN). From a point at 3,650m in front of the Jungfrauoch, recognising and taking advantage of exceptional favourable wind conditions, he took off in his Condor flew across the Lötschental and the Wallis arriving over the Simplon with little height to spare. However, finding further thermals he was able to continue along the Centrovalli with some difficulty eventually landing at Bellinzona aerodrome after a flight lasting 5hrs 47mins. The straight-line distance from the Jungfrauoch was 90 kms but the distance flown was approximately 145 kms."

References: the 'Schweizerisches LUFTPOST-HANDBUCH (1992) SF-31' which gives full details of all the flights carrying mail, including the names of the pilots and the number of postal items carried.

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