



# "Helvetia"

SOCIETY FOR COLLECTORS OF SWITZERLAND

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Summit, N.J. 07901, 274-4175

## HELVETIA CALENDAR

- Dec. 21 -- Monthly meeting, Fair Lawn Arts Center, 12-56 River Road, Fair Lawn, N.J., 8 p.m. Program: post cards showing patriotic and military scenes, cantonal costumes and coats of arms, and postal conveyances. All members are invited to bring appropriate material. Guests welcome.
- Mar. 11-13 -- BEPEX show. Helvetia entry in club competition. Theme is 1934 philately.
- Apr. 15 -- Helvetia hosts SASS regional meeting at SOJEX.

## BLUM HONORED AT CHRISTMAS DINNER

Henry Blum received a Helvetia Award for distinguished service at the society's annual Christmas dinner on Dec. 11. In January he and his wife, Carrie, also a member, will move to Bricktown, N.J. The award, an inscribed wooden plate rimmed with the 22 Swiss cantonal coats of arms, was a token of the membership's appreciation for Henry's support of society activities, in particular his generosity in providing material from his extensive collection for many meeting programs since 1967.

George Wettach made arrangements for the roast beef dinner at the Homestead Restaurant in Hasbrouck Heights, N.J. A total of 18 members, wives and friends attended the annual event.

## ASDA BOOTH ATTRACTS NEW MEMBERS

About a dozen collectors joined Helvetia and another dozen expressed interest in the SASS New York Chapter during the ASDA show in New York's Madison Square Garden last month. On hand to answer questions and accept dues at the joint Helvetia-SASS hospitality booth were representatives of both organizations. Helvetia President Steve Pomex, who made last minute arrangements for the booth, decorated it with travel posters from the Swiss National Tourist Office in New York and pages from the collection of Helvetia member Harlan Stone. The "unidentified" member that the Dec. 13 issue of Linn's Stamp News pictured in the booth was Steve himself.

1971 NABA EXHIBITION  
Translated by Walter Reimann

Hans Hunziker reports in the Berner Briefmarken Zeitung that at the June NABA exhibition in Bern he counted the following number of copies of some of the Swiss classics:

Double Geneva	37
Basel Dove	70
(including 21 plus a pair on covers)	
Vaud 4	44
Poste Locale (without frame around cross)	32

Among the rare frankings, he noticed a cover with 1½ Zurich 4's used as 6 Rappen postage, a vertical strip of three of the Winterthur used as 7½ Rappen postage, and a pair and a single of the Neuchatel used as 15 Rappen postage on a cover from Geneva to Bulle.

He also mentions that, among the more modern rarities, the following were conspicuous by their absence: the imperf air-mails (Zumstein No. 4z, 9z, 13z), and the inverted surcharge 10 on 15 Rappen (Zumstein No. 20). The re-engraved 25 Rappen UPU commemorative was not shown on cover.

ANPHILEX '71

ANPHILEX '71, the invitation exhibits sponsored by the Collectors Club of New York in commemoration of its 75th anniversary last month, included two frames of Swiss classics provided by the Anne Boyd Lichtenstein Foundation. To quote from the catalog for the exhibition held in the grand ballroom at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York:

The early stamps of Switzerland have long been ranked among the foremost philatelic classics. In these two frames are displayed representative selections of the 1843-1862 issues from the famous collection formed by Alfred F. Lichtenstein, including singles, pairs, blocks, unused, used and used on cover. Outstanding items are:

- Zurich 1843 4r black used
- 1846 4r used on piece
- 6r unused strip of five
- 1843 Double Geneva 10c unused and used  
and a reversed pair used
- 1849 Vaud 5c unused block of eight
- Basel Dove 1845 2½r on cover
- Federal issue 1851 5r with cross framed
- 1852 15c rayon block of 12 and a pair used  
on a wrapper
- 1855 1fr lavender mint block of four

## SASS NEW YORK CHAPTER MEETING

The recently organized New York Chapter of the Swiss American Stamp Society (SASS) will hold its second meeting at the Collectors Club of New York, 22 E. 35th St., N. Y., on Dec. 30 at 8 p.m. Officers will be elected, dues established and programs scheduled. Harlan Stone, elected president pro tem at the first meeting in October, will show his specialized collection of the Sitting Helvetia issues.

## NEW HELVETIA MEMBERS

Dr. Alfred Bloch, 20803 Brock St., East Detroit, Mich. 48021

Kurt F. Stemmer, c/o Whitemarsh Valley Country Club, Philadelphia, Pa. 19118

Richard Bennett, 6 Harvard Place, Livingston, N.J. 07039

Paul J. Kravitz, P. O. Box 29, Kingsbridge Station, Bronx, N. Y. 10463

Harold Yaeger, 515 Larch Lane, East Meadow, N. Y. 11554

Gerald S. Diamond, 1 Mt. Vernon Road, Upper Montclair, N. J. 07043

Aaron Grantz, 188 Keap St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11211

Henry C. Heunermund, Jr., 2038 Caroline Ave., Linden, N.J. 07036

Robert C. Ross, 344 W. 72nd St., Apt. 12H, New York, N. Y. 10023

Joseph E. Krois, Jr., Edelweiss Stamps, Box 15, Bayside, N. Y. 11361

John Betts, 5 Alton Road, Stamford, Conn. 06906

## NEWS BRIEF

Mary Ritter, a recent member of Helvetia, died during the summer. Max Buser, well known in New York philatelic circles because of his long association with the firm of H. R. Harmer, died in October. They were a sister and brother of Helvetia member Edward Buser.

The Payment of Postage in Cash  
at the End of December 1851 in Switzerland  
by Jean J. Winkler

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Translated from Schweizer Briefmarken Zeitung  
February 1953  
by Werner Vogel

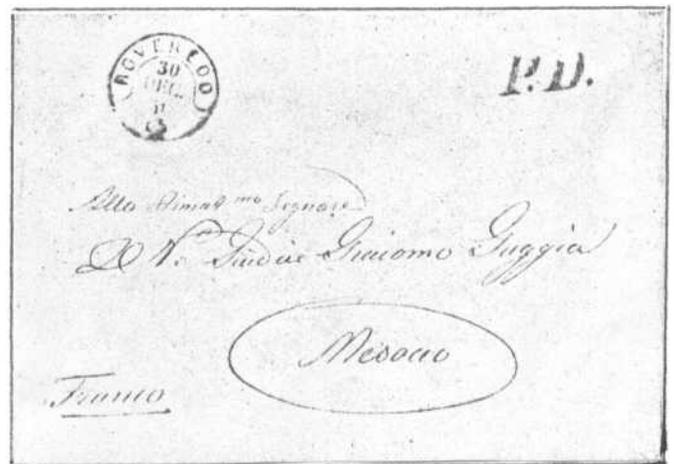
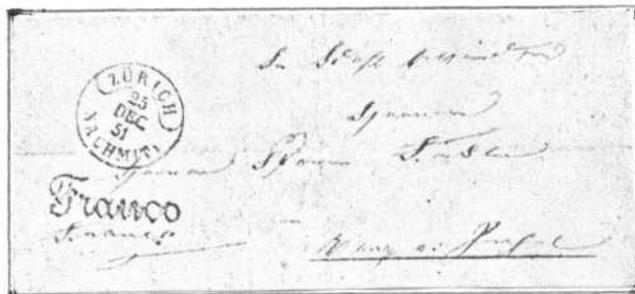
Even the best Swiss philatelists know very little about the end of the year 1851 when for a short time letters could not be sent with stamps because no postage stamp could be sold. Postage had to be paid in cash. Up to that time stamps were sold in old Swiss value (one Batzen = four Kreuzer) in the cantons of Basel, Argau, Bern, Freiburg, Solothurn, Waadt and Wallis. The Swiss Franc at 10 Batzen or 100 Rappen was worth 1.43 Francs at today's value. The other cantons had different kinds of money, altogether not less than 297. In addition there was a lot of foreign money. This all brought a lot of difficulties to the postal service. A uniform money system for the whole of Switzerland was a necessity.

With the change of the postal laws of June 4, 1849 (effective Oct. 1, 1849) and the new law of Aug. 25, 1851, (effective Jan. 1, 1852), the French money system became effective for all of Switzerland. Under that law all the old stamps with the old values were to be discontinued. The post offices had to return all stamps on hand. In that short time, until the new value became effective on Jan. 1, 1852, postage had to be paid in cash and letters were stamped "Franco" or marked with similar handwritten notations. Unused postage stamps could be returned up to Dec. 24, 1851, to the post office. Money was not given back, but the returned stamps were exchanged on Jan. 1, 1852, for the new value stamps.

Starting Jan. 1, 1852, only three "Rayon" or distance categories were in effect. The postage for these were 5, 10 and 15 centimes respectively. The idea was to have a new set of stamps on that date. There was a lot of correspondence between the designer Weiss in Munich and the Council of the Swiss Government. Because the first delivery could not be made in time, the old 5 and 10 Rappen stamps were sold for the new value 5 and 10 centimes. For this reason the old stamps were sold at different prices. The sale of the old stamps was stopped on Dec. 25, 1851, so that the bookkeeping was made easier. The new stamps came out only on Jan. 1. During these seven days not a single postage stamp was sold.

Although the Rayon I and II stamps were kept for the postage of the two distances (first zone up to two miles = 9600 meters, second zone from two to ten miles), a new stamp was needed for the third zone over 10 miles. A new 15 centime stamp was added until the issue of the new set of stamps.

Because the law said that all postage stamps should be returned as of Dec. 25, one should think that all during these seven days (Dec. 25-31) but not before that date, the "Franco" letters could be found. That is not the case. During all the time I collected stamps, I could find only six letters, the oldest dating from Dec. 22, 1851. (Three are illustrated on the next page.)



As all the stamps in the hands of the post offices had to be returned to the Director of Posts by Dec. 25, it has to be supposed that some more distant post offices or some over-anxious postmasters returned their stamps earlier, because they thought that the stamps had to be in the hands of the Subdirector by Dec. 25. It could therefore be possible, but very unlikely, that there could be cash-paid letters with dates earlier than Dec. 22. Whatever it may be, the duration of the cash-paid letters was not more than 10 days.

During this period only a very few of all letters were franked by the senders with stamps. Most of the mail was franked free by the Government and the Church. In addition, anyone who had stamps in his possession could use them. Letters without stamps were usually destroyed because they were worthless. As a result, you can imagine that these cash-paid covers are very rare. Mr. Buehler called these covers in his book Rund um das Sammeln von Marken auf Brief (translated "Collecting Stamps on Cover") small rarities.

It is astonishing that collectors of Swiss stamps neglected these interesting covers. Maybe they were not recognized. There are very few collectors who can call themselves lucky to own some. Furthermore, covers from Dec. 25 to 31, 1851, with stamps should be even more rare.