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AHPS or the Editor. Articles on Swiss, Liechtenstein, UN Geneva and related philately are welcome
and should be sent to the Editor.
The Board of Election of the British Philatelic Federation has named Mrs. Alma Lee, among others, to the role of Distinguished Philatelist. Mrs. Lee, of the United Kingdom, is the first women to be so honored in the 70 year history of the role and follows her late husband, Roland A.G. Lee, as a signatory. Mrs. Lee has formed an award winning collection of Swiss stamps including Cantonals, Rayons, Strubels and the Sitting and Standing Helvetia and has written the booklet, "Introducing Thematic Collecting" published by the National Philatelic Society in 1983 and reprinted in 1984 and 1990. Congratulations to her.

David E. Durham will participate in the 700-year anniversary on the Rütlis, August 1, 1991. He wonders if any other AHPS'ers will be there. If so, give him a call at (716) 833-6504.

Join me and many others in congratulating Switzerland on the celebration of its 700 year history and what it stands for. ♦

**EDITOR'S COMMENT** Mario Wiedenmeier

**Errata:** In the article "Strube Usage Periods - An Update" we would appreciate your correcting four column headings which were inadvertently misprinted. In Table I.c, the heading for the fourth column should be 25B and not 26B. In Table I.d, the third column should be headed 23Cb and not 24Cb; the fourth column 23Cc and not 26Cc. In Table I.e, the heading of the first column should be 23Cd-f and not 22Cd-f. We apologize for any misunderstanding this may have caused. ♦

**700 Years Switzerland, Happy Birthday**
The white envelope is addressed to "Squaw Karin Hauck"; and this is where she lives: "where the birds are singing in the fifth tepee". That's the address written with a red felt pen. No problems. The Indian girl resides at "Vogelsangstrasse 5" (#5 Bird-song-street). But in which town? For this there are only coordinates: E 8 degrees 38'30" N 46 degrees 53'05". The fingers of the postal clerk follow the lines on the topographical map past the Lake of Lucerne and follow a river. "In the valley of the cold river Reuss", was added below the coordinates. There -"Altdorf". The following morning a letter carrier drops the letter in the mailbox at the fifth tepee for "Squaw Karin.

Switchboard operator Karin Hauck admits that the content was not important at all; it's a game we are playing trying to outdo each other with prank addresses. Already during high school Urs Klahr, Rene Gisler and Karin were sending each other coded messages. After Rene moved to Lucerne the three kept writing each other letters. But the content was not the main thing, the aim was to send a most uniquely addressed letter. The answer to a quiz or solving a crossword puzzle would reveal the address to the postman. Mail in the form of a giant hand drawn postage stamp or even a sealed plastic envelope filled with water was sent. The latter sprang a leak and no water was left in it when it arrived, explained Karin. But the swiss Post Office moved it all. Only two letters got lost so far.
Postal clerks have other things to do than solve puzzles. 390,000 of 13 million daily postal items have some shortcomings in the way they are addressed, explained Vitus Estermann of the Lucerne post administration. In many cases the mailman will find the addressee if only the house number is missing or the street name spelled incorrectly. The others are directed to the search department of one of the eleven post districts. At Lucerne, there are approximately 3000 items a week which use up to sixty man hours to process. These address detectives will solve 90% of the problems for delivery with two or three days delay; and only in extreme cases will the letter be opened to identify the addressee or sender. The postmaster of Altdorf considers this service part of customer service and even finds humor in the game that the three play. To the first mentioned letter he attached a note: "During the peace pipe smoking ceremony, the big manitou has bestowed wisdom on our fleet footed carrier Paki Tiki Taku so he could find the way to the squaw. "Hugh" ♦

Happy Birthday

700 Years Switzerland
The following is not very philatelic but helpful anyway and I thought it might come in handy one day: **Lost your Swiss friend or can’t locate your great-great grandfather in the family tree?** Whenever you have to search for a person with Swiss lineage just keep in mind that the Swiss have about the best citizen records available. First, because they have never been ravaged by war and, second, mainly because of some unique citizenship laws that are based on some fairly old tribal customs. All Swiss families belong to a certain village or town in a given canton (*) [in my case the RATZ family name was first recorded at a place called Leuzigen, canton of Bern, the first one was probably the rat-catcher of the village...].

Hometown citizenship is inherited like the family surname, and all genealogical information like birth, marriages, divorces and death are channeled back to the hometown of a Swiss citizen even though he or she might have never seen it. This information goes to the civil registrar’s office where it is entered into the Civil Registers, also called Burger Registers in larger towns. In smaller places it is customary that the clerk also posts a public notice on the official town bulletin board so other citizens can see what’s going on in the world with their tribe’s daughters and sons. These Burger Records obviously contain a lot of information (although not complete) on many families that immigrated to America. If you know the place of origin of the person you are seeking information about, the registrar will issue a Familienschein (family record) as far as it’s recorded in his books. When you don’t know the place of origin, it gets a bit stickier as the last place of residence might not be able to help out. If at least you know the canton of origin, you might find your luck by writing to the respective Staats-Archive. Either way, always add a reply envelope with either Swiss franking or International Reply Coupons. It will get you faster results.

If you are still stuck try a Mormon Branch Family History Library and view Swiss genealogical information on microfilm till your eyes beg you to stop.

There are also a couple of handy books that you might want to get from your library: "Handy Guide to Swiss Genealogical Records" by Jared Suess and "In Search of Your European Roots" by Angus Baxter.

(*) One of the reasons for some of the high prices for older stamps with clear town cancels: the Heimatsammler definitely want to include their place of origin and sometimes there are more collecting descendants than there are decent full or near-full son of certain villages on the market.
The Incredible History of the Simplon Pass

Translated by Bob Zeigler

Francois Bernath

Since antiquity, the peoples on both sides of the Alps have attempted to overcome the barrier of rocks and ice between the Italian peninsula and central Europe.

The battle of Octodurum (Martigny) having assured the domination of Rome in Valais (58-50 B.C.), there was no further opposition as the Romans opened the military highway of Mont-Joux to their armies. They also opened to commerce a mule-path over the Simplon, which placed the inhabitants of northern Italy in contact with the valley of the upper Rhone.

Travelling entrepreneurs and merchants, the Romans understood very quickly the importance of this outstanding link between Milan and Helvetia.

The Simplon Pass deliberately diverged from routes which appeared to follow watercourses. It climbed the sharp heights of Frassinone, above Trasquera, gained the plateau of Simplon, then, by sharp hairpin bends, the Saltine, regaining the heights of Schallberg in order to avoid the gorges opposite Brig.

It was over this short route that the legions of the successors of Emperor Augustus marched. Proof of this is furnished by the coins which they left there, as well as by a milestone erected under the Caesars Volution and Gallus (3rd century A.D.), discovered at Sion and bearing the inscription "League XVII," the exact distance from that city to the Simplon Pass.

During the middle ages, pilgrims and merchants climbed the Simplon in great numbers. This number would become larger still after 1200, when a hospice was constructed on the upper plateau. Protector and Count of Valais, the Bishop of Sion was responsible for assuring the maintenance and security of the Simplon route. To recover the cost which this responsibility entailed he was authorized to collect tolls.
War resumed in the 15th century between the Upper Valais and the inhabitants of Domodossola, and history records of these somber years only the memory of fire and pillage.

The 17th century saw the glorious era of the "Great Stockalper," Baron of Duing in Savoy, citizen of Milan, knight of the Holy Roman Empire, lord of Brig. Made chief administrator of the region, Caspar Jodok Stockalper reigned as sovereign of Brig and became the "king of the Simplon." He rebuilt the old Simplon hospice and successfully encouraged the development of commercial trade. In 1634, he obtained privileges from Milan for the transit of merchandise through the Simplon. In the first half of the 17th century, postal service was rendered in the most rudimentary way. Before 1616, it was the government drummers who filled the role of messengers. In 1640, the Grand Stockalper organized a mounted courier service to carry letters between Milan and Geneva by the Simplon route.

Later, in the 18th century, a descendent of the Grand Stockalper achieved importance: Caspar-Eugen Stockalper, president of the war-council of Upper Valais for the defense of the Simplon in 1799.

In 1675, Beat Fisher of Reichenbach, Bernese patrician, organized a postal service in several Swiss cantons. He also was quick to perceive the importance of the Valais for Alpine transit. His interest was focused on the Simplon Pass and his intention was to establish a direct route between Paris and Milan. This was the same idea which Napoleon had a little more than a century later.

The desire of the French Directory to intervene in Swiss affairs led in 1798 to the occupation of the country by Revolutionary troops, and Valais became one of the nineteen cantons of the Helvetic Republic. The posts were centralized, and new rules and rates were put into force, though the Fischer family remained at the head of the postal service.

The modern era of the Simplon begins with the second Italian campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte. After his return from Egypt, his coup of the 18th Brumaire and the overthrow of the Directory, he decided to reclaim Italy, defeating his enemies by a maneuver that were both inspired and overwhelming. While with the bulk of his army he crossed the Simplon on May 27, 1800 to capture Domodossola. It was a daring enterprise, but it worked. The battalion which left Brig was able, thanks to the speed of its march by the Simplon, to contribute to the victory at Marengo.

Bonaparte, now First Consul, was thus convinced of the important role which this route could play from a commercial as well as military point of view; if a road could be constructed there which would permit the passage of artillery convoys and stagecoaches.

On September 7, 1800, three months after the victory at Marengo, he issued a decree which constitutes a sort of founding charter of this route: "The way from Brig to Domo d'Ossola will be rendered passable for cannon."

Work on the new Simplon road began in 1801 from both sides.
Direction of the entire project was given to the French engineer Nicolas Heard.

In a letter addressed to the Grand Bailiff of Valais at Sion, Ceard wrote: "You have no doubt anticipated that the French Government is determined to complete the part of the new Simplon road on the territory of the Republic of Valais, to make possible the route from Paris to Milan..."

Since Valais now assured a good avenue of communication between France and Italy, Bonaparte decided, shortly after having given the order to construct the Simplon road, to annex the valley to France. He charged General Turreau with the execution of his plan, which ran aground because of the attachment of the population to Switzerland. Modifying his tactics, Napoleon isolated Valais by proclaiming it an independent republic under the protection of France, Italy, and Switzerland.

The Valaisians understood from the beginning that the Simplon route represented economic prosperity for them. However, they refused all collaboration with Napoleon, since these riches would then only become the fruits of servitude.

For five years 5,000 workers were employed. "The great work of art on the passage of the route from Brig to Domo d'Ossola, all under supervision of the French Republic..." (Ceard in a letter of 1 Vendémiaire, Year 11, or September 23, 1802) was achieved September 16, 1805.

The same year, a courier left Lausanne twice a week for Italy by way of Valais, and as soon as the route was practicable the couriers used horses to carry the mail between St. Gingolph and Domodossola.

In November 1810, Valais was occupied by Italian troops and joined to France as the Department of Simplon.

With a stroke of the pen, Napoleon thus incorporated Valais into France, and a decree which he signed December 26 at the Tuileries Palace set up the organization of the new department. The inspector of posts of the Department of Doubs, de Raymond, was sent to Valais in order to organize its postal system after the French pattern.

After the defeat at Leipzig in 1813 and the abdication of Napoleon in 1814, Valais regained its liberty and resumed its place in the Swiss Confederation.

From 1816 to 1830 three runs of the stage (or diligence) were being made each week in both directions. The number of travelers and also of important people who crossed the Simplon grew larger and larger. Here is the transcript of a letter describing some of the adventures and illustrious people along this celebrated route: "Simplon Barrier, November 19, 1836.

I received yesterday at nine o'clock, near Rothwald, the letter which V. E. sent me by courier on the 16th instant. It reached me by carriage just as I was ready to leave. From then on I hastened to Berisal, where I arrived at the same time as the coaches of the important person whom V.E. had described to me. I learned that it was not His Highness Grand Duke Michael, but a Russian Senator, General Bouterlin, with two of his
brothers, of whom one was Chamberlain to the Emperor, the other a colonel, and several ladies.

"Despite this change, I presented myself to the Senator, and described to him the duties I could perform in advance of his cortege. I offered him these services, to render his passage as easy as possible. He thanked me very much for this attention, and made known to me his desire that they might leave their carriages, since the ladies were fearful. They felt there would be less chance of an accident if they travelled by sleigh. Consequently I set to work, while the ladies and gentlemen had lunch. Three light sleighs were prepared (by taking the wheels off the carriages), they got it, and we arrived at the Simplon (hospice) in three hours. They didn’t want to go any faster, because the weather was very nice and the road in fine shape. The next day I tried to get them to remount the wheels on the carriages at Simplon, but the ladies preferred to continue as far as possible by sleigh. They did so as far as Iselle, where there are long intervals of bare rock and earth. Here I took my leave of these illustrious travelers, who thanked me very profusely, especially the General-Senator, with whom I had conversed during the entire crossing of the mountains. He told me much about his own country, about the crossing of the Balkans where he had been, as well as in Spain as commissar of Russia, when the Duke of Angouleme had been delivered to Ferdinand VII. He was very pleased with the Simplon and with the Valais, which he admired. Arriving at Iselle, he asked me to thank the Council for the pains they had taken to render his trip pleasant.

Signed Escher, Conductor of the Simplon Pass"

Under federal auspices beginning in 1848, the posts improved their services and accelerated their trips. Every day one mail-coach left Lausanne, and another left Domodossola. They covered this distance in about 32 hours. In the same year an "Office for mail-coaches and parcels delivery for Switzerland and Italy" was opened at Domodossola to improve the organization of traffic on the Simplon route. This service was soon interrupted. On December 30, 1848, director Gentinetta informed the postal superintendent at Sion that the Lombardy government was suspending mail-coach runs from the Piedmont, retaining however the delivery of dispatches by courier.

Around 1870, in their "golden age," diligence carried 29,000 travelers per year between Sierre and Arona. The railroad slowly replaced the mail-coaches, and on May 31, 1906, vanquished by the opening of the tunnel, the last diligence of the Simplon made its last run. The development of highway traffic gave great importance to the Simplon pass because its location permitted it to stay open for a longer portion of the year than was the case with other Alpine passes. In the past fifty years important improvements have been made in the highway. However it is significant
that the outline of the road proposed by Napoleon and concurred in by Cead has not been modified.

Napoleon never had the chance to admire the road which he had imagined, but the Simplon road remains, in the perfection of its plan and the audacity of its conception, a great expression of his universal genius.

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New stamps
Switzerland – A Capsule History

by Richard T. Hall

Switzerland, lying at the center of Europe, has been at the crossroads of civilization since the earliest times. Important north-south commerce routes from Germany to Italy and east-west routes from France to Austria and the Balkans have made Switzerland an object of domination by the major powers since Roman times.

After the last ice age retreated from central Europe, lake dwellers of the Bronze Age settled along the shores of the many lakes of western Switzerland (see Pro Patria #165 and 168). In the 5th and 4th Centuries B.C., the plateau of Switzerland was settled by the Celts (see Pro Patria #158). In 58 B.C., Julius Caesar fought the Helvetii, a powerful Celtic tribe, at Bibracte (near present-day Autun in France). Caesar forced them back into western Switzerland where they were allowed to live in peace and as a buffer for the defense of the northern frontier with the Alemannii, the powerful tribe of the area of modern Germany. Another Celtic tribe, the Rhatia, living in the southeast of modern Switzerland were also conquered by the Romans.

Evidence of the Roman occupation of Switzerland abounds. Many of modern Switzerland’s cities and towns can trace their lineage back to Roman times. For example, Zürich was known as Turicum (see #724), Basel was Basilia (see #331), Nyon was first Noviodunum in Celtic times and Colonia Julia Equestris in Roman times (see #334), Chur was Curia Rhaetorum (see #722).

Around 500 A.D., the Alemannii overran the Romans along the northern borders of the Empire. The Germanic-speaking Alemannii occupied Switzerland north of the Alps. The Burgundians occupied western Switzerland, and the Lombards, an ancient Germanic tribe, occupied the area to the south of the Alps. These areas of occupation correspond roughly to the present-day linguistic divisions of Switzerland – German in the north and east, French in the west, and Italian in the south. The fourth national language, Romansh, spoken in the southeast, is closest to the Latin of the Roman conquerors.

The decline of the Roman Empire in Switzerland saw the rise of Christianity. The monastery of St. Gall began to develop in the 7th Century on the site of the hermitage of the Irish monk Gallus.
With the domination of Europe by Charlemagne, Switzerland became part of the Holy Roman Empire. Because of the remoteness of the alpine valleys, the Swiss were ruled lightly. However, into this power vacuum came the local lords, the House of Hapsburg, who wanted control over the Gotthard road.

To protect themselves from despotic control by the Hapsburgs, the peasants along the Gotthard road – from Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden – banded together and swore a "Perpetual Pact" in August 1291, the date taken as the birth of the Swiss Confederation. The high value of the 1921 Pro Juventute issue shows the Swiss coat of arms supported by King Rudolf of Hapsburg and William Tell, memorializing event of this period.

Over the next 60 years the three original Waldstätte (Forest states) were joined by Luzern (1332), Zürich (1351), Glarus (1352), and Bern (1353). The Hapsburgs could not tolerate the growing power of the Confederation and went to battle with them in 1386 at Sempach in the canton of Luzern. The high value of the 1922 Pro Juventute issue shows the Swiss arms again but this time with Duke Leopold of Austria and Arnold von Winkelried as supporters (see also #721). Leopold was the leader of the Hapsburgs and was killed in the battle. Winkelried became a folk hero by grabbing as many Hapsburg spears as he could, thrusting them into his chest and breaching the Austrian line like a hedgehog.

The return engagement was at Näfels in the canton of Glarus in 1386. The Confederates had destroyed the Austrian fortress at Ober-Windegg and taken control over the Linth valley. The Austrians counterattacked on April 9, 1386, and were put to flight (see #760).
The Confederation continued to be challenged by outside forces. In the Burgundian Wars of 1474-77, Charles the Bold was defeated. The high value of the 1924 Pro Juventute issue shows the Swiss arms supported by soldiers of Burgundy and the Swiss Confederation.

The strength and independence of the Swiss Confederation prompted surrounding territories to apply for admission to the Confederation. The rural cantons of the Confederation feared domination by the rich towns. When Fribourg and Solothurn applied for entrance, the Confederation almost split apart. Only by the intervention of Bruder Klaus (Niklaus von der Flüe) at the Diet of Stans in December 1481 was disintegration avoided. Through his mediation, the two new cantons were added and the fears of the rural cantons mollified.

Basel and Schaffhausen joined the Confederation in 1501 and Appenzell in 1513. By now, the Swiss were getting a bit headstrong and let their military successes go to their heads. They became involved in a disastrous campaign against the French in Lombardy and suffered badly at Marignano in 1515. After being burned by the fires of power, the Swiss rethought their position and decided neutrality better suited a small country such as theirs.

The next battles were among the Swiss themselves, an outgrowth of the Protestant Reformation. Zwingli in Zürich and Calvin in Genève gathered many followers in Switzerland. Civil war was waged between the Reformed cantons and the Catholic cantons from 1529 to 1531. Switzerland was not alone in these religious wars. The Thirty Years’ War in Germany was fought over the same ideas.

Following the Second Peace of Kappel which settled the religious differences, peace reigned over the land for 200 years. The religious fires came to life again in 1712 when civil war broke out again. The Peace of Aarau of 1712 guaranteed equal rights for both Reformed and Catholic Swiss, an idea which has stood until modern times.
Then came Napoléon. The Confederation had begun to suffer from hardening of the arteries by the late 18th Century. Though most of the modern borders of Switzerland had been filled out by the end of the 18th Century, the 13 cantons of 1513 treated the more recently added areas as “subject” lands. Only 1 out of 8 of all Swiss inhabitants enjoyed all the freedoms for which Switzerland was noted. Given the events of 1776 and 1789, this was hardly advanced thinking. So when Napoléon cast an acquiring eye to the east, he found easy pickings because of disunity. Switzerland became the Helvetic Republic to which Napoléon gave full cantonal status to St. Gallen, Graubünden, Aargau, Thurgau, Ticino, and Vaud in 1803.

With Napoléon’s defeat, the Congress of Vienna in 1815 completed the modern map of Switzerland, and planted the seeds for a problem which was to come to a head 150 years later. Genève, Neuchâtel, and Valais were added to the Confederation. To compensate Bern for the loss of Aargau and Vaud which had gained their independence, the former prince-bishopric of Basel was added to Bern – the Bernese Jura.

With the Restoration, the country fell back on its old, reactionary ways. The liberal cantons took action to reflect the enlightened ideas sweeping the world in the early 19th Century by amending their own cantonal constitutions. The conservative Catholic cantons wanted no part of this modern thinking and formed a separate alliance called the “Sonderbund” in December 1845. The Confederation government could not tolerate such an internal division and went to war on the 7 Catholic cantons of the Sonderbund. The movement was suppressed in 1847.

In 1848 the first Swiss Constitution was adopted which provided for a strong federal system. This Constitution was extensively revised in 1874 to provide the form of Federal government in place in Switzerland today.

The final entry into this capsule history is the resolution of the “Jura” problem created by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Separtists campaigned for a separate canton beginning as early as the late 1940s. The 1960s were marked by terrorist acts and violence. Finally on September 26, 1978, three of the seven districts of the Bernese Jura voted to form
a separate canton (see #621). On January 1, 1979, the 23rd or 26th canton of Switzerland came into being. The different numbers result from how you treat the 6 half-cantons. Appenzell had split into Inner- and Ausser-Rhoden along confessional lines. Basel split in Basel-Stadt and -Landschaft along rural-city lines. And Unterwalden split in Nidwalden and Obwalden.

Looking back onto its 700 years as a nation, the path of Switzerland has not been easy or smooth. The peaceful notion we have today of the country is belied by its early history. What best sums up Switzerland’s history is that it is a country which holds its freedom dear and has fought to make that an accepted idea in the modern community of nations.

The reader should be aware that the maps which accompany this brief history are notional only. The cantonal boundaries shown are those of the present day, no attempt has been made to reflect the historical boundaries for the years illustrated.

For those who are interested in reading further on the history of Switzerland, I can recommend J. Murray Luck’s book, _History of Switzerland_, published by The Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship Inc., 4139 El Camino Way, Palo Alto, California, in 1985. The book’s cost is $36.00.
POST ON THE UETLIBERG

By Franz Oeler

(Translated by Charles J. LaBlonde. The original text appeared in a special anniversary booklet produced by the Zürich Stamp Club.)

The Uetliberg, mountain of Zürich, is 870 meters high, 460 meters over the mirror of the Lake of Zürich. It is tall enough to give the best views in the area. Especially nice is the view of Zürich city center and the lake, of which one can see many kilometers from the top. This was also true in the middle ages as evidenced by the recently discovered graves on the Uetliberg. The name of the mountain is supposed to come from a German duke named Uotila who lived there at times. But a warden named Utonus could also have been the namesake.* The Uetliberg had inhabitants long before it had a name. Ancient walls can still be seen, and a few years ago near the train station someone found Celtic graves, richly adorned.

In the 13th century, the city of Zürich with Hapsburg help, destroyed the Uetliburg (the castle) and thereafter built a parapet to which a watchtower was added in the 17th century. In the 19th century Uetliberg became a tourist destination, and in 1837 the first guest house was built on top, from which the innkeeper dispensed cow, goat, and donkey milk thrice daily. In 1875 the first Uetliberg rails were laid. At the same time Kaspar Fürst opened a grand hotel and spa with 100 rooms below the summit. The famous lookout tower followed in 1894 and, unlike the hotel, still stands today.

All of this activity dictated the need for a post office and one was opened on the Uetliberg 1 August 1875. The first postmaster was Kaspar Fürst, founder of the Uetliberg railroad and owner of the Grand Hotel. He held this post until 31 March 1879, when he ended up in jail due to a suspicious fire in the Kulm Restaurant! His successor was J. Boller who also served only a short time, to 1 October 1882. There followed A. Landry from Le Hette, who took over the hotel and postal duties. We can thank him for the most interesting cancels from the Uetliberg. After 15 years, on 1 June 1897, Landry closed up and the Uetliberg Railway Corporation took over the postal duties, until they closed on 1 November 1920. After the reopening on 1 September 1923, the Uetliberg RR again ran the post office until the Swiss PTT took it over on 1 January 1926.

* Translator's Note: The Zürich Kantonalbank gives away a very nice booklet on the origin and evolution of names in the Canton of Zürich. Anyone interested in the history of names should obtain this book. For Uetliberg, the book gives us the following: Uetliberg since 1667, Uttliberg in 1594, Uotilinberg 1361, Uetelenburgh 1218 = Burg des Uatilo (Duke of Bavaria from 736 to 748 and son of Duke Gottfried).
THE POSTMARKS

With the opening on 1 August 1875 came a straightline mark 6 x 29 mm(1). In 1876 came a round mark with cross and fine shading lines in the lower segment(2). Already on 1 September 1878 Uetliberg was downgraded to a non-accountable agency and this ended the circular postmarks. The new straightline mark(3) was 5 x 26 mm and was used into mid 1884. It is known in blue from 1880.

This period as a non-accountable agency, 1 September 1878 to 31 May 1891, coincides largely with the tenure of A. Landry as postmaster (1 October 1882 to 31 May 1897). Landry's native tongue was French, thus the mystery postmark(4) "Uetliberg pres Zürich" (known 1884-1890). Note the French word, "pres," in a cancel in the center of German-speaking Switzerland! This mark, unique in all of Switzerland, was surely made by Landry. But he was not allowed to use this mark by postal rules. He really used the mark in his hotel-owner's capacity, for advertising purposes. The "Uetliberg pres Zürich" mark is found on stamps, often over-canceled with the Zürich Briefexpedition marking. Landry's mark was used during this period instead of the straightline mark.

From 1 June 1891 through 31 May 1897, Uetliberg was once more an accountable post office, open all year long. At this time it got the regular circular cancel with coarse shading, used for the next 50 years(5).

It seems postal activity was not always heavy, especially in winter. On 1 June 1897 new rules were implemented. The post office was "accountable" only in summer (until 1900 this meant 1 June - 30 September and after 1901 it meant 1 June-15 September). The round cancel could only be used during this time. The rest of the year, until the end of 1920, various straightline markings were used. The first(6), 4.5 x 27 mm, was found 1897/1898 in black and violet. It was found again 1903 - 1920 in black. A short time later came the UETLIBERG in box (7), (1 October 1898 -1901). A larger straightline, 5.5 x 36mm(8), ran from 16 September 1903 to 1920 in blue and black. Another straightline followed(9), 4 x 27 mm, 1920, only in black.

All of these were not officially sanctioned. The sorting office was Zürich Briefexpedition...sometimes accidently (seldom) Zürich Selnau(9). Straightlines after 1 November 1920 are philatelic fiddles, since the circular cancel was used year round.

Especially nice are cards with Uetliberg straightline mark and the Uetliberg round cancel on the stamps(6). This was legitimate and possible, but only on certain dates! This was only when 1 June (official post office opening day) fell on a Monday. Cards posted Saturday afternoon or Sunday got the straightline. After that they were handed over to the newly opened post office on Monday morning where they received the circular cancel. Only these years are possible: 1903, 1908, (1909 due to Pentecost) and 1914. Any other dates with both cancels are suspect.
Finally on 1 September 1923 Uetliberg became a fully accountable post office and used only the official circular date cancels. This was the regular cancel, with VIII district number and three stars, without post code (10,11,12).

This concludes the story of the regular Uetliberg postmarks but there is more. The railroad brought with it some markings, above all a mark seen only in blue from 1901 to 1912(20). As a cancel it is found on RR documents. Normally the RR marks(21) are found on freight cards, other bills of lading and freight-related forms. One finds the RR marks on stamps now and then. Two oval markings of the Uetliberg RR are known, probably to mark telegrams...they are very rare(18,19).

For many years in the hotel an eight-cornered telegraph marking was used(17). Also, over the years, two emergency cancels were necessary, one in August 1939 and the other 22 February - 15 April 1954(15,16).

Two stamped envelopes from around the turn of the century have Uetliberg pictures on the reverse. Early in this century one finds on cards the extra marking "Uetliberg b. Zürich/Chalet," in oval form, in blue, black and violet. The Uetliberg post office was in the Chalet 1882 - 1920.

Cachets Uto-Staffel/Rest. and Uto-Kulm/Annaburg, etc are private.

At the foot of the Uetliberg lies the Albisgütli, known for its shooting range and youth shooting activities. To be noted here is the mark Zürich-Albisgütli used during the shooting events. It is known so far from 1898/1899/1900/1904/1909/1911.
### Uetliberg Postal Markings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>SIZE</th>
<th>IN USE</th>
<th>COLOR</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 St. Line (GROUP 43/1 101)</td>
<td>6 x 29</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Round Fine Shading</td>
<td>5 - 6/1876</td>
<td>1876 - 1884</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>On Stamp 4 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 - 10/1876</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Straightline</td>
<td>5 x 26</td>
<td>1875 - 1884</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>On Cover 4 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Round Cancel (Uetliberg prä Zürich)</td>
<td>1884 - 1891</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rare on stamps &amp; stamps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Round Coarse Shading</td>
<td>6/1891 - 1939</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>On Cover 2 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Blue-Black</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 St. Line (Group 43)</td>
<td>4.5 x 27</td>
<td>6/1897 - 1920</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rare 1897/1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Violet</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Boxed St. Line (Group 60)</td>
<td>5 x 8.75 x 40.5</td>
<td>10/1898 - 1901</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Example 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 St. Line (Gr. 43)</td>
<td>5.5 x 36</td>
<td>1893 - 1920</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Example 1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1910 - 1914</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Straightline</td>
<td>4 x 27</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Round w/ VIII</td>
<td>1939 - 1951</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Round w/ 3 Stars</td>
<td>1951 - 1955</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Round w/ PLZ</td>
<td>1951 - 1955</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 K Cancel</td>
<td>1956 - 1969</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 K Cancel</td>
<td>1969 - 1974</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Emergency Cancel</td>
<td>Rectangular Aug-39</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Emergency Cancel</td>
<td>Rectangular 3/4/54</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 8 Corner Telegraph Mark</td>
<td>1875 - 1886</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Only on telegraph stamps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Uetliberg/1885 Zürich</td>
<td>Oval 1885</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Only on telegraph stamps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Uetlibergbahn/Zürich/Di</td>
<td>Oval 1880 - 1886</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Only on telegraph stamps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Uetlibergbahn/Station</td>
<td>Round 1901 - 1912</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Various Railroad Marks:</td>
<td>Possible to find on stamps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes

- The period of use of certain straight line cancels is indeterminate. Even today, it is impossible to tell exactly when some of the cancels were in use. Given are the first and last known uses.
- Straight line postmarks, with the exception of number 1, should only exist from the days when the post office was a non-accountable agency. In any case, uses after 1920 are not genuine.
Postkarte

Carte postale. — Cartolina postale

Nur für die Adresse

[Handgeschriebenes Adressfeld]

Postkartenfirma

Postkartenfirma

[Handgeschriebenes Adressfeld]

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Union postale universelle — WELTPOSTVEREIN — Unione postale universale

SUISSE

[Handgeschriebenes Adressfeld]

Herrn

Jean Diener

5 Rue Thérèse
Paris.

[Handgeschriebenes Adressfeld]

Restaurant Uto Kulm
Uetliberg
Zürich

Restaurant Uto Kulm
Uetliberg
813 m. ü. M.
Zürich

[Handgeschriebenes Adressfeld]
# Rabatt-Rechnung

**Gesellschafts- und Schulfahrten**

**UETLIBERGBAHN**

Zürich, den 28. 1. 1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zahl</th>
<th>Ausgeb. Billete</th>
<th>K. Klasse</th>
<th>Betrag</th>
<th>Bemerkung der Gesellschaft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>821</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gesellschaften von

Personen

Schulen von

Personen

Erwachsene, nicht zum Lehrpersonal gehörende

Begleiter

Rabatt: 821

Total: 821

Eingeschrieben:

Signiert: Heberle / O. Signiert: Empfang bestätigt:

---

**Angebote 188**

**Bolgen 16**

---

**Image References:**

- Stamp images
- Postmark: Zürich-Uetliberg
- Railway station stamps
Another new stamp creation is the series of four stamps designed by Lausanne graphic artist, André Bovey. It symbolises Switzerland's four linguistic regions. An 80¢ stamp is dedicated to yet another anniversary - the 800th birthday of Berne - a date which will be marked by a series of special events.

Some Price Comparisons — Over the Years

Al Altwegg

On Aug. 18, 1891, a postcard was dropped in the mail in Berlin, Germany, by a certain E. Stock of Adalbertstrasse 69, Berlin. It was addressed to Mr. E. F. Parker of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in the "Verein. St. v. Nordamerika" and passed through New York on Aug. 28, 1891.

In the century (well, almost!) since that postal card was mailed, some interesting things have happened to the value of the postage stamps that Herr Stock was writing about. Today they are among the rarest and most valuable of the Swiss stamps.

For comparison, here are the prices for these stamps as quoted in the current issue of the 1989/90 Zumstein catalog, the bible of Swiss stamp collectors: The Double Geneva, for instance, for which Herr Stock was willing to pay $26—, is now quoted by Zumstein at 56,000 Swiss francs used, or 80,000 francs unused (even if hinged), and 86,000 francs on cover. Translating that into American dollars at the approximate rate of 70 cents to the Swiss franc, $39,200 used, $56,000 unused, and $60,200 on cover. (Incidentally, when I looked this up once before in the 1968 Zumstein, the quoted price was $9,000 either used or on cover!)

For a 5-centime Geneva, Herr Stock was willing to pay $1.50. Assuming he meant, thereby, the Small Eagle Geneva stamp, Zumstein now quotes it at 4,000 francs unused, 2,800 francs used, and 4,600 francs on cover. That translates to $2,800 mint, $1,960 used, and $3,220 on cover.

For the Zurich 6 rappen, Herr Stock was willing to offer $1.80 if used or $4.00 if unused (he didn't say "original gum, never hinged"). That stamp is now quoted at 2,300 to 2,500 francs used and 2,700 to 8,750 francs unused. That translates into about $1,600 to $1,750 used and $1,890 to $6,125 unused.

Finally, on his card Herr Stock wrote, "I want very specially Zurich 4 and 6 rappen—any number of these." The Zurich 4 currently catalogs anywhere between $16,450 and $36,400.

Interestingly, someone—presumably the card's recipient, Mr. Parker of Bethlehem, Pa.—wrote on it in pencil: "These are the only ones in stock." He had checked the Geneva 5 and the Zurich 6. One can't help but wonder whether Herr Stock got those stamps at the prices he offered, and what he turned around and sold them for.
Your price list for lily just to hand off in fine condition, I could accept.  

- Hirtelka, jersey 10, #26, 5 szt. 6.50
- Hirtelka Jr., 1.80
- Hirtelka Jr. 4.

I want very specially Hirtelka 4 + 6 Reps. + any number of these.

Yours truly

E. Stock

700 Years Switzerland, Happy Birthday
SALES CIRCUIT NOTES

Absence of Circuit notes from recent issues of Tell has been due to lack of space rather than lack of circuit activity. The circuits are alive and well, in spite of a weak national economy. As of today, May 26, we have 6 active circuits with several more planned for the summer.

BUYERS The Swiss franc has fallen from a high of over 80¢ to around 68¢. It may fall a bit further in the near future, but long term has no way to go but up, once the euphoria about victory in the Gulf war evaporates and inflation heats up. For the immediate future all things Swiss will be less expensive than further down the road, so now is a good time to buy.

If your interests have changed since submitting your circuit participation form don't forget to let the circuit manager know so you don't receive circuits in which you're not interested. Anyone who makes no purchase from a circuit will not receive more circuits in the same category unless they make a specific request.

SELLERS We are especially in need of can- tonals, rayons, se-tenant and tete-beche pairs and strips, air mail covers, souvenir sheets, officials, Liechtenstein, telegraphs, soldiers, errors/varieties and better covers in all categories (no post 1960 FDC's please). We have good demand for this material and if priced sensibly should sell well.

GENERAL If you have questions or comments feel free to call or write. For calls evenings are best.

Emil L. Tobler, POB 26, Bradford, RI, 02808 (401) 377-2238
700 Years Switzerland, Happy Birthday

AHPS MAIL AUCTION

Auction No. 91 presents a very small selection of items although there are some excellent lots. The AHPS Mail Auctions service to the members can only be as valuable as the level of participation. Your participation in the auctions will enhance the value of the society to the entire membership.

The next auction will be published in the November, 1991 issue of TELL. Lots for that auction must be received before September 15 in order to be included. Please send only material free of defects or faults and provide a good description of each item.

Values in Auction 91 are from the 1991 Zumstein Catalog unless stated otherwise and are expressed on the basis of 1 sFr. = $.70. Please send your bids to Vinal Grim, PO Box 674, Minocqua, WI 54548.

AHPS MAIL AUCTION 91    CLOSING DATE AUGUST 15, 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lot Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Z.17II (Sc.10) Rayon J, Pos. T12 C2 RU, used; margins very wide (showing cutting lines) on 3 sides, bottom has full frame line and adequate margin, fresh color and black federal grill cancel is light and clean, minimum bid $80.00...........$154.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Z.24Aa STRUBEEL 15 Rp. dull rose shade with light blue grill cancel; four frame lines, light crease in upper left corner, no other faults, minimum bid $320..........................$525.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Z.24b (Sc. 22) STRUBEEL, 15 Rp. lilac-rose shade ,used; four margins trimmed along frame line at top otherwise white margins around, one small corner bend at UL, part of right edge somewhat uneven, minimum bid $49..............................$91.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Z.26C (Sc. 29) STRUBEEL, 40 Rp. green, used; full frame line on left, partial on other three sides, SON Basel CDS with second small partial cancel on bottom, minimum bid $40.00......$87.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Z.27Cb STRUBEEL 1 Fr. blue-grey, light black federal grill cancel; full frame lines on top, left and bottom, partial at right, minimum bid $300.00..............................$390.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Z.35 (Sc.48) Sitting Helvetia 60c. copper bronze, used; circular cancel May 20, 64, minor thin spot.............$161.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  Z.36b (Sc.50a) Sitting Helvetia 1 Fr. gold bronze, used; circular cancel Zurich 5 APR 65, good centering with all frame lines clear of perfs..............................$175.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Z.49 (Sc. 65) Sitting Helvetia 25c. green, used fine; SON CDS cancel, 2 short perfs on bottom right, minimum bid $32.00..................................................$77.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  Z. 62Ad 1882 Cross of Confederation 12c. dark ultramarine variety, MNH; left perfs close to frame, lower perfs cut into frame, minimum bid $30.00..........................$52.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10 Z.69A (Sc.84) Standing Helvetia 40c., VF used; single St. Gallen Cancel, 14.V.88, sharp and clear..............................................$31.50
11 Z.71E (Sc. 87b) Standing Helvetia 1 Fr. lilac, used; fresh col-
or and light CDS (Zurich BRF.AUFG 8.II.01), very well centered, one slightly short perf at bottom, minimum bid $125..............$280.00
12 Z.159 (Sc. 178) Tell Bust 25c. carmine, used B/4, F-VF; single centered St. Gallen cancel......................................................$175.00
13 Z.190 (Sc.215) 1932 Disarmament 1 Fr. B/4 VF; single centered circular Wolfenshiessen 8.VI.32 cancel.................................................$52.50
14 Z.198 (Sc. 223) 1934 Landscape 20c. B/4 used, fine; single inverted circular cancel is positioned on the left side of block..................................................$105.00
15 Z.269 (Sc.300) 1945 Peace Issue 80c. value used, fine; lower left corner cancel, minimum bid $50.00.....................................$98.00
16 Z. F.1-2 (Sc. C1-2) Airmail, propeller overprint, MLH VF..................$336.00
17 WIII 16/Z.258 (Sc. B130/287) Two items consisting of Miniatur-ure Sheet with First Day Cancels plus small FDC with pair of Z.258; sheet has two tiny gum disturbances which could be hinge reminders, minimum bid $1950, Zusenstein catalog value of Block 16 FDC is sFr. 3500......................................................$2450.00
18 Z. WIII 21 (Sc. B143) 1945 Souvenir Sheet, MH; two hinge reminders; minimum bid $125.......................................................$210.00
19 Z.196/198 (Sc. 221/223) Registered cover to Flushing, NY franked with Z.196 pair and Z.198 B/4; cds cancels plus roller type cancel across top of cover, two U.S. customs stamps '...collect 10 cents' and '...Free of Duty' minimum bid $62.00.....................................................$160.00
20 Z. WI 93-96 (Sc. B106-109) 1940 Pro Juventute registered FDC to Washington, DC; some small minor stains on front, gum stains from envelope flap on reverse, minimum bid $190.00......$280.00
21 Z. WI 97-100 (Sc. B112-115) 1941 Pro Juventute registered FDC to Kitchener, Ontario; censored mail with reseal strip on left side showing 'Examined by C.54', backstamped Toronto, Ottawa and Kitchener, minimum bid $175.00.............................................$228.00
22 Z. WI 138-42 (Sc. 207-11) 1951 Pro Juventute registered FDC to Chicago, German cancel; clean cover, minimum bid $135.00.$175.00
23 Z.29 1862 Standing Helvetia 3c. black with Ausser Kurs Type I overprint; all letters of overprint show, upper perfs close to frame, those on right barely touch frame, minimum bid $100.00, Amateur Collector.......................................................$150.00
24 Z.47 (Sc. 63) Sitting Helvetia 15c. yellow, Ausser Kurs over-
print; all letters show and left edge shows top of 'A', one short perf in UR corner, minimum bid $75.00, Amateur Collect- or..........................................................$100.00
25 Z.29/Pal 1941 Airmail 50c. 'white roof' variety, used fine; single circular cancel on left two-third of stamp, minimum bid $50.00.........................................................$56.00
26 1989 UPU Swiss Conference Delegation Folder containing a mount-
ed selection of 17 International Office stamps plus France Un-
esco issues of 1984-1987, minimum bid $30.00, Estimate.............$50.00
27 Accumulation of over 215 mint and used WWII Swiss Soldier stamps with two volume Sulser Soldier Stamp Catalog, minimum bid $60.00, Estimate..................................................$125.00

800 Years Bern, Happy Birthday
The importance of Switzerland in the overall development of the European postal network is far greater than its small size would indicate, this being due primarily to its location. It occupied a key position between the powerful postal systems of France, Thurn and Taxis and Italy (Savoy, Sardinia, Venice, etc.). Geographically Switzerland sat astride the main Alpine routes connecting northern and southern Europe. Thus did developments within Switzerland have a large effect on all communication within Europe. One cannot long discuss European postal history in general and Swiss postal history in particular without coming upon the name of Beat Fischer who played a central role in Switzerland while Switzerland was playing a central role in Europe. In the following paragraphs we look at some highlights in the life of this fascinating personality.

From his birth in 1641 until he entered public life in 1672 little is known of Beat Fischer’s life outside the fact that he studied law and the fact that he was married in 1667. Before turning his attention to postal matters in 1674 he was a member of the Council of 200 and treasury secretary for the German-speaking part of the Republic of Bern. By means of a historical and anonymous memo in the fall of 1674 Fischer suggested to the Council that any respectable government should have a postal service (Bern at this time did employ a few messengers but had no formal postal system). The magistrates quite agreed with him and on 21 July 1675 the Fischer Post came into being with twice weekly service for:

a) Schaffhausen and Zurich via Solothurn, Aarau, and Lenzburg with connections for St. Gallen and Germany.

b) Geneva via Fribourg, Payerne, Moudon, Lausanne with connections for Lyon.

c) Basel.

Weekly service was also provided for Luzern and Neuchatel.
Of course it was one thing to legislate this massive undertaking into business but quite another thing to make it a reality. Zurich and St. Gallen, the cantons with the most to lose as their merchant postal messengers transported the majority of Swiss mail at that time, protested rather vehemently against the Fischer Post. Thus were Fischer's negotiating talents strongly tested during the infancy of the Bernese postal activities. Neuchatel, Basel, Freiburg and Schaffhausen capitulated rapidly to the tenacious and personable Fischer. Zurich and St. Gallen gave in slowly, yielding at first their southern route to Geneva and Lyon in 1677; stagewise over the next few years they also yielded their northern connections to Beat Fischer who was very magnanimous in making them a part of his postal system. In fact by 1688 we find Fischer, in conjunction with the Zurich postmaster, Kaspar von Muralt, making plans for a messenger service to Italy over the Gotthard Pass. This project was to be one of Fischer's most difficult. Basel had been collecting all north European mail for transport over the pass until the Zurich/Bern partnership decided to move in. But the latter experienced some difficulty with the Italian rulers south of the Alps and were not able to take over the Gotthard Post until 1796. Meanwhile Fischer used the Splugen Pass to communicate with Venice and Milan.

Beat Fischer did not limit his activities to Switzerland alone but sought and partially obtained an international network. As early as 1680 he was made a knight by Kaiser Leopold I for his efforts in transporting correspondence from Germany to lands of the Spanish crown south of the Alps. In 1695 he signed a contract with the low countries for exchange of mail between England, the Low Countries, and the Empire on the North and Piedmont and Savoy on the South. Fischer also received in 1695 the Neuchatel postal monopoly which gave him an opening to the West for mail to Paris. The map gives a good summarized impression of the Fischer Post at its peak with Bern at the hub of central European postal network.

Besides operating his postal system Fischer was very active in community activities until his sudden death in 1698. He founded a newspaper which later evolved into the famous "Gazette de Berne." He was a provincial governor of Wangen and in 1683 he bought the castle of Reichenbach which he remodeled. After his death the three sons of Beat Fischer von Reichenbach continued operation of the postal system but its size and importance dwindled steadily, certainly not due to ineptness on the part of the sons but rather due to changing climate in the postal arena. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries' governments decided to operate their own postal systems instead of contracting with private individuals for postal service. The Fischers were still responsible for many notable firsts within Switzerland such as the inauguration of coach service on many postal routes. As late as 1815, when Geneva entered the Confederation, the Fischer Post was given Geneva's postal monopoly

150
which they operated until 1830 when the canton took over its own system. In 1832 Bern, where it all started, severed all ties with the Fischer family. It is interesting to note that Beat Fischer once again carried Swiss mail in 1975, the year in which he was commemorated on a 60 centime stamp, 300 years after formation of the Fischer Post.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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According to "TELL" of January, 1991, member Hans Wetter feels like a drone because he has contributed 'very little' to "TELL". I am worse off, I am a member of the totally silent majority, having contributed absolutely nothing. However I did figure out a way to beat the 'superstars' by writing about something they did not (?) pay attention to -- like the numbers in the sheetmargin.

These numbers show the total cost of one or more rows of stamps, or appear as a single-digit number, which I assume to be the plate number.

Due to limited material, there are many blanks in my story, like the year when these numbers first appeared. They were not on 1900 UPU's, nor the "TELL's", nor the 1933 airs. Also, dates given later on are based on my available examples, and are 'kind of flexible'.

My first number is on the margin of a 1936 Landscape. It is in recess printing, and I want to restrict this article to recess-printed numbers. The outlines of the digits are filled out with carelessly engraved diagonal lines which are by no means parallel to each other. Therefore, each digit becomes an individual and is easily recognized, especially the zero. I assume there were dies made from originals as, for example, both zeros in a '100-' are identical.

To my surprise, these dies were re-used for later issues. I found these numbers unchanged in 1941 (Historical Designs), 1942 (Symbolic Designs), 1948 (Airmails) and on Pro Juventute stamps in recess printing through 1960. Between 1945 and 1953 Pro Patria 5+5 Rp values were printed in a combination of recess printing and photogravure. The numbers in the margins of these stamps were also in photogravure. But starting with 1954, the 5+5 Pro Patria's were pure recess printing, and our friends appear again. My last example of these particular digits on a Pro Patria is from 1961.

During this period of 1936 to 1961, the 1949 Landscapes were the only exception. The old, or first type of number appears for plate numbers, but a second newly engraved type is used for the rows. The shading of the digits is much more regular. It seems this second type was used for the 1949 series only, I could not find it on any other issue. Everything else during this period is of the first type, including the 1960 Postal History series and the Europe stamps, even the number on the inter-space of
booklet sheets.

Our next period spans 1968 to 1979. All my numerous examples of this time are of the old first type, including the new definitive 'Folk Customs'. Even combination printing show the numbers in recess of the first type, contrary to the Pro Patria between 1945 and 1953..

In 1980, with the Fr 3.50 value of the architectural series, a fourth type appears. It is 3.5mm high, and the digits are filled out with a very regular diagonal grid. But don't count out the old survivor of 1936: look at the 3 values of 'Folk Customs' issued in September of 1984!

Needless to say, the first type was also found on examples from the International Offices between 1939 and 1969.

In closing, I would like to point out one peculiarity found on the 1961 Evangelists, which could eventually help to narrow down different printing: on stamps of the same denomination, some margins show the third type of 1961, and some show the fourth type of 1980.

Just in case I have now started a new field for collectors: There is plenty of room to specialize. While the digits of the first type do not vary over the years, one can find many varieties of the 'period' between the Francs and the Rappens. ...And there is the beautiful partial double embossing I found on the '1' in the margin of a 1938 Historic Symbols.

---

Postmarks

![Postmark 1](image1)

![Postmark 2](image2)

![Postmark 3](image3)

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### STAMP CONVERSION UPDATE

**1980 - 1989**

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**OFFICIAL STAMPS:**

**D IV - BIT INTERNATIONAL LABOR OFFICE**

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**D X - UPU UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION**

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**D XI - UIT INTERNAT. TELECOMMUNICATION UNION**

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