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TELL

Tiptoe Through a Swiss Flower Garden in Stamps

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by by Richard T. Hall, C.Ph.H.

If you like flowers on stamps, Swiss stamps are for you. Beginning with the Pro Juventute issue of 1943, flowers have been a popular subject for Swiss stamps, particularly semipostal stamps.

The firm Helio Courvoisier S.A. perfected the photogravure printing process in the 1930s and printed virtually all of Switzerland's photogravure stamps up until 1999. It also printed stamps for more than 30 other countries. An interesting collection could be formed of Courvoisier-printed stamps. The firm was sold to Walsall Security Printers of Great Britain in 2001.

Let's walk through the flower garden. I will give the English name of the flower and its Latin designation, which should be helpful for flower topicalists to sort the stamps into the correct botanical families.

The first series of floral stamps shows alpine wildflowers. As mentioned, our walk begins with

the 1943 Pro Juventute issue. The three floral stamps of the set (Scott B127- B129) were designed by Hans Fischer of Zurich and printed in photogravure by Helio Courvoisier S.A. of La Chaux-de-Fonds, as were the floral stamps of the 1944 to 1949 Pro Juventute issues.

Figure 1, the 10c+5c denomination of this set, shows a silver thistle (*Carlina acaulis* Compositae), which grows in alpine valleys. When this flower senses rain is about to fall, it closes up to protect its pollen, earning the nickname the "weather clock". The 20c+5c stamp shows a lady slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus* Orchidaceae), and the top value of the set, the 30c+10c, shows a gentian (*Gentiana acaulis* Gentianaceae).

The 1944 Pro Juventute issue (Scott B138- B140) begins with that most alpine of all flowers, the edelweiss (*Leontopodium alpinum* Compositae), shown on the 10c+5c stamp pictured in



Figure 1. Silver thistle



Figure 2. Edelweiss



Figure 3. Spring Crocus

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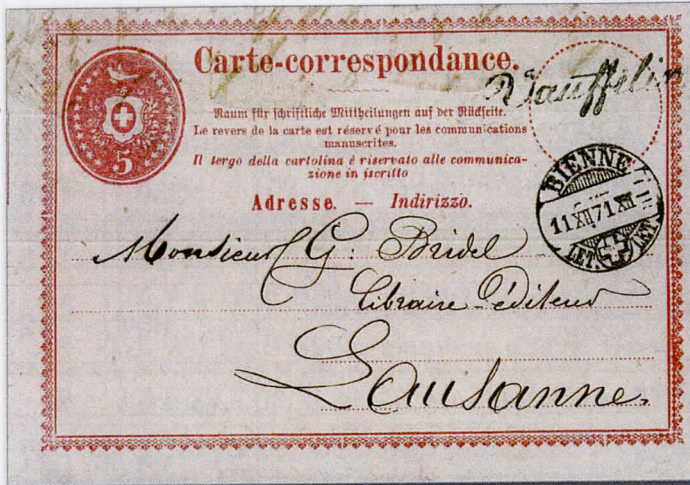
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My Favorite Piece: A Card from Vauffelin to Lausanne

by Roberto Lopez

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Cancellation from Group 49



Postal card mailed in Vauffelin, transit Bienne 11 December 1871, destination Lausanne.

Group 148A/T.10

Philately offers us multiple facets of collections such as postal stationery, cancellations, postal history and so on. When you find a beautiful piece in a bourse and, moreover, not very expensive – it's simply good luck. I present you the following card because it meets all these criteria.

This is a piece of postal stationery (PK001 according to Martin Baer's catalog; no. 2 according to Zumstein's postal stationery catalog) sent from Vauffelin to Lausanne. Mundane, you may say.

When you examine the card and look closely at the cancellations, it becomes already less mundane. The departure stamp of Vauffelin is of the group 49 (cursive letters, mostly used in the pre-philatelic era).

The transit date stamp is a Güller test stamp (double circle stamp with a bridge and a circled cross at the bottom, all in elzévir script).

In Vauffelin, the non-accounting post office was opened on October 1, 1846. The accounting post office is known (according to the list "Postel-enchronik" published regularly by the Swiss association of the collectors of postal cards, the ASCEP) since 1.7.1903. When this postal card was sent, Vauffelin had only one post office and did not have a circular postmark. Studying the Andres/Emmenegger catalog of cancellations, we do not find any straight-line Vauffelin cancella-

tion, either in Group 30 or in Group 43, so we must believe that only this pre-philatelic cachet was in use.

The nearest accountable office was in Bienne, which is the reason for the Bienne cancel. This is a Güller test stamp, which is not found in Güller's books (group 148A in the Andres/Emmenegger catalog; number T.10 in the work of Hans Zinken and Toni Pfeffer).

From the point of view of postal history, we learn that Vauffelin is a small locality and old commune of the canton of Bern which is situated in the administrative district of the Bernese Jura. The commune was composed of two locales: Vauffelin and Frinvillier. Vauffelin was part of France from 1797 to 1815, first within the department of Mont-Terrible, and from 1800 within the department of Haut-Rhin, after the attachment of the department of Mont-Terrible to the said department. In 1815, by the decision of the Congress of Vienna, the territory of the former Bishopric of Basel was assigned to the canton of Bern.

After a first refusal to merge in 2008, the inhabitants of Vauffelin-Finvillier and Plagne finally approved the merger of the two communes on February 28, 2013, giving birth to the new commune of Sauge on January 1, 2014.

Mundane or not? In any case, I got great pleasure from finding this small piece. ✚

2022 SBK Catalog Raffle Results

by Bruce Marsden

I am pleased to report that the raffle of four 2022 SBK catalogs of Switzerland was a success. The raffle raised \$125 for the benefit of the AHPS thanks to the generous catalog donation by Swiss classics dealers Markus and Gottfried Honegger. Congratulations to raffle winners Allen Jenkins, Mike Gartzke, Rudy Caduff and Vern Gideon. If you were not a winner this time, don't despair, there may be more opportunities in the future.