



VOLUME III

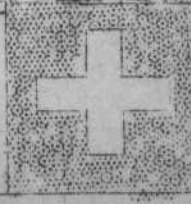
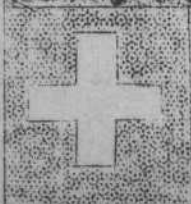
No. 8&9

BULLETIN

THE "HELVETIA" SOCIETY

FOR

COLLECTORS OF SWITZERLAND



NATIONAL PHILATELIC AUCTIONS

FOR

REFUGEE RELIEF.

LAST CALL!



Have you contributed to this auction? - Did you do your bit to help the unfortunate, destitute and despairing of war-torn Europe? Remember, the more we give, the greater the savings of lives. The greater the savings of lives, the greater the chances to defeat the dictators and their tyranny! If we help nourish the subjugated, we strenghten their bodies and spirit defiance to slavery! We must not permit the selling of souls, but do everything in our power to help the down-trodden to break their chains. THE REFUGEE AUCTION IS THE MEANS! Let's give freely! Let's give gladly! This main event is in November. Let's buy what we can! If you have the money, and your heart is in the right place, BE CHARITABLE! Lend your support and buy at this auction. There are splendid opportunities to fill your vacant spaces in your album. Remember, every time you look at your stamps you bought at this auction, you will proudly experience the infinite satisfaction of having been a part in helping to liberate a life from the shadow of death. Respond generously to this cause! Humanity calls you to help reduce the suffering and instill new hope to shattered lives and nations.

So, onward friends and do your share,
Give all, and more than you can spare;
The need is great, the suffering heavy,
Death toll rises, and increases steady.

To meet this demand, we call on our hobby,
To give others joy, for humanity we lobby;
So go to your "dups" and pick out the best,
And send them to Ed. Stern, as per request.

Be sure you mark them "AUCTION - REFUGEE RELIEF
With helpful description which must be brief:
Then watch for **your name** in the catalogue list,
Which glorifies the donor Philatelist.

The big event is some time in November,
Bear this in mind, and try to remember:
Save up some money, there are bargains galore,
The proceeds go to Refugees of foreign shore.

* * * G.A.V.G.

B U L L E T I N

" HELVETIA SOCIETY FOR COLLECTORS OF SWITZERLAND "

EDITOR: Gustave A. von Gross

317 South 15th Street

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

VOLUME III

August/September 1940

Nos. 8/9

Philadelphia, Pa. 9/30/40.

Minutes of the Meeting
of the
" Helvetia Society "

The regular monthly meeting of the Helvetia Society was held on the above date at 317 South 15th. Street, Phila. Pa. with the President Mr. Jacques Kilcher presiding. The meeting was called to order at 8:45 P.M. with 14 members answering the roll call, after which the minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

Treasurers Report.Receipts:

Balance on hand May 20, 1940 \$ 52.05

Dues 14.00

Total \$ 66.05

\$ 8.00

Balance \$ 58.05

Expenditures:Order #42 June & July
Bulletins \$ 2.80Order #43 August & September
Bulletins \$ 5.20

Total \$ 8.00

Balance on hand October 30, 1940 \$ 58.05

Edward H. Lewandowski, D.D.S.

Treasurer.

Reports Of Committees.

Counterfeit: Mr. von Gross reported no progress. In a general discussion on this matter, Mr. Marcus, also a member of this committee, felt that while the original idea was to expose all the counterfeit stamps, it is also a fact that it would be practically impossible to determine how many counterfeit stamps there really are and whether or not the committee could secure all the counterfeits.

It was therefore recommended that the most logical course to pursue would be to devote the time and efforts of the committee to the reproduction and description of the genuine stamps instead of to the counterfeit stamps. It was thought that this method would be of so much more

value to the Collectors to have the reproductions of the genuine stamps to use for comparison that our efforts would be better spent in limiting ourselves to the work which will be of the greatest benefit to the Helvetia members.

Liaison: Progress.

Radio Broadcast: It was moved, seconded and carried that in as much as we are unable to obtain any information on this subject, the question of the Radio Broadcast be tabled for the time being.

For the good of the Society.

The President appointed the following to serve as a nominating committee. Mr. Vincent Domanski J. chairman, Mr. Martin Neumunz and Dr. Charles H. Evans members.

As the Helvetia Banquet is scheduled to be held in New York next February 1, 1941, the President appointed the following to act as a banquet committee to arrange for the banquet: Dr. C.H. Evans, chairman, R.L. Cullum and Mrs. Anna V. Elkins members.

The following bills were ordered paid:

Order #42 to mimeograph and mailing the June and July bulletins \$ 2.80
Order #43 Mimeographing and mailing the August and September bulletins etc. \$ 5.20.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned in regular form.

Secretary
T.F. Harrison.

* * * *

1940 Swiss Independence Day Stamps.

Karl Posch of Union City of New Jersey forwarded to me the following article which appeared in the May 1940 issue of SCOTT'S MONTHLY JOURNAL. Thanks for your contribution Karl, I am sure others will enjoy reading this interesting bit of Swiss history which needs partly correcting.
Quote:

The significance of the designs of four semi-postals issued by Switzerland to raise relief funds is explained by F. Doseebach, director of the Official Information Bureau of Switzerland in New York. The vignettes were selected, he points out, to "recall in the heart of every citizen just a few of the many heroic episodes which glorify Swiss history." Next August 1st will be Swiss Independence Day, when money will be collected to be shared by the National Relief Fund for Swiss Soldiers and Families, the Red Cross, and those needy dependents of Swiss soldiers who are not qualified to receive support from the National Relief Fund, and the surtaxes from the sales of the stamps now issued will be added to those collections. Each stamp bears the Red Cross symbol in lower right, and inscribed is Collecté pour le Don National et la Croix-Rouge (Collected for the National Fund and the Red Cross) in French on 30c plus 10c, with the equivalent

wording in Italian on 10c plus 5c and in German on 5c plus 5c and 20c plus 5c.

The 5c, captioned "Sempach 1386", illustrates the Stans (capital of Nidwalden) memorial to Arnold von Winkelried, a mythical, or possibly an actual heroic Swiss figure at the Battle of Sempach on July 9, 1386, when the Swiss Confederates defeated an army led by Duke Leopold III of Austria. The legendary deed of von Winkelried was that "at a critical moment when the Swiss had failed to break the serried ranks of the Austrian knights, he came to the rescue; commending his wife and children to the care of his comrades, he rushed toward the Austrians, gathered a number of their spears together against his breast, and fell pierced through and through, having opened a way into the hostile ranks for his fellow-countrymen, though at the price of his own life."

The 10c, inscribed "Giornico 1478," recalls December 28th of that year when about 600 Confederates defeated 12,000 Milanese troops at Giornico, in the canton of Ticino, largely by hurling huge rocks and tree trunks from the heights down upon the invaders. In memory of this victory the church Santi Innocenti of Pollegio was erected. The stamp illustrates a figure toppling a rock.

The 20c, with the wording "Calven 1499" and bearing a picture of Benedict Fontana, pays tribute to a victory which 6,000 men of the Grisons achieved in the Calven defile near Muenster on May 22, 1499. Fontana, head of the League of the House of God, led the winning forces.

The 30c, inscribed "1914 Les Rengiers 1918," recalls Swiss mobilization in the World War and "also serves to emphasize Switzerland's determination to safeguard her frontiers in the present crisis." A statue "The Watch at Les Rengiers" by the sculptor L'Eplattenier is shown on the stamp. Les Rengiers is a pass between Porrentruy and Delémont, in north-western Switzerland, and during 1914-18 saw more Swiss troops pass by than any other Swiss section.

* * *

Unquote: Correction:

Each stamp bears in the lower corners a shield. The one to the left, the white shield, contains the denomination of the stamp plus the surtax, and the one to the right, the white cross in the red field, the Swiss national colors. In the above article, SCOTT'S MONTHLY JOURNAL states incorrectly, quote: "Each stamp bears the Red Cross symbol in lower right, etc." - Unquote: I am sure Mr. Dossenbach never made this statement, being too well acquainted with the coat of arms of Switzerland to confuse it with the Red Cross symbol.

A second error in this article is the misspelling of the mountain pass which should read "Les Rangiers" instead of "Les Rengiers" in the 30c plus 10c value.

In order to have this article complete, it would be nice to add the names of the designers and the engraver of these stamps. The 5 plus 5, green, was designed by artist Carl Liner of Appenzell; the 10 plus 5, orange-brown, and the 20 plus 5, red, are the creation of designer Bernhard Reber of Bern; and the 30 plus 10, blue, is a product from the able hands of sculptor Charles L'Eplattenier of La Chaux-de-Fonds. The stamps were photo-engraved on white granite paper, flat gum, by the printery of S.A. Courvoisier of La Chaux-de-Fonds.

* * *

The Swiss Independence Day Sheet.

Sentimental appeal and national patriotism was responsible for the issuing of this special souvenir sheet. The beautiful sets of the 1940 Swiss Independence Day stamps were received with such enthusiasm, that the Swiss Postal Authority was besieged with requests to issue them in the form of a souvenir sheet. The Post Office Department, after due consideration, granted the request.

The sheet is 65 mm high and 125 mm wide; imperforate, of white paper, a little stronger than ordinarily used for stamps, and contains shreds of red and blue silks. The four stamps as described in the preceding article, are placed side by side. A border of three light-gray lines, the center one being much heavier than the others, encloses the stamps. In the center of the upper border-frame is the symbolic emblem of "Goodwill Offering", the seal of the Swiss National Independence Day Committee. Centrally spaced in the lower margin of the sheet, and below the lower border-frame, the sales price is printed in German, French and Italian. Just like the stamps, the sheets were engraved by Courvoisier of La Chaux-de-Fonds.

This special souvenir sheet was placed on sale from July 16 to August 1st, 1940, and loses its franking privilege after November 30, 1940. Face value - 65 Rappen; sales price 5 francs. The net proceeds were turned over to the same agencies as mentioned in the article on these stamps.

Since I have forgotten to state the date of issue of the Independence Day stamps, I would like to add, that unlike other years, and due to help the National Relief Funds, the sale of these stamps was advanced. In normal years they are available from June 15 to August 15th, but this year they were on sale from March 20th to August fifteenth. Their franking value expires November 30, 1940.

G.A.v.G.

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Non-Philatelic Swiss Independence Day Souvenir Sheet.

by Karl Posch, Union City, N.J.

The Swiss Pavilion at the New York World's Fair offers to its visitors its own Swiss Independence Day Souvenir Sheet. Price 50 cents.

The souvenir sheet, writing paper size, at top left contains a printed seal reading: "Swiss Pavilion New York World's Fair 1940"; at top center there are two Edelweiss; and at top right - in color - the Red Cross symbol. Below this printing, and in the center of the sheet, a set of 4 stamps of the 1940 Swiss Independence Day stamps, perforated, is mounted in block formation, the center of the block of four stamps bearing the cancellation "BASEL - BRIEFANNAHME."

The net proceeds from the sale of these sheets will be turned over to the Swiss Soldiers and their Families.

* * *

Counterfeiters At Work.

Several of the comparatively late Swiss stamps have grown in importance, advanced to the class of minor rarities and are greatly missed by almost every collector and dealer.

To this classification belongs the "Tall Bust tête bêche 20/20c carmine red of 1925"; Zumstein's major number 174z; tête bêche number K 25z gummed and ribbed paper (Scott's # 193aR). The new Zumstein 1941 lists this tête bêche 45.00 Francs while the same tête bêche on flat paper mint is catalogued only at 1.00 Franc, and used at 60 Rappen.

This great difference in price awakened the counterfeit artists into action. Lately Zumstein's expertising department has been kept busy examining some of these tête bêches with forged ribbing. - Stamps were submitted from all parts of Switzerland which leads them to believe that the counterfeiters spread their racket pretty well. SO BE WARE!

Anyone possessing a single stamp of Zumstein's #174 on flat paper (Scott's 198), and Zumstein's #174z on ribbed paper (Scott's #198R), should experience no difficulty in detecting the forgery. - The two stamps vary entirely in color on the face of the stamp, and in paper nuance. Those facts should help you materially in deciding in your own mind whether the ribbing of the tête bêches in question is genuine or forged.

* * *

SWISS NEUTRALITY

or

The answer to "Why the Swiss people so liberally contributed to the National Defense and Relief Funds and willingly supported its sale of stamps to maintain their vigorous neutrality."

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It is universally known that Switzerland is a neutral country, but the significance and importance of her neutrality is far less widely understood.

The neutrality of Switzerland goes back to the XVIIth century, to the time of the Battle of Marignan (1515). With the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, the neutrality of the Helvetic Union was for the first time expressly laid down by the Great Powers. Later, in 1814 and 1815, at the Congresses of Vienna and Paris and more recently still, in 1938, by the League of Nations, the principle of Swiss neutrality was formally recognized. Finally, at the outbreak of hostilities in 1939, the French, English, Italian and German governments declared that they would at all times respect this neutrality.

Why is it that neutrality has become the fundamental principle of Swiss policy? In dealing with this question two main factors must be taken into consideration, the one appertaining to external, the other to internal reasons.

By abandoning her neutrality, Switzerland, situated as she is in the center of Europe, would continually have been involved in the conflicts of her neighbors and have become the battle arena of Europe. On the other hand, if she had allowed herself to be drawn into the quarrels of foreign states, the different racial elements which compose her population would have

clashed both from the sentimental and the material point of view.

Thus it would have been impossible to avoid the religious wars of the XVIIth and the conflict of nationalities in the XIXth century. These wars would have divided the country and it is probable that the Swiss Confederation would not have survived such schisms.

And yet precisely this miracle has been brought about in Switzerland: the peaceful cohabitation, within the same frontiers, of a population belonging to four different linguistic groups, practising two different religions and whose traditions and psychological make-up are diametrically opposed, and yet all submitted to the same legislation and the same government. Switzerland thus constitutes a real League of Nations, vitally alive, a sort of "United States of Europe" on a small scale. When one fully realizes the meaning and the importance of this surprising fact, one can understand that the Swiss, in order to avoid endangering this achievement of which they are so proud, should have renounced for ever all thought of pursuing an active foreign policy. They have no claims to make against any other state, nor do they acknowledge any claims against themselves.

Moreover, this neutrality is advantageous to others besides Switzerland. In the "Act recognizing and guaranteeing the perpetual neutrality of Switzerland and the inviolability of her territory", signed on November 20th, 1815, the Great Powers officially set forth "that the neutrality and inviolability of Switzerland and her independence of all foreign influence are in the real interest of Europe". Again in 1938, the League of Nations declared that the permanent neutrality of Switzerland, guardian of the mountain passes in the very heart of Europe, is "justified in the interest of general peace".

It is necessary to specify here that this neutrality is recognized and not guaranteed. Indeed Switzerland admits no right of control over her policy, whether interior or exterior, on the part of foreign powers. She is herself both the guarantor and the defender of her own neutrality.

Thus, for reasons of self protection, Switzerland maintains an army capable of effectively carrying on a war of defense against any aggressor. The Swiss army has one particular characteristic. It is composed of citizens enrolled and trained for the defense of the State. Every citizen is subject to military service, for which every youth prepares himself by physical training, sports and firing practice. At the age of twenty a young man is mobilized as a recruit and goes through a course of training lasting four months. Thereafter, he is called up annually to take part in a "repetition course" lasting a few weeks, in order to perfect his instruction and to maintain his training. This particular trait of the Swiss army results in the fact that there is no essential difference between the army and the people. It is often said that, "The army is the nation, and the nation the army" - and it is true. A national army composed of militiamen is an institution peculiar to Switzerland and the unsuspected power of the country lies precisely in the fact that it has as a foundation not conscription but the privilege of the free man to carry arms. To carry his gun on his shoulder means to the Swiss the same as the bearing of a sword meant to a nobleman in ancient times. One might almost say that every citizen is on leave of absence during the interim between the annual periods of instruction, and he takes home his arms and all military equipment. This system permits an extremely rapid general mobilization, such as took place in August 1939.

During the last few years, considerable efforts, involving hundreds of millions of francs, have been made to perfect the defensive strength of the country. Several lines of fortifications have been built along the frontiers and the system of "covering" frontier troops has been adopted. These troops are recruited amongst the men living near the frontiers. They know the lie of the land; before mobilization they know exactly the place they are to occupy in case of a national emergency. Resolute, well trained, well armed and equipped, ready for anything, they would bear the brunt of the first attack.

Certain units have recently been formed, such as the famous "light brigades", which are more easily manipulated, and for the most part motorized and very rapid in movement. The Swiss army is moreover endowed with ultra-modern equipment which comprises a great number of automatic arms and anti-tank guns. Part of this armament is fabricated in Switzerland, such as the anti-aircraft guns.

Thus, the Swiss military machine today is so well prepared that invaders would find themselves dangerously handicapped from the start.

It would however be wrong to believe that Switzerland, secure behind the bastion of the high Alps and protected by a strong army, is egoistically uninterested in the destiny of other nations. On the contrary, by maintaining this neutrality Switzerland can help the victims of war. It was a Swiss, Henry Dunant, who in 1864, founded the International Red Cross Society, and through him the cross of Switzerland became the symbol of mercy. During the Great War, from 1914 to 1918, Switzerland took care of the internment of sick and wounded prisoners of war, and she has not shunned this task in the present conflict to render it again imperative. The Central Agency for Prisoners of War is located at Geneva and all its workers are Swiss who give their service voluntarily. A great deal could be said about the immense humanitarian work which Switzerland carries on among war victims. Further, many other institutions of international importance are established in Switzerland: the League of Nations, the International Labor Office, the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union, the Bureau of the International Tele-Communication Union, the Bureau of the International Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, the International Meteorological Organization, etc. The Swiss Confederation harbors almost ninety international organizations within its frontiers.

Island of peace and tranquillity, strongly guarded by a well trained and well equipped army, ready for any sacrifice, Switzerland can, thanks to her neutrality, render many valuable services to humanity.

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OFF THE RECORD.

Greetings to friend Albert and Mrs. Schellenberg, Columbia, S.C.; your kind letter has been received and thanks for the invitation.

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Erratum: By an oversight, the last BULLETIN should have been numbered 6/7 instead of 5 and 6. Kindly correct.

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