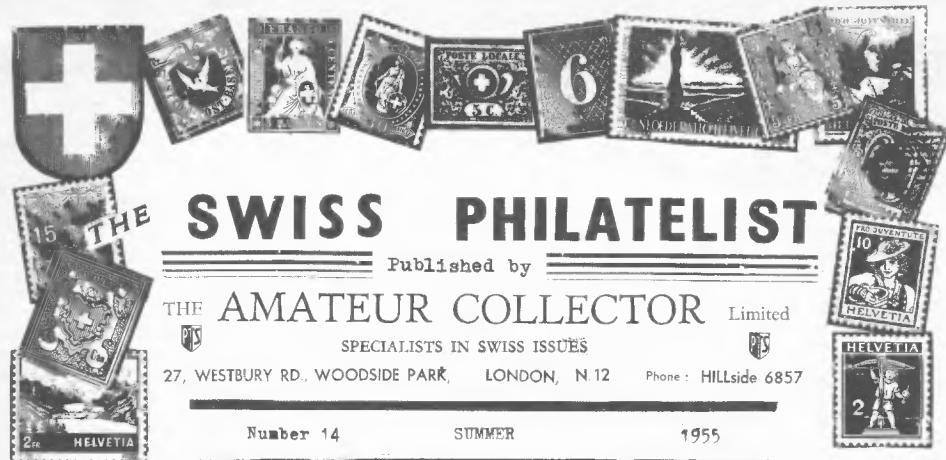


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SUMMER

1955

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1955

PRO PATRIA



STAMPS

5c. Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich (grey)

10c. SAANE (green, lt. green)

20c. AEGERI LAKE (carmine-brown & reddish lt. brn)

30c. GRAEPPLENSSEE (brown and light brown)

40c. LAKE OF BIENNE (blue and light blue)

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June 1st. to Aug. 31st (or

Sept. 15th. at PTT only)

Valid till Dec. 31st. 5c.

Designers: (etc)

5c. Eugen & Max Lenz (engraved by Albert Yersin). 10, 20, 30 & 40c. Franz Fedier of Erstfeld. These four values are printed by Courvoisier in Photogravure on white coated paper with usual red & blue fibres in sheets of 50 (two: A and B) and have smooth gum. The 5c. value on the other hand is produced by rotary copper engraving (PTT Printing Wks) on copperpl. engraving paper. Sheets are of 50 stamps (four different: 1, 2, 3 & 4).

The beautiful Lakes and Waterways depicted on this years Pro Patria set will surely kindle many nostalgic memories of Swiss Holidays in past years and bring much pleasant anticipation to those lucky ones who will travel to Switzerland this year. Four values of the set are devoted to Scenery, while the fifth (5c) commemorates the Centenary of the Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich. The PTT Gazette states that 90% of the proceeds from the Charity Premium will this year be devoted to help the mountain population. The remaining 10% goes to the Swiss Institute for Art Research in Zurich.

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please note!

Because of the inclusion in this Number of the Article about the Wine Growers' Festival (Pages 3&4) specially written for the "Swiss Philatelist" by the eminent American Philatelic Writer, Mrs. Edith M. Faulstich, some of our regular features could not be included. These will of course be incorporated again in future issues.

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In Search of Variety

Second Instalment
in a Series of Articles
By Lt.Col. J.D.Blyth.

The resemblance between many of the early stamps of various countries suggests that few of their designers could claim complete originality, and the artist responsible for the "Silk Threads" of 1854 must surely have been influenced by the 1851 issue of Trinidad though he may not have admired the rather dumpy Britannia depicted thereon. Certainly Helvetia's flowing draperies are a great improvement on the bolster which conceals Britannia's lower limbs; while the bare and tousled head makes abundantly clear the reason for the nickname "Strubeli".

The days of lithography were over, and the letterpress was adopted for stamp production. In this the die was made by cutting away the parts not required to print, leaving a smooth surface bearing the design in reverse. A single master die was engraved, usually in steel, often with openings for the insertion of plugs bearing the different numerals and inscriptions. In the case of the Strubelis it seems possible that Helvetia with her background of lozenges was the subject of the main master die, and that the frames with the different inscriptions and values were provided by a number of subsidiary dies into which the master die fitted. Support for this theory is given by the fact that the rosette in the top left corner has its bottom petal joined to its left hand neighbour on all the 10 rappen stamps up to and including the milky blue stamps with pale crimson threads of the 1855 issue, after which the peculiarity disappears; and, further, this feature is confined to the 10 rappen stamps and does not appear on any other values.

By a process of moulding and casting from the assemblies of the master and subsidiary dies a number of "cliches" were made. These were rectangular blocks bearing on one face replicas of the master assembly; and in the case of the Strubelis were locked together in a forme and used in that condition as a block for printing. The relative positions and spacing of the stamps in a sheet show that the linear dimensions of the rectangles must have varied considerably, for adjacent stamps are frequently out of alignment (see illustration) and I have specimens showing distances between stamps varying from one-hundredth to one-twentieth of an inch. Small wonder that many stamps have incomplete or missing frame lines. The irregular positioning in the sheet makes it fairly certain that the embossing and the colour printing were done simultaneously, for if this were not the case a special block bearing the relief designs in exactly the correct positions would have had to be made for each value. I feel that at this point I should emphasize the fact that I am not an expert, and do not know exactly how the cliches etc. were made; though I have had confirmation of my statement that they were locked in a forme to make a printing block. In general the descriptions and explanations in these articles are those which I have evolved for myself, since I find the study required far more interesting than looking up everything in a book. Also, to avoid wearisome repetition of "I have a stamp which ...", "In my collection there is a specimen which ..." whenever a variety or detail needs description, the description will be intro-

duced by the word "Example" followed by a number. The number is to make it easy to refer back to any particular example. As is the case with most stamps, there are many varieties of the Strubelis which consist of coloured or colourless lines, marks, or dots, caused by small imperfections in

the cliches. Many of them are listed by Zumstein; and, the cause being obvious, they are not of very great interest. The frame lines seem to offer an interesting field for research since, however wide the surrounding white margin, the four frame lines are seldom complete. This is often said to be due to wear or damage, but such an explanation is by no means always correct. Close examination with a powerful glass shows that in many cases faulty inking is the cause.

Example 1. 20 rappen, orange. First Berne printing, 1854-55. Cat. No.25B. A clear print, with exceptionally sharp relief in the letters &c. of the inscription. No coloured frame line on the right, though the margin is so wide that it is edged by part of the frame line of the adjacent stamp. Examination with a powerful glass shows a clear and deep impression in the paper of the complete line, with no trace of wear. The only possible explanation seems to be that the line on the die was not inked, but it is difficult to evolve a feasible theory as to how such a thing could happen. Without further evidence it would not be justifiable to regard a missing frame line

of this description as a recurrent variety, as it may have occurred only in a single printing. Broken and damaged frame lines, however, are often found as recurrent varieties; the most easily recognised being the "split frame line".

The only paper flaw which I have come across in a Strubeli is a very narrow fold (the section of it being like a Z squashed flat) with the design printed across it. Care must be taken to distinguish between the true flaw of this nature, which exists before printing, and that wrecker of fine specimens, the crease made after printing.

Complete double prints are to be found, but I cannot help a feeling of doubt as to whether they are truly recurrent. A cliche showing such a fault would be detected and replaced so easily that the most probable cause is the accidental passage through the press of a sheet already printed. A partial double print, however, which might need close scrutiny for detection, is in all probability recurrent.

Example 2. The specimen is that described in Example 1. The word CENTIMES and the top left corner square show doubling due to a slight displacement in a mainly vertical direction. The upright lines of the letters show the doubling most clearly, there being a thin white line above and parallel to each upright and separated from it by a narrow band of colour. The serifs of the F in FRANCO and, to a smaller extent, those of the R are thickened by the doubling, and give evidence of a slight lateral displacement. No doubling can be detected in Helvetia and the lozenges. A common method of making cliches was to press the master die into any suitable material in a plastic condition, thereby making a mould from which replicas were cast. If, as I have suggested, the rectangular frame with the inscriptions was a separate subsidiary to the central master die, a partially doubled matrix would be likely to follow if for any reason it was found necessary to insert the subsidiary die a second time. I believe that the term "re-entry" originally referred to such a second insertion, though modern speech seems to use it to convey the idea of any double print. Before leaving the Strubelis mention must be made of a variety which, though non-recurrent, is so

Continued on Page 4.

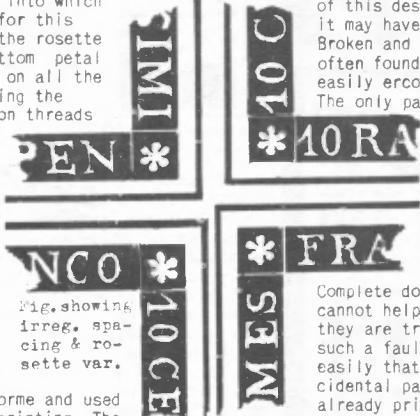


Fig. showing
irreg. spa-
cing & ro-
sette var.

Fête des Vignerons

THE WINEGROWERS FESTIVAL
It happens only four times in a Century and
offers the collector a chance to build a
ideline topical. by Edith M. Faulstich



The 10c stamp of the publicity set issued by the Swiss PTT on February 15, 1955, is a charming little item which many a topicalist will want for his or her collection of hats, fruits, costumes or even in a collection of stamps publicizing events. These topicalists may not be limited to the field of Swiss stamps, and by the same token the Swiss collector does not have to limit the story of the fabulous winegrowers festival, philatelically, to the stamps of Switzerland. The Vevey hat stamp gives us a chance to recall a fascinating story which starts in an era almost lost in antiquity and it also give us the possibility of stepping out of the role of

stamps alone and into the realm of postal history, covers, cancellations, & even seals and other fringe material connected with philately. Every collector has his own type of imagination and we do not presume to dictate which stamps, covers, cancellations or what-have-you should be included in your philatelic story of The Winegrowers Festival. But we will use a star after some of the things and places which we think should be visually represented in the topical album. A few of these will be illustrated with the article.

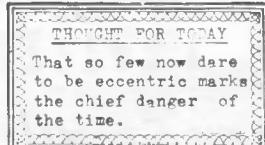
The festival will open on August 1st at the gay historic city and lakeside resort of Vevey* and will continue for a two week period. Vevey can be easily reached from Geneva*, Lausanne* and Montreux*, by rail*, road* and by pleasure steamer*. To give an example of how just the two previous sentences can be brought to like philatelically we might remind readers that the very mention of August 1 should inspire the Swiss topicalist to include stamp No. 216 featuring the signing of the Ruetli. Vevey, Geneva, Lausanne and Montreux can be featured by a variety of stamps pertaining to them, or by cancellations or covers from those cities. An ancient letter on yellowed parchment discussing the growth of the vines around Vevey would add a mellow touch. So would a lovely old illustrated letter sheet from any of the towns. A number of stamps feature the railway, the Alpine roads and there are railroad markings, Alpine pass markings and even steamer cancellations from the Lake of Geneva. But enough of hints. Let's continue with the story of the Winegrowers Festival. It might be interesting to see how different each collector could make this story by the simple use of his own freedom of choice pertaining to it. Origin of the Festival: History tells us that the culture of the vine* in the upper basin of Lake Leman* goes back to the Roman epic*. It is definitely known that in 1000 AD the Cathedral of Lausanne* possessed 31 vineyards* around Vevey and we also know that the monks* of the Abbey of Haut-Cret, near Oron had planted vine-yards in the XII century. In order to encourage and develop the culture of the vine an "Abbaye" of agriculture* called St. Urbain was set up in Vevey itself. The origin is lost in the darkness of centuries. This organization offered rewards to the most deserving winegrowers and increased in prestige through the centuries. At the end of the XVIII century the Abbaye took the name of agricultural society and along about the middle of the XIX Century became the "Honourable Brotherhood of Vinedressers". Rewards were distributed at a ceremony every three years when a parade was staged through the town followed by a banquet. Since the end of the XVIII century the shows took place every six years - then occasionally according to the international situation. This year's event is only the fourth in over a hundred years. Dates of the festivals in the XIX and XX centuries were - 1819, 1833, 1851, 1865, 1889, 1905, 1927. Each event became more spectacular than its predecessor and local authors and composers offered their talents to the committees with the result that the magnificent and popular fete is now a considered a national masterpiece. As the Swiss poet Juste Olivier said, it glorifies the daily work of Mother Earth*. It is a glamorous evocation of nature. It exalts the peaceful activities of the people*. Above all it is a drama which brings into evidence the art of the painter*, the Musician*, the poet* and the dancer* in a brilliant "hymn of gratitude to the glory of the Creator". A kind of incantation of heathen virtues is admitted so that life will be shown as the generous, religious, yet earthy sort of existence

SWISS PHILATELIST PAGE 3.

Vevey
SUISSE

it is. Perhaps that is why the festival allows the God of Wine*, the Goddess of Harvest*, the Goddess of Spring* with their colorful stories to appear. In the framework of the seasons the Wine-growers Festival mingles tradition* and invention*. It is an unique show imitating nothing, always increasing which, to quote a press release, "follows its road like that of a stream into a great river". The scenario of this year's spectacle is briefly an overall picture extolling the cultivation of the soil* throughout the passing seasons of the year. There is a prologue, four acts and an epilogue. The play opens with the ceremonial entrance of the guard of honour* proceeded by heralds*, horsemen*, fife and drum*, the company of the Cent Suisses and the bannerets of the Swiss Confederation* and cantons*. The Guard takes up its position round the central arena to participate in the traditional ceremony of the crowning of the best winegrowers* and the distribution of medals and awards. The seasons follow in this manner: Winter - the procession of Dionysus ushers in the cycle of the seasons. It evokes in succession woodcraft* and woodcutters* new wine*, and the sowing of grain* in the furrows*. Vivid groups such as that of the gypsies and the wedding party* give a note of lively gaiety to the first act. The second act features Spring. Now the furrows have turned green*. The procession of Pales enters accompanied by a bevy of girls* who make the offering to the goddess of their flowers* and dances*. But the vineyards* are threatened by danger and a ballet symbolizes the struggle of the vine stocks against the attack of frost*. When the danger is past the wine-growers resume their labours* whilst an old shepherd and his flock* enter the arena. He is followed by girls who thin out the vine leaves and who dance with the winegrowers. The scene closes with the songs and dances inspired by the May tree. Summer - in the third act - is acclaimed by the cohort of the Sun's archers. It is now the throng of Ceres' followers which appear in the arena and on the tiers of the stage.

(Continued Page 4. Col. 1.)



After evoking the harvest*, the vineyards*, menaced by the summer parasites*, triumph once more over the spirit of evil*. Then while the grapes* are ripening the rest of the act is devoted to the call of the mount ain* with its procession of herdsmen*, its flocks*, rustic dances*, midsummer song and the renowned pastoral melody. Autumn is featured in the fourth act which shows gaiety in the vineyards. The winegrowers busy themselves around the presses as they dance and sing. At that point Bacchus, God of Wine*, appears with an escort of fauns and Bacchantes to join in the merry-making*. The revelling is at its height and the scene ends in a frenzied Bacchanal succeeded by a farandole* in which each group of singers and dancers takes part.

In the epilogue the farandole comes to an abrupt end. The remaining performers and guards of honour reenter and form a procession* for the grand finale before leaving the arena to the triumphant strains of the last hymn*, the pealing of bells*, and the thundering of guns*.

According to information from Switzerland the Wine-growers Festival is neither oratorio, grand opera, nor a festival in the usual sense. It is an unique spectacle drawing inspiration from ancient national traditions*.

The festival has been compared to the Panathenaea of ancient Greece* (oldest of all such festivals) by Henry Bordeaux. It owes its prodigious development to a centuries' old tradition and to the enthusiasm of the entire population. The spectacle set against the beauty of lake* and mountain* has the advantage of nature's handiwork as a backdrop.. A amphitheater which will seat 20,000 people was specially built on the market place in Vevey* where Bonaparte* reviewed his troops on May 8, 1803. It is here that 3,000 singers, musicians and entertainers will perform in the festival which is considered to be the most costly to be held in Europe. There is no doubt but that it will be an unique event which should be inspiration enough for any traveler planning to go abroad this summer, to arrange his schedule in order to be in Vevey from August 1 - 14.

Authors and collaborators of the fair are: Carlo Hemmerling, Vevey musical composer. Geo Blanc, Vevey, author of the festival poem. H.R. Frost, Paris, artist for costumes and scenery. Oscar Eberle, Zurish, stage manager. Maurice Lehmann, director of the opera and the Opera Comique, Paris, artistic director. Band of the Republic Guard, Paris, will collaborate.

This article is not as philatelic as the kind we are usually prone to write but there is so much enthusiasm in Switzerland for this centuries old festival, and there are so many of us who will not find it possible to journey to Vevey for the great event that we thought an arm chair trip fortified by a little imagination, and the album in front of us might help to fill the gap which we will feel because we cannot be in beautiful historic Vevey for the great Winegrowers extravaganza.

Acknowledgements:- In this article we have used information supplied by press releases, the Swiss Information Center in New York, various folders and from letters from M. Alblas of Lausanne and M. Naef of the Press Service for the Fete.

WANTS LISTS INVITED

The
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In Search of Variety

Continued from
Page 2.

frequent and familiar that by now it must surely have earned the courtesy title of "Recurrent". This is the variety in which smudges of colour appear on parts which should be white. Probably because it is the most obvious the variety with a smudge of colour in the lower half of the shield is the most frequently mentioned, but the most common looks so much like an intentional part of the design that it may easily escape notice.

Example 3. 10 rappen, dark blue. 1858-62. Cat. No 23Gc. A well printed specimen with no signs of wear or clogging of the ink. There is a faint coloured smudge in the lower part of the shield and a dark smudge at the top of the shield, under Helvetia's arm. On the left of the shield some of the lines indicating folds in the drapery are joined by triangular smudges, the apex of each triangle being at the junction of two lines; and the ends of other lines spread out into narrow triangles. Each triangle is dark at its apex and becomes progressively lighter until it fades away at its base, giving the effect of shading in the folds. The apparently intentional shading fits in so well with the design that it becomes almost an effort to realise that such gradations of tone cannot be produced deliberately when printing from a line block.

The varieties of paper, shades of colour, and colours of the silk threads are too numerous to cover here; but if there are any novices among my readers I would implore them not to poke about with a needle when trying to discover the colour of a silk thread. A small drop of benzine will disclose the secret without doing any damage.

As we leave the Strubelis and come to the Sitting Helvetias the time has arrived to have a look at the answer to the "Home Work" set at the end of the previous article. Here it is. Like the Strubelis, the Sitting Helvetias were printed from cliches locked in a forme; but, unlike the Strubelis, the perforated stamps had to be accurately positioned and spaced in the sheet. Any necessary adjustments were made by inserting packing between the cliches, the packing consisting of strips of such materials as paper or cardboard. In many cases the protruding edges of the packing were not trimmed to a sufficient depth, with the result that they became inky and transferred their mark to the paper; and so created the variety described in Zumstein as doubled or thickened framelines..

My allotted space is nearing its end and will not be renewed until we meet again in 1862. In the meantime, for those who like such things, here is the problem for this instalment. Knowing that the Sitting Helvetias were printed from cliches, and accepting the evidence contained in the "Amateur Collectors Catalogue" what would you deduce to have been the planning of master die and subsidiaries for the production of cliches to print the different values? The possibilities are :-

(a) A separate master die for each value. (b) A single master die for the central design with a separate subsidiary frame for each value. (c) A single master die with openings for the different values to be inserted as plugs.. (d) As (b) with a single subsidiary frame and plugs for the different values to be inserted in the subsidiary. Do the descriptions in Gibbons or Zumstein's Catalogues tend to make you revise your deductions?

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT TIME)



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