



THE SWISS PHILATELIST

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SPECIALISTS IN SWISS ISSUES

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1952

ZUMSTEIN

Spezial-Katalog

The 13th (1952) edition of the excellent and indispensable work - impatiently awaited for months - has just been published, and the first copies reached us only a day before THE SWISS PHILATELIST went to press.

However, even a quick perusal of the volume which has grown to 528 pages, shows that the new ZUMSTEIN has been thoroughly re-edited. Many new chapters have been added, including those on Specimen, Ausser Kurs stamps, Kocher stamps, Stamp Booklets, etc. The Zurich issues now have six pages and many new pictures, the Rayons were revised and many illustrations and tables added.

Medium and modern issues have also been re-edited in many instances and there are numerous additions and very many price alterations.

We can supply the new catalogue, which is a "MUST" for every Swiss specialist at 17s. 6d. plus 11d. postage. Please order immediately!

PRO PATRIA 1952

From this year onwards, the National Fête stamps, issued every year for the Swiss Confederation celebration, will be named "PRO PATRIA" stamps, bear for a number of years the pictures of Swiss lakes and rivers, and produced in a medium size (except for the lowest value).

The 1952 set comprises five values, as follows:

5 + 5 C. grey and red, in large size, with a design commemorating the sixth centenary of the admission of Glarus and Zug into the Confederation; the design is by Paul Boesch, engraved by Albert Yersin, printed by the FIT printing works in combined copper plate and photo gravure. The paper is white. There are 4 sheets per cylinder, bearing the numbers 1-4.

PRO PATRIA 1952



10 + 10 C. green and light green, depicts a scenery of the Doubs river,
20 + 10 C. brown carmine and reddish brown, the Lake of St. Gotthard,
30 + 10 C. brown and light brown, the picturesque valley of the Moesa,
40 + 10 C. blue and light blue, a scenery at the Lake of Mærjelen.

All four designs are by Otto Baumberger, and executed in photo-gravure by Courvoisier, printed in sheets of 50 with control numbers A and B, on white paper with an admixture of red and blue fibres.

The PRO PATRIA set, which owing to its attractive designs will be very popular, will be on sale from May 31st until August 31st, 1952 and valid for franking mail until November 30th, 1952.

OUR APPROVAL SERVICE : Specialised Selections Available

By general request this service is gradually being extended to cover all sections of Swiss issues. There is a lot to be said for being able to examine stamps at home, with plenty of time to study the various copies of each item, priced according to quality.

Our "YELLOW LEAFLET", which is enclosed with this issue, gives details of the sections now available. The following are being prepared in addition to those listed, and some are already available. NATIONAL FÊTE, TELEGRAPH, U.P.U. 1900, NUMERALS and POSTAGE ISSUES 1914 - 1948.

Why not put your name on the list of those collectors, who regularly receive these approvals? You can state your preference by crossing out any section not of interest to you, and if you mark your form "Please send weekly", or "fortnightly", or "monthly", etc., we shall see to it that you only receive material when you really want to see it.



POSTAGE STAMP DESIGN

By A. Plumetta
Inspector in the General Direction of the PTT



The artist's motif : Painting
by HANS FISCHER - Kuessnach.

The stamp collector may be interested in the gestation period of a stamp, which proceeds the actual printing and issue. One of the foremost considerations of the postal administration must be to preserve the artistic value of the design, although it must be often adapted to the exigencies of the processes of printing and reproduction. One must recognize that a postage stamp is a printing most widely distributed. It goes out into the wide world in many millions of copies and it should convey some idea about the country and the people from where it originates.

A stamp is thus required to give some idea about the art, the culture, history, and perhaps, the scenery and customs of its homeland. It must also be characteristic of the style and the artistic taste of its times.

The task of expressing and interpreting the spirit of a country and people with the aid of so a minute picture is not an easy one. It can only be achieved by close co-operation between the artist, the postal authority and the producer. In some cases it may be necessary to call in experts,

maybe a scientist, a historian an entomologist, a naturalist.

The artist is called upon to submit a number of designs always keeping in mind the general effect which depends on the proportion of dark & light, on the contrast of the colours and background, on the purity of lines, and the use of clair-obscur.

Reduced to the tiny size of a stamp, even the finest design can be utterly destroyed. One cannot pronounce a judgment upon a design before it is reduced to the actual size of the proposed stamp. This phase of preparation requires the collaboration of the printing expert, the engraver, the heliogravure expert, the men who know all about inks and paper. The clichés may need to be redone, the gravure improved, many proofs and colour trials must be produced to test the absorption of the inks, the quality of the paper - all of which may affect the design and diminish or enhance the desired effect. Only then the final signal "all right for printing" can be given.



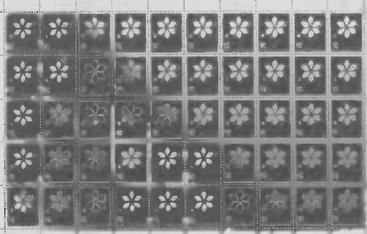
One of the many studies
(Note the light background)



Three essays prepared in actual size, showing the development of the design and colour contrasts.



The design approved by P.S.T.



The finished product
A complete sheet of the 10c.P.F. of
1946, des. Fisher, print. Gourvoisier.

FOR THE CONNOISSEUR



STANDING HELVETIA 69B
on cover, signed by Post
master Cully, Lausanne
Messag. Pmk. on C.O.D.

letter, twice delivered. Luxury copy
of this very rare stamp with plate -
flaw 1. A most desirable item £ 6.6.0

1848 GENEVA 5 C. Large Eagle, Dark
Green, Red Rosette Pmk, fully cen-
tered and light. Superb looking!
Three very wide margins, just touching at
top. BPA and Zunstein Certs. ONLY £ 2 25

B.I.T. 1924 No.21/I : The rare HELVETIA error
(only 1,000 copies printed, most of which were lost
for ever!) on piece in strip of three. SUPERS USED.

An item rarely in any dealer's stock £ 42.10.0

Writing-up your Collection!

We are pleased to inform our clients that we have
secured the services of an artist for the purpose
of writing up Switzerland Collections. Customers
interested are invited to ask for sample pages of
her work. Quotations on request.



Focus on THE SWISS POST OFFICE

By EDWARD H. SPIRO,

Hon. Secretary HELVETIA PHILATELIC SOCIETY



The organisation of the Swiss postal services is today recognised as one of the most efficient in the world. If it is true that a small country with a population of 4½ million and an area of a

size not larger than Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Lincoln and Northumberland, but much thinner populated, faces less difficulties in providing postal services than Britain or the United States, many problems exist in Switzerland which do not elsewhere. The extremely complex topography and geology, the Alps, high mountain passes, villages and hamlets nestling on seemingly inaccessible peaks, everpresent danger of snow avalanches, landslides, floods, and the vicissitudes of climate make the collection and delivery of mail and the maintenance of telecommunications a precarious and costly task.

Switzerland has a proud postal history. Centuries ago, when much richer and mightier states in Europe had but a sporadic and unreliable postal service, the "runners" of the Cantons and the mail services of merchant guilds and great landowners provided a good and fairly regular service. More than hundred and fifty years ago a well organised postal system was run by five cantons, Berne, Zurich, Bale, Saint Gall and Schaffhausen. In 1643, only two years after the United Kingdom introduced the first adhesive postage stamp, Zurich followed suit as the first postal authority on the European continent.

It was Emanuel Benedekt Laroche-Stehelin, a Bale banker and merchant, whose initiative brought about the unification of the cantonal post and the creation of the Federal Post in 1849. Twenty five years later, on the eve of the establishment of the Universal Postal Union in Berne, a single authority for postal and telegraph services was set up in Switzerland, and in 1880, when the first telephone lines were opened, this new medium of communication

was added to the unified control.

But it was not until 1927, that the P.T.T. as we know it now, was set up by a special Act of the Federal Parliament.

Today, this authority is responsible for all branches of communications. Its manifold duties require a large and intricate organisation. The various sections of the General Direction in Berne and the eleven "Kreis" (districts) Directions in Geneva, Lausanne, Berne, Neuchatel, Bale, Aarau, Lucerne, Zurich.



St.Gall, Chur and Bellinzona, control the postal services proper, the telegraph and telephone system, (which, incidentally, is in many regards the most modern in the world:- one can dial from any 'phone, even from a coin box, any telephone number throughout Switzerland, without first booking the call with an exchange!), the postal automobile services, the various engineering and maintenance tasks and many other matters. By providing a highly efficient bank system for the transfer of payments through the Postal Cheque Department, the P.T.T. plays a foremost role in Swiss economy and finance.

To give just a small example of the many varied facilities extended to the public, one can subscribe at every Swiss P.O. to any newspaper and journal published in Switzerland, and to many periodicals appearing abroad. For a fee of 20 Centimes one can get answered by dialling a telephone exchange any query, including Sport results, the programmes of theatres, cinemas, results in local and general elections, railway timetables, apart from weather forecasts, taxi calls and such like. Moreover, the telephone subscribers can dial the "News" and listen at any time of the day or night to the latest news bulletin, in German, French or Italian.

There are at present more than 4,000 post offices, telegraph bureaux, telephone exchanges, depots and garages, stores and other buildings owned or used by the P.T.T., 1,100 railway mail coaches, 3,900 postal automobile courses, more than 1,000 motor vehicles, and a staff of over 20,000 men and women, well paid, and working under excellent conditions in modern and pleasantly equipped buildings.

(TURN TO PAGE FOUR)





THINGS TO WATCH

A NEW VARIETY

occurs on the 20 C. Pro Juventute stamp of 1951. The "A" in the printers' firm in the right hand bottom corner is missing, making it Geurvelser S. instead of S. A. The variety was

discovered only a few days before the Pro Juventute set went off sale, and it is now eagerly sought for in Switzerland. It occurs only on the very last stamp (the 50th) on sheet B IIII. Several must have been distributed in our New Issue Service, so examine your album! We offer the few available copies at 6/-s. mint or used.

A SPECIAL POST OFFICE

functioned at the Geneva Motorcar Show which took place from March 20th to 30th, 1952, at the Palais des Expositions. Mail posted at the exhibition was cancelled with a special postmark bearing the inscription "Geneve - Salons International de l'automobile" and date.



TWO ATTRACTIVE PROPAGANDA POSTMARKS

were used by the Automobile Post Offices No. 2 and 3, respectively, on the occasion of the "Sechselauten" in Zurich on April 20th and 21st, and at Bale, for the Swiss Industrial Fair, from April 19th to 29th.

THE REFUGEE ORGANISATION OVERPRINTS

on Swiss stamps (Nos. 1-6, page 44) have become obsolete at the end of May with the winding up of the Organisation.

THE STANLEY GIBBONS EUROPE CATALOGUE 1952

has now appeared, and as a general catalogue certainly deserves the highest praise. But, although Switzerland has been partly reedited to us, Swiss specialists, it is still far from being perfect. However, the most significant feature of this year's edition is that, with few exceptions, the quotations for Swiss issues have been substantially marked up. More than 800 stamps show steep increases, amounting to a total of £ 4,770. In contrast those quotations which were marked down amount to only £ 13.6s. In this regard the new S.G. presents a more accurate up-to-date guide to the stamp market, although in some cases the new prices are still below the true market price. Without desiring to appear presumptuous we believe that our first Catalogue of Switzerland exercised some influence upon the changes in S.G. prices. We shall strive towards an even greater accuracy in the assessment of the true value of Swiss stamps in the 1953 edition of our Catalogue. We also hope that S.G. will include in its future editions a more comprehensive listing of perforations, control marks and main varieties than hitherto.

REAL BARGAINS!

SOCIÉTÉ DES NATIONS overprints on 1936/42 Landscapes, MINT, Nos. 47, 48, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 69 and 70. Set of 9 values: **6s.3d**

BUREAU INTERNATIONALE DU TRAVAIL overprints on 1936/42 Landscapes, MINT, Nos. 39, 40, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 61 and 62. Set of 9 v. (catalogued 7s.5d.).....only **6s.3d.**

The above two sets together only **12/- s.**
Blocks of four pro rata. These offers are valid only till the end of June 1952.

THE AMATEUR COLLECTOR LTD., PT.S.
27, Westbury Road. Woodside Park. London, N.12.

FOCUS ON THE SWISS POST OFFICE

By EDWARD H. SPIRO,

(Continued from Page Two)

Little wonder that the P.T.T. requires such vast organisation when one considers the enormous growth of postal traffic. In 1850, 15 million letters went through the post, a hundred years later the figure was 994 mill. Over the same period, the mailing of newspapers jumped from 10.6 million to 553 million a year. While in 1850 about 2 million parcels were carried, the figure one hundred years later was 71 million. The post conducted about 500,000 passengers in horse-drawn coaches, when there were few railway lines; the present annual number of passengers using the comfortable postbuses exceeds 20,000,000 a year. While in a century the population less than doubled (from 2.4 million in 1850, to 4.5 million now), letter mail traffic multiplied 7,000 times!

To stamp collectors some figures on stamp issues will be of interest. In 1852, when the Strubellis were introduced, 4,000,000 stamps were used. In 1900, the figure was 273,000,000, and the 1948 statistics reveal that 625,000,000 stamps of all kinds were sold by the P.T.T.

This article can give only a sketchy and entirely inadequate picture of the P.T.T. organisation. The P.T.T. has issued many interesting publications on its work, especially in 1949, on the occasion of the postal centenary. Every year the P.T.T. ALMANACK and AGENDA is published, an artistically produced and lavishly illustrated desk diary, crammed with most useful information for the collector. Readers are advised to obtain some of these publications, as well as those published by the Postal Museum.

My short report would be, however, quite incomplete, if I did not mention the excellent service given to collectors by the P.T.T. Philatelic Agency. Not only can all current stamps and stationery (and various publications) be ordered there, but the Agency also provides a service for First Day covers, special cancellations, first flights; and is always ready to advise philatelists. The kindly Superintendent of the Agency once told me that he and his staff regard "service" as their foremost duty of office. Everybody who had any dealings with the Agency can wholeheartedly agree that this task is being fulfilled with greatest courtesy and exemplary efficiency.



The author is indebted to the P.T.T. for the information on which this article is based and for the illustrations used.

