Special Issue

Switzerland in World War II
Its Defense – Its Survival – Its Refugees and Internees

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Switzerland in World War II
Its Defense – Its Survival – Its Refugees and Internees
by
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The Pre-War Years

In the 1930s, following the appointment of Adolf Hitler as Chancellor of Germany, the Swiss government began to view their position in an European war that seemed inevitable and the poor state of their defenses with alarm. In the years following the First World War, Switzerland’s military budget was the subject of intense political discussion from the Social Democratic Party and other left-wing groups. Weakening of the country’s defenses was the “path to peace,” according to some socialist dogma. As a result, by the 1930s, Switzerland’s defense network had serious problems as noted in this quotation from the October 23, 1933, issue of TIME magazine:2

Last week matter-of-fact Swiss War Minister Rudolf Minger marched into a budget session of the Swiss National Council (House of Representatives) and crisply declared: “It has come to my knowledge that a German plan exists for the invasion of Switzerland. … What is disquieting is the small importance they seem to attach to the Swiss Army’s powers of resistance. … It is high time for Switzerland to act!” The real German threat, as the National Council well knew, is potential — represented not by the small Reichswehr of today but by Nazi Germany’s colossal brownshirt army of a few years hence, for which the Reichswehr will supply super-trained officers. Last week Swiss War Minister Minger, who has had to keep his entire military establishment going this year on only 92,600,000 Swiss francs ($26,000,000), asked for 120,000,000 francs ($33,700,000) “to replenish arms and military equipment.” Promptly the Council voted 20,000,000 francs, resolved to vote the rest after Adolf Hitler blasted Europe’s hopes for Disarmament Day. …

As the lure of the German National Socialist propaganda threatened to destroy the traditional Swiss stance of defending their country regardless of the size or strength of the invader, by the end of 1939 the Swiss defense budget had grown to over 1 billion Swiss francs ($280,000,000)!

Germany took no diplomatic niceties in expressing its displeasure with the Swiss:

… While last week’s German assurance in effect guaranteed Switzerland that no German troops would march through her territory in event of war, it did not preclude the possibility that Chancellor Hitler may one day gobble the nation whole. There are some 3,000,000 Germans, “racial comrades” of the Führer, within the nation’s boundaries. Fully three-fourths of the population speak German. Reich Field Marshal Göring recently published in his National Zeitung a map of Greater Germany [see Figure 1],3 prepared by Reich propagandists for school use, which pictured practically the whole of Switzerland as belonging to the Reich. The Swiss frontier is “the boundary of the internal separation of the German people,” announced Göring’s newsheet and claimed Switzerland’s 3,000,000 Germans as “exiled citizens of the German Reich.” Official Swiss protests registered in Berlin brought a semiofficial promise that the map would be withdrawn from educational circulation.

With such attacks, it was apparent that their neighbor to the north presented a real threat to Switzerland. With the two-fold goal of beefing up the military and of reminding the Swiss of their fighting heritage, the government instituted significant increases in military spending and “Swissness” campaigns. Some of these efforts have a philatelic connection.

Philatelic Activities

The first campaign with a philatelic connection was that of the 1936 Wehranleihe (National Defense Fund). On October 1, 1936 a set of three semipostal stamps was placed on sale through the month of October. In addition to sales at post offices, secondary school children sold these stamps on the streets and door to

Figure 1. 1935 German map of “Greater Germany”.

Note: Footnotes are found at the end of the text.
door during the month. The surtax was designated for the National Defense Fund. The stamps picture Ferdinand Holder’s Freiburger Senn (Fribourg Alpine Dairy Farmer) (Zumstein WIII 2-4, Figure 2). Special slogan cancels reading “Subscribe to the National Defense Fund” in German, French, or Italian were placed in service in 34 post offices across Switzerland (machine cancel 2.2.20, Figure 3). It is interesting to note that these stamps were the first to be inscribed “Pro Patria” but are not considered to be part of the Pro Patria annual stamp series. In fact, the Pro Patria stamps did not begin to use that phrase until the 1952 issue.

The Swiss parliament had authorized a national defense budget of Fr235 million to be financed from the Military Loan fund, the so-called «Plebiszt mit dem Portemonnaie» (“Plebiscite of the Purse”). The goal was Fr80 million by October 15, 1936. By October 16, Fr335 million had been raised. Church bells rang across the land. To put this amount in perspective, Fr335 million was more than half the total receipts of the Federal government at the time. And the fact that Switzerland’s military budget was suddenly quadrupled was not lost on Switzerland’s neighbors.

Following the success of the Defense Fund effort, the three stamps were reissued on October 23, 1936, in a special souvenir sheet inscribed “PRO PATRIA 1936” (Zumstein WIII 8, Figure 4). The sheet remained on sale until November 30, 1936. Large blocks of four souvenir sheets were also sold. The stamps of the two formats are distinguishable – those of the first issue are on smooth paper with black and red threads, those of the souvenir sheet are on grilled paper with blue and red threads.

The next public campaign for the benefit of the military was the 1938 Pro Aero issue. The Pro Aero Foundation was created to encourage aviation in Switzerland. Sales of the 1938 stamp supported the Swiss air force by helping to purchase modern airplanes. The 1938 Pro Aero stamp (Zumstein F26) was valid only on the special flights flown on May 31, 1938 (postponed from May 22 due to bad weather) (Figure 5). The flights took place between 13 cities across Switzerland (Figure 6). Flights were made from each of the 13 cities to each of the other 12 cities. Mathematically, this should result in 156 possible combinations. However, only 154 can exist because Le Locle and La Chaux-de-Fonds shared an airport so flights between these two cities were not possible. Covers received a special blue cachet as seen on the cover in Figure 5.

The Landi – Philately

Probably the principal effort to remind the Swiss of their heritage prior to the outbreak of the Second World War was the 1939 National Exposition, the “Landi” from its German name, Schweizerische Landesausstellung. The Landi was held in Zürich on
the banks of the lake between May 6 and October 29, 1939. Two sets of stamps were issued for the Landi, the first set of three on February 1, 1939, to publicize the upcoming event. Three different designs were used for each denomination and each denomination was issued in each of the three national languages (at that time, Romansch was added later) - German, French, and Italian (Zumstein 219-227, Figure 7). Special slogan cancellations reading “1939 Zürich Swiss National Exposition” in German, French, and Italian were used between June 1938 and March 1939 at 31 post offices across Switzerland (machine cancel 4.1.95, Figure 8).

The second set of four stamps was issued to mark the opening of the event on May 6, 1939 (Zumstein 228-239, Figure 9). Here the same design was used for all four denominations and, like the earlier issue, each denomination was issued in each of the three national languages. The stamps were issued in two versions – in sheets of one language (all four denominations) and in coils (only the 5c, 10c, and 20c denominations) with the three languages se-tenant. Special cancels were applied to mail posted at the various postal facilities on the grounds of the Landi. Hand cancels were applied at four locations on the grounds (Sondercancels S.196 to S.199, Figure 10) and a machine slogan cancel was applied at the PTT Pavilion. Interestingly, the machine cancel used during the first five days of the Landi had the wrong closing date for the Exposition – October 31 instead of October 29. Needless to say, this error cancel is very rare (machine cancels 4.1.102 for the error, 4.1.103 for the corrected version, Figure 11).

The Landi – The Exposition

Upon entering the principal entrance to the Landi on the left bank of the Lake of Zürich, the visitor ascended a ramp to the Höhenstrasse (High Street), a half-mile long elevated walkway (Figure 12) which passed through several buildings, the first of which was the grouping Heimat und Volk (Homeland and the People), setting the stage for the Landi’s message of heritage and duty. Here the 1291 Bundesbrief (the Swiss equivalent of the American Declaration of Independence) was on display. A Hall of Honor lined with pictures of 150 famous Swiss under a ceiling of hundreds of Swiss crosses and exhibiting important documents from Swiss history reminded the visitor of those who had passed before him. A 150-foot-long mural entitled “In Labore Pax” (Pursuit of Peace) traced the history of the Swiss Confederation from its inception in 1291 to the then present day (Figure 13).
The visitor to the Wehrwille (Defense) exhibit was reminded that the defense of the Confederation had been the way of life in Switzerland for 650 years by two statements: “1291 – With all our might and effort against all aggressors” (Figure 14) and “1939 – Every Swiss is liable for military service” (Figure 15). Between these two statements stood a larger-than-life statue of a Swiss man donning his army uniform in front of the simple statement “650 Jahre” (650 Years), underscoring what had been the duty of every Swiss for the past 650 years (Figure 16).

The Hall of the Three Crosses was a square, high-ceiling space. On the far wall was a sgraffito drawing of the legendary three Swiss patriots taking their oath of confederation in the meadow at Rütli in 1291. On the left wall was another sgraffito drawing, this time of a modern Swiss family and a Christian cross. The Swiss flag and the flag of the Red Cross were draped the Christian cross — the three crosses (Figure 17). Various quotations were incised on the right wall and on the rear wall were displayed the flags of the 22 cantons.

The final room in the Heimat und Volk group was the psychologically powerful Gelöbnis (Taking the Oath) exhibit. A large statue of four men of different ages over which the figure of Genius hovered stood against a wall in which was incised the words of the National Hymn in all four languages (Figure 18). The room was the final exclamation point for the message of heritage and duty so artfully displayed along the Höhenstrasse.

The outbreak of the war brought the Landi to a temporary close. But in an effort of support to the nation and the army, it reopened to greatly increased attendance, closing, as scheduled, on October 29, 1939.

**Jewish Emigrants and Refugees from Germany**

Germany’s anti-Semitic campaign began shortly after Hitler’s rise to power, as seen from this quotation from the May 30, 1932, issue of TIME magazine:

In Munich the violent, blatant Völkischer Beobachter, organ of Jew-baiting Adolf Hitler, reminded its readers that famed Jewish Biographer Emil Ludwig long ago quit Germany for Switzerland, clarioned, “We advise other Jews to leave Germany while they have the opportunity. … We are determined to free Germany of the Jewish plague!” …

With the increasingly drastic measures being taken in Germany against those of the Jewish faith and opponents of the Nazi regime, Switzerland began receiving civilian refugees from Germany who were designated as “emigrants” by the Federal Department of Justice and Police under whose jurisdiction they fell. These first refugees from Germany were taken care of by family in Switzerland or they had their own financial support. Many of these were students. Those who entered Switzerland without family or their own financial support were housed in so-called Emigranten Heime (refugee homes) of local, national, or international welfare organizations of various faiths. They were not permitted to take on gainful employment but could study or work in critical occupations such as agriculture.

Unfortunately, some of the Swiss officialdom displayed anti-Semitic feelings as seen from this quote from the September 12, 1938, issue of TIME magazine:

Swiss authorities declared that an estimated 140 Jews per day had been “clandestinely” fleeing from Germany into Switzerland, announced that barbed wire is being strung along the frontier to stem this “Jewish flood.” Jewish refugee camps in Switzerland were reported jampacked last week. The camp at Diepoldsau hoisted a banner reading: “THANKS TO THE SWISS PEOPLE.”

Figure 16. The Wehrwille statue at the Swiss National Exposition.  
Figure 17. The Hall of the Three Crosses at the Swiss National Exposition. Note figure at right.  
Figure 18. The Gelöbnis statue at the Swiss National Exposition.  
Figure 19. Cover marking Hitler’s “spontaneous” visit to Vienna on the fourth day of unification March 17, 1938. Note special purple cancel “Der Führer in Wien” (“The Leader in Vienna”) which was applied to all mail that day.
With the annexation of Austria in the Anschluss of March 11, 1938 (Figures 19 and 20), another wave of refugees hit Switzerland:

…The Vienna Nazi press jubilantly reported that thousands of deserted automobiles had piled up along the frontiers as Jews, Catholics and Schuschnigg supporters were caught trying to escape. Typical of the thoroughness with which Nazi adherents had prepared for “the day” was the fact that 24 hours after Nazification the Nazi guard at the remotest frontier post was armed with a fully tabulated, thumb-indexed book of many thousand names on the Nazi black list, which he checked against the passports of those wishing to cross. …

*(TIME magazine March 28, 1938)*

Now, escapees were treated in the same manner as the previous “Emigrants” but were now termed Flüchtlinge (refugees) and were housed in so-called Flüchtlings Heime or Lager (refugee homes or camps). At this point the Swiss government provided partial financial support. Neither Emigranten or Flüchtlinge had free mailing privileges with their letters passing through the Swiss mail system without any distinction. Figure 21 shows a card from the Jewish Refugee Committee in Zürich to a relative of a recent refugee from Austria advising of his safe arrival in Switzerland.

Another outcome of the Anschluss was Hitler’s noises about annexing Liechtenstein as an historic part of Austria – itself now part of the Greater Germany. Prince Franz of Liechtenstein had appointed his cousin Franz Joseph II as Regent in March 1938, citing old age, but unmentioned was the fact that his wife was Jewish *(TIME magazine April 11, 1938)*. Franz Joseph II became the Prince on July 25, 1938, upon the death of Prince Franz. Prince Franz Joseph II met with Hitler in March 1939 to discuss “colonies” *(TIME magazine March 13, 1939)*. These talks resulted in the following as described in the April 3, 1939, issue of *TIME* magazine:

The traditionally neutral Swiss had a real week-end scare when alarming news came over the border that the Reich had been massing more than 200,000 troops around Lake Constance, to the north, and near the Swiss eastern frontier. Switzerland’s border guard was doubled, border roads and bridges were mined and anti-aircraft guns were in position in Basel, Zurich and other big cities. To allay popular fears the Swiss Federal Council appealed for calm, issued a statement that “rumors concerning an immediate menace to Switzerland, whether direct or indirect, are without foundation.”
This emergency call-up of the Frontier troops was the first formal Swiss response to Germany’s saber rattling. At the same time, efforts to re-arm and defend the country were accelerated. The German Embassy and Consulates in Switzerland still considered these refugees to be German. They held events, to which these refugees were invited, that can only be considered propaganda affairs. Figure 22 shows an invitation to one of the refugees living in the St. Gallen area to a “National Festival of the German People” shortly after the Austrian *Anschluss*. The program speaks for itself.

*Emigranten* and *Flüchtlinge* were expected to leave Switzerland at their earliest opportunity! This may account for the subtle distinction of calling them *emigrants* rather than *immigrants* as emigrants are residents of another country while immigrants are residents of the receiving country. The Swiss, by maintaining their status as “emigrants,” confirmed their temporary resident status. By the end of 1938 there were 7,500 refugees in Switzerland.

**The War Years**

With the outbreak of the war on September 1, 1939, the world changed as did Switzerland. The Swiss military was now under the command of General Henri Guisan who had been appointed Commander-in-Chief by the Swiss Parliament on August 30, 1939 (Figure 23). Switzerland’s army has a General only during times of war; Guisan was the fourth Swiss General. Following General Guisan’s recommendation, the Swiss Parliament declared September 2, 1939, as the “First Day of General Mobilization” (Figure 24). General Guisan then proceeded to prepare Switzerland’s defenses against possible invasion. As a neutral country Switzerland would not allow transit of foreign troops across its territory. This was particularly important in the northwest corner of Switzerland as the southern ends of both the Maginot and Siegfried Lines were located across the borders at that point. If the French wanted to skirt the Siegfried Line they would have to cross into Jura to attack Germany in southern Bavaria. Likewise, if the Germans wanted to skirt the Maginot line to attack France, they would have to cross into Basel or Aargau. While defenses were constructed on the French border, Guisan really only feared an invasion from Germany. In fact, there were secret plans made between the Swiss and the French to allow the French transit across Switzerland in the event that Germany invaded Switzerland. These plans were discovered during the war by the Germans, much to the embarrassment of the Swiss.
Guisan had decided that instead of trying to defend the country at the Rhine, a more defensible line ran from Basel to Liechtenstein (Figure 25) abandoning cities like Basel, Zürich, and St. Gallen.9 And if that failed, he planned a mountain redoubt in the Alps. Soldiers were put to work building fortifications. Figure 26 shows some views of these efforts taken from postcards sold to benefit soldiers and their families. The Gotthard and Simplon tunnels were mined as were all major industries and transportation facilities. In fact, the Swiss entrance to the Gotthard tunnel became the most heavily fortified place in the world, surpassing even the entrances to the Panama Canal.10

**Philatelic Activities**

The next philatelic reminder of the Swiss defensive tradition came in the 1940 Pro Patria set issued on March 20, 1940 (Zumstein WII 3-6). This set of four stamps (Figure 27) shows statues commemorating Swiss defensive actions through the centuries from the Battle of Sempach in 1386 to the border defense in World War I. Two versions...
of the 20c + 5c value exist, differing in
the shape of the legend at the foot of the
statue (Figure 28). The revised version
was issued on April 4, 1940 (Zumstein
WII 7). Additionally, a souvenir sheet of
the four stamps was issued on July 16, 1940
(Zumstein WII 12, Figure 29).

On May 9, 1940, the Swiss postal
administration and the Army co-sponsored a
series of flights to benefit the National Fund
and the Red Cross.11 Twelve military airplanes
flew mail from 16 collecting post offices
across Switzerland to Bern-Belpmoos. There
the mail was sorted and flown to 16 military
post offices (Feldpost), an early application
of the FedEx hub philosophy (Figure 30).
With 16 originating locations and 16 terminal
locations, there is a total of 256 combinations
possible for these flights! A special Sondercancel
was applied to each cover in the language of the
originating location – German, French, Italian,
or Romansch. Figure 31 shows covers with each
of the four languages.

Another reminder of the historical
heritage of the Swiss came in 1941 with the
middle value definitive set issued on January
15, 1941 (Zumstein 243-251). The nine
values of the set show important figures from
Swiss history including the three confederates
of 1291 (Figure 32, left) and William Tell
(Figure 32, right).

Figure 30. The routes of the 1940 Red
Cross and National Fund flights.

Figure 31. The four languages of the 1940 Red Cross and
National Fund flight Sondercancels, from top:
German, flown from Bern to Feldpost 17 (1,046 covers flown);
French, flown from Geneva to Feldpost 37 (158 covers flown);
Italian, flown from Bellinzona to Feldpost 11 (170 covers flown) (note erroneous date of the Feldpost 11
arrival cancel, 9.IV.40 instead of 9.V.40; and Romansch, flown
from Samedan to Feldpost 12 (1,000 covers flown).
As the noose of war tightened around the Swiss borders, an adequate food supply became a real problem. To address this problem, Dr. Friedrich Wahlen, who served as Chief of the Section of Agricultural Production and Home Economics in the Swiss War Food Office from 1938 to 1942, and from 1942 to 1945 as Commissioner for Food Production, developed the so-called “Wahlen Plan”. The goal of the plan was to convert all arable land, including permanent pastures, to agricultural production. This was very difficult, in particular, for the dairy farmers who, in most cases, had neither the horses, equipment, nor the storage facilities for products such as potatoes or beets. This included plowing under dairy farms, public parks, sporting facilities, and excess industrial land. Between 1940 and 1945, the cultivable area increased from 183,000 to 352,000 hectares (445,000 to 870,000 acres).12 The Wahlen Plan was enacted on November 15, 1940. To publicize the Plan, the 1941 Cultivation campaign stamp was issued on March 21, 1941 (Zumstein 252, Figure 33). Once again, special slogan cancels were used across Switzerland to support the campaign. Reading “Cultivate for the Country” in three languages, the slogan cancel (machine cancel 2.2.26, German and French versions are shown in Figure 34) was used from March 1941 to June 1945 at 37 post offices across the country.

Even with the Wahlen Plan, there was rationing in Switzerland. Switzerland was the only country in Europe not to suffer a rationing of fruits and vegetables, but other foodstuffs were rationed. The average daily ration went from 3200 to 2200 calories per person over the course of the war. Figure 35 shows some ration coupons for meals. And because most able-bodied men were serving in the Army, there was a shortage of people to work in the fields. One source of such labor was the large influx of emigrants and refugees and later, internees. Many of these “guests” were permitted to leave the various camps to work and live on farms. Figure 36 shows a letter from the Bureau of Emigrants of the Federal Police for Foreigners to the Cantonal Employment Office in St. Gallen. The gist of the letter states that the named person would be of better service as an agriculturalist with a diploma on a farm than being in a work camp.

Cut off from traditional sources of raw materials, the Swiss were encouraged to salvage and recycle as much as possible. The 1942 Salvage issue (Zumstein 254-256, Figure 37, next page) was issued on March 21, 1942, to publicize this campaign. This issue is especially interesting with stamps in three different languages appearing in the sheet of 25 – 12 in German, eight in French, and five in Italian. This results in six different horizontal se-tenant pairs, five different vertical pairs, four different horizontal strips of three, three different vertical strips of three, four different horizontal strips of four, and three different vertical strips of four – a total of 25 collectible combinations! And again
a special slogan cancel, reading “Save on Primary Materials - Use Scrap” in three languages, was used to promote the campaign (machine cancels 2.2.24 and 2.2.30, Figure 38). The use of the cancel actually preceded the stamps, the cancels having been placed in use in late September 1940 and continued until May 1945 and were used at 34 post offices across Switzerland. There are two versions of the German cancel, with and without the rectangular frame.

The Army and Public Support

The appointment of Henri Guisan as General of the Swiss Army probably prevented Switzerland from suffering the fate of Austria or Czechoslovakia. In 1940 Marcel Pilet-Golaz became the President of Switzerland. Pilet-Golaz, along with the majority of the Federal Council, senior members of the Swiss Foreign Office, many ranking army officers, and a group of influential Swiss society were all advocating “accommodation” with the Germans. But the vast majority of the Swiss citizenry opposed any such “accommodation”, as did Guisan. On June 25, 1940, Pilet-Golaz made a radio broadcast to the nation. To quote from Neither Friend nor Foe:

… the president issued an amazingly undisguised call to the Swiss to get used to the idea that Europe’s future was a German one — that if Switzerland indeed was to have a future, its people had best make their peace with that fact.

… Using the vocabulary of Nazi Germany and Vichy France, the president sounded like a petit Pétain with his dicta exhorting the Swiss people to “discuss not, but work; enjoy not, but produce; demand not, but give.” Parroting the exact phrases of Nazi jargon, he called for the Erneuerung (renewal) and Anpassung (adaptation) of Swiss institutions and policies.

… There wasn’t a word of praise for the nation’s soldiers, certainly not for the work Guisan had undertaken to strengthen Swiss defenses. Nor was there a word spoken about resisting an invasion should one come. It seemed that the president viewed Guisan as a greater danger than Hitler.

One month later, on July 25, 1940, Guisan had his top 650 army commanders join him on the lake steamer Stadt Luzern for the hour and a half trip to the Rütli, the site of the 1291 Oath of Confederation. On the meadow at Rütli Guisan enjoined his officers to save the nation from Pilet-Golaz’s German-oriented future with these words:

In 1939 the Federal Council entrusted the army with the task of protecting our centuries-old independence. This independence has been respected, until now, by our neighbors, and we will see to it that it will be respected to the end. As long as in Europe millions stand under arms, and as long as important forces are able to attack us at any time, this army has to remain at its post.

Come what may, the fortifications you have built preserve all their value. Our efforts have not been in vain, since we still hold our destiny in our own hands. Don’t listen to those who, out of ignorance or evil intention, spread negative news and doubt. Let us trust not only in our right but also in our strength, which enables us, if everybody is possessed of an iron will, to defend ourselves successfully.
March 2012

Needless to say, the Federal Council was shocked and the Germans irate. But the Swiss people understood and supported Guisan’s policy of strategic withdrawal and the redoubt. Relations between Guisan and Pilet-Golaz were difficult for the entire war period. The reality of the German threat is evident from the invasion plan submitted by Captain Otto Wilhelm von Menges of the General Staff to the German Army High Command on August 12, 1940 (Figure 39).16

The Swiss people’s support of soldiers and their families began almost immediately after the war broke out. Figure 40 shows a cover sent on November 24, 1939. It is inscribed “The Swiss People donate to their soldiers” in German, French, and Italian, and “Postage free - Soldier’s Christmas 1939 - by order of the General” with an address to send contributions. The General Mobilization order had resulted in severe financial hardship for soldiers and their families. The 1940 Swiss National Fund was one effort to allay these hardships. Postcards were sold to raise funds such as those shown in Figures 41-43 on the following page.

Another civilian support of soldiers came in the form of soldier stamps. Soldier stamps were created during World War I to raise funds to build Soldatenstuben (rooms similar to our USO canteens) used by soldiers for recreation. They had no postage value. During World War II over two thousand face-different soldier stamps were issued by various army units. The public

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Figure 39. The 1940 von Menges Plan for the invasion of Switzerland.

Figure 40, above. Postage-free cover for the Soldier’s Christmas 1939 fund.

Figure 41, upper right. 1940 Postcard inscribed “Swiss National Fund for our Soldiers and their Families and for the Swiss Red Cross.” View side shows a 1798 Bernese soldier. The card was mailed from an active-duty soldier in the III/46 Rifle Company.

Figure 42, right. Postcard inscribed “Our Soldiers at Work - For the benefit of soldiers in work companies and their families.” View side (see Figure 26 left) shows soldiers applying camouflage to a bunker.
Figure 43, above. 1940 Bundesfeier (National Day) postcard inscribed “For our Soldiers.” View side shows William Tell’s son and a crossbow.

Figure 44, right. A selection of Soldier stamps. Left to right, top to bottom from upper left: Auxiliary Construction Detachment; Pontoon Battalion; Carrier Pigeon Service; Rifle Battalion; Fusilier Battalion; Military Hospital; Territorial Regiment; Frontier Rifle Battalion; Mountain Brigade.

Figure 45. A selection of “official” army envelopes and postal cards.
enthusiastically embraced these new soldier stamps as a way to show support of the troops by contributing to the various assistance funds. Sales of these soldier stamps raised as much as 30,000 francs for individual unit funds in the first year. Over the course of the war a total of almost 2 million francs was raised for these assistance funds, mainly through the sale of soldier stamps. Figure 44 shows a selection of World War II soldier stamps.

Soldiers had postage free privileges for their normal correspondence (Feldpost). However, if a special service such as registration, special delivery, or air mail was desired, postage stamps to cover the cost of these services had to be affixed. The Army printed various special envelopes for its mail. Examples of such envelopes and postcards are shown in Figure 45. In addition to these examples of “official” stationery, various charitable organizations provided envelopes for individual soldier use. Figures 46 to 48 show examples of some of these. Some military units produced stationery for their own assistance funds (Figure 49).17

Censorship

One aspect of war is censorship of mail. In Switzerland, censorship of civilian mail was the exception rather than the rule, but it did occur. As a neutral, Switzerland was home for spies of many nations. Knowing this, a nationwide campaign “The Enemy is...”
“The Enemy is Listening” was instituted. A famous design, shown on a label and in a slogan cancel (machine cancel 2.2.31 used between May 1, 1943 and November 24, 1944 across Switzerland) in Figure 50, was used on placards and billboards across Switzerland. Suspicious items thought to pertain to sabotage, espionage, or illegal money transfers were legally opened, read, and resealed with a special label (Figure 51) by the P.T.T. Figure 52 shows one example of censorship by the P.T.T.

The military also was involved in censorship of civilian mail. Figures 53 and 54 show two examples. Telegrams were also censored (Figure 55).

One interesting area of censorship was on the publication of photographs of strategic military areas. The Federal Council decreed on October 10, 1939, that a permit was required to publish photographs of any place in Switzerland to prevent use of such photographs by the enemy in an invasion. Approved photographs had to print their permit number on each published item. Where we see this is in picture postal cards and postcards. The format of these permit notations was “NNNN BRB 3.10.1939” for German-area cards where “NNNN” is the permit number. In French-speaking areas the BRB was replaced by the
French equivalent “ACF”, and in the Italian-speaking areas “DCF”. Examples of these permit notations are shown in Figure 56. Furthermore, all the name signs were removed at the entrance to villages, as were the distance indications and names on signs along roads and highways.

The Dangers of War

An unfortunate result of a war being fought all around Switzerland is accidental bombing of Swiss cities by Allied planes. The most famous case of accidental bombing took place in Schaffhausen on April 1, 1944.

Fires Burn Through Day

SCHAFFHAUSEN Switzerland, April 2 (U.P.) — Fires still burning in this northeastern Swiss town today from yesterday’s mistaken United States Eighth Air Force attack, but the task of clearing debris and rubble was progressing briskly.

Public services had not been resumed at 4 P.M. although electricity and water were being supplied to some districts. Telephoning was nearly impossible.

Schaffhausen still was surrounded by military police, and Gen. Henri Guisan, Commander in Chief of the Swiss Army, accompanied by the chief of the Military Department, arrived this morning to inspect damage.

Periodic explosions rent the air today as demolition squads blasted the ruins of wrecked buildings. Several streets, where
walls were in danger of toppling, were closed to the public. Others were guarded and persons warned by guards to use them at their own risk. All were cautioned to walk in the middle of streets amid piles of broken glass, rubble and bricks thrown from the ruins by clearing gangs.

_The New York Times, April 3, 1944_¹⁸

**We Pay Swiss $1,000,000 In Reparation Installment**

The Swiss domestic radio reported last night that Leland Harrison, United States Minister to Switzerland, had presented to the Swiss Government a check for $1,000,000 as the “first installment of compensation for damage done by the bombing of Schaffhausen” by error on April 1.

The Swiss broadcast, reported by the Federal Communications Commission, credited its report to an official announcement in Berne.

_The New York Times, April 12, 1944_

**Emigrants, Refugees, and Internees**

Emigrants and refugees were handled differently from internees. It is useful to compare the rules and regulations of the two groups to better understand what follows. The table below summarizes these rules and regulations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emigrants and Refugees</th>
<th>Internees*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Jurisdiction</strong></td>
<td>Federal Department of Justice and Police</td>
<td>Federal Department of Defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mail Censorship</strong></td>
<td>None except in camps under military jurisdiction</td>
<td>Yes but no for escaped POWs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free Mail Privileges</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domicile in Switzerland</strong></td>
<td>Refugee homes, detached work sites, internment camps, private homes, religious institutes</td>
<td>Military internment camps, detached work sites, hospitals, clinics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>Study, apprenticeships, work in critical professions</td>
<td>Continue interrupted studies, work in critical professions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restrictions</strong></td>
<td>No gainful employment, leave Switzerland as soon as possible, can’t marry, can’t become a Swiss citizen, can’t volunteer for military service, travel ban after 1943</td>
<td>Geneva Convention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Support</strong></td>
<td>Family and relatives, welfare and refugee organizations, Swiss government (little)</td>
<td>Respective governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total in Switzerland, 1939</strong></td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total in Switzerland, 1945</strong></td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>105,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* There was also a group of Italian internees under military jurisdiction who actually were “military refugees” as they had come into Switzerland not as soldiers but as partisans.

**Emigrants and Refugees**

Mail from emigrants and refugees, because it had to be stamped, can only be identified either by the return address or the contents of the letter. And some of these letters’ contents tell of the plights of the writers. Figure 57 is one such letter written by a German refugee couple living in Luzern written to their son in the United States. Written on March 22, 1941, and mailed on the 24th, the letter travelled by train from Luzern to Stuttgart via Basel. In Stuttgart it was placed on board a German airplane which flew it to Lisbon, Portugal, via Barcelona and Madrid. In Lisbon it was placed on board the PanAm Clipper flight to New York where it arrived on April 5 and sent on to its final destination in Baltimore, Maryland, on April 6 and cleared customs on the 7th. The letter enclosed, shown in Figure 58, is addressed to “My dearest beloved child!” and complains of the high cost of living, the ban against employment, the slowness of the American Consulate, and problems of visas and ship tickets. It ends with the plea, “Are we ever getting out of here?” As the United States was still a neutral in March 1941 and as the letter had travelled in a sealed bag from Switzerland, it was not censored by the Germans.

Refugees and emigrants, upon entering Switzerland, were sent to one of several refugee reception camps. Figure 59 shows a letter from an inmate at the _Passantenlager_ (Transit camp) Burgerspital, Bern. As these camps were under the control of
the Army Territorial Command, it was subject to military censorship. And because civilian refugees did not have postage-free privileges, regular postage was required.

Figure 60 shows an official letter from the internment home at Bienenberg near Liestal, as shown by the return address stamp. This camp had 145 inmates in 1943 and housed females refugees working at mending and sewing.19 Figure 61 on the next page shows a photograph of women in this camp.

Mail to inmates at the various camps is easily identified from the address. Figure 62

Figure 58. Letter enclosed in the envelope shown in Figure 57.

Figure 61, on the next page shows a photograph of women in this camp.

Mail to inmates at the various camps is easily identified from the address. Figure 62

Figure 58. Letter enclosed in the envelope shown in Figure 57.

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Figure 61, on the next page shows a photograph of women in this camp.

Mail to inmates at the various camps is easily identified from the address. Figure 62

Figure 58. Letter enclosed in the envelope shown in Figure 57.
(top) shows a letter mailed from Zürich to a person in the Finhaut refugee camp in Canton Valais. This was a camp for families which held 28 inmates in 1943.

Figure 62 (bottom) shows a letter from Prague, Bohemia and Moravia (occupied Czechoslovakia), to a person in the Sonnenberg ob Kriens refugee camp in Canton Luzern. This camp was for women and girls which held 197 inmates in 1943.

As the war wound down in Europe, Switzerland faced a new wave of refugees, liberated Jews from German concentration camps. Figure 63 shows a card from a recently-arrived person liberated from the Theresienstadt concentration camp, who arrived with 1,200 other refugees on two special trains in St. Gallen on February 7, 1945. These refugees were transferred to the refugee reception camp at Adliswil five or six days later. As these reception camps were under the jurisdiction of the Army Territorial Command, mail from them received military censoring. The addressee, Leila Stern, was a resident of St. Gallen. The card told her news of fellow inmates and family members.
As these newly-arrived refugees were not allowed to be employed, many volunteered for welfare work. Figure 64 shows a letter allowing a long-time refugee to volunteer in helping with the influx of new refugees. The first person she saw disembarking from one of the arriving trains was a former classmate of hers back in Germany!

At the end of the war the refugees did not immediately leave Switzerland. Questions of citizenship, visas, available transportation, and financial problems kept many of them in Switzerland until well into 1946-1947. Figure 65 shows a late letter from the refugee home at Chesières addressed to the Central Administration for Work Camps, Household Division, in Zürich.

Sometimes, in the confusing times just after the war in Europe had ended, Jewish refugees would find their way to Palestine. When the Swiss authorities tried to locate them, they would discover they were gone.

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Figure 64. Letter of permission for a refugee to volunteer in helping newly-arrived refugees, October 20, 1943.

Figure 65, above. Registered official letter from the Chesières refugee home, March 22, 1946.

Figure 66. Express official letter to Liselotte Heldemuth, July 26, 1946. Marking in blue pencil on the front reads “14473 Kvutzat Eynot” (in Ivrit); those on the back are two from the Luzern Express and Telephone Delivery Office dated July 26 and July 27; Canobbio dated September 21, 1945; and the rectangular handstamp of the Main Office of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in Jerusalem with the Ivrit inscription “Received from the office of the Representation in Geneva”.

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Figure 66 gives an example of this. The Police Division of the Central Administration for Work Camps in Zürich send a letter to Liselotte Heldemuth at the Hotel Bernerhof in Luzern. She was not there and the letter sat in Luzern for two months when, on September 21, 1945, it was forwarded to Castello Trevano, Lugano - Canobbio. Again she was not found in Canobbio. At that point the letter was forwarded in another envelope (or by courier) to Geneva where the Geneva representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine then forwarded it to Jerusalem. Mrs. Heldemuth probably had left Switzerland with the Youth Aliyah group for Palestine. There she joined the Kvutzat Eynot group which was trained professionally for two years by the Women's International Zionist Organization in Nes Ziona, Palestine (located between Rishon-le-Zion and Rehovot).

**Military Internees**

With the fall of France in 1940, soldiers of many nationalities began streaming across the border into Switzerland. Most of these first arrivals were French and Polish. The scene at the border is vividly described in this article from the June 20, 1940, edition of *The New York Times*:

**2,000 FRENCH TROOPS FLEE TO SWITZERLAND**

∗General and Exhausted Men Had Retreated Since Sunday∗

LE LOCLE, Switzerland, at the French Frontier, June 19 (UP)—Two thousand French soldiers, including a general, two colonels, four lieutenant-colonels and thirty-five other officers of the aviation staff for the Dijon region stumbled wearily across the Col des Roches ridge into neutral Switzerland today.

They surrendered to Swiss army border guards, and without a word fell exhausted to sleep on the grass.

Some of the soldiers’ uniforms were torn and bloody. Many of them had fought at Verdun. They reached Besançon Sunday, they said, expecting to form a new army, only to find the city abandoned.

Ammunition dumps and gasoline storage tanks were burning. Roads were filled with vehicles, abandoned for lack of fuel, or burned and twisted from bombings.

Yesterday they met a strong German motorized column which forced its way through to the southwest. This morning they fought at Joux, where French forces were holding out against periodic attacks of a German armored unit.

The steady flow of refugees continued across this part of the Jura frontier. They said many of their number had been killed by bombing in towns of the Doubs Valley, southeast of Besançon, France, and that others had met death when caught between the German and French fighting forces.

One woman brought her dead child across the mountains with her. The child had been killed by a bomb fragment near Besancon. A few rode, driving in camouflaged automobiles and trucks.

The Swiss, suddenly faced with thousands of military internees, set up a special service organization to handle internees and their mail – Eidgenössisches Kommissariat für Internierung (Federal Commission for Internment). Figure 67 shows a cover from this organization. A central office for internee mail service was established in Köniz near Bern but on August 8, 1940 was relocated to Münchenbuchsee, and again on September 2, 1944 to Gümlingen. At first only Swiss post office personnel were allowed to work in this office but because of labor shortages in Switzerland internees were allowed to help.

At first organizationally, military internment camps were part of three regional districts – Region Seeland, Region Napf, and Region Oberland. To these three two additional districts were formed later – Region Thur and...
Region Menthue. Figure 68 shows covers from the Seeland and Napf Regions. Naturally, the administrative staffs of the internment camps needed to correspond with other units or organizations. While covers from such mail are not “internee” mail, they are part of the internee mail system. Such mail can be identified by the return address on the envelope. For example, in Figure 69, the letter was sent from the Reichenburg internment camp, Feldpost (field post office) 5143. Feldpost numbers in the 5000 series are not internee mail. Likewise, as shown in Figure 70, the title of the sender can indicate administrative mail – in this case “Postordonnanz” (mail clerk).

One of the first things an internee wanted to do was contact his family to let them know of his whereabouts. Figure 71 shows a postcard from a French internee written on June 22, 1940, presumably to his girlfriend. Unfortunately the card was deemed inadmissible and returned to the sender by the French authorities. The card bears the first internment camp cancel, a large Swiss cross in a large double circle, 31mm in diameter, but without the name of the camp or the postage-free indication. Without this postage-free indication, a second handstamp, *Franc de port*, was required. This meant double work so this cancel was withdrawn after about a week, making it a very rare usage.

A month later the situation had calmed down and a French internee at the Wiler bei Utzenstorf camp was able to send a card to his wife back in France. This card (Figure 72) bears the revised version of the cancel shown in Figure 71, this with the Swiss cross replaced by the words *‘Franc de port’* (postage free).

Polish soldiers formed a large part of the early influx of internees. Figure 73 shows the same cancel as

Figure 69. Letter from the administrative guard staff (*Bewachunstruppen*) at the Reichenburg internment camp to the International Red Cross, Central Agency for Prisoners of War, in Geneva.

Figure 70. Letter from the mail clerk (Postordonnanz) at the Ilanz internment camp to the Feldpostdirektion (Internierung) (Management of Internment Field Post Operations) in Bern.
shown in Figure 71 but without the dot before and after “en Suisse”. This cover is from a Polish internee at the Birmenstorf bei Baden camp to another internee at the Elgg bei Winterthur camp. Figure 74 shows a postcard from a young Polish cadet (Aspirant) at the Münchenbuchsee office to another Polish cadet at the Grangeneuve internment camp. The diameter of the internment cancel had been reduced to 28mm and included the dots.

With over 40,000 French and Polish internees in Swiss internment camps, the Welfare Fund for Internees, which was administered by the Federal Commission for Internment and Hospitalization, was in desperate need of funds. To help replenish the Fund postcards and stamp-like labels were issued beginning in 1940. Figures 75 to 77 show three of the postcards, these without “indicia”. A similar set of postcards was also issued with an “indicia” with no value, but were sold for 10c. (Figures 78 and 79 on a following page) The stamp-like labels for French and Polish internees were each sold for 20c (Figures 80 and 81 on a following page). A lottery was held on December 6, 1942, to raise funds. Some of the souvenir postcards were printed with details of the lottery on the back (Figure 82).21

Figure 71, left. Postcard from a French internee to France written June 22, 1940. The card is cancelled with the first version of the internment cancel, in use only about one week. After several forwardings within France it was marked (in blue pencil) “inadmis” (inadmissable) and stamped “Retour à l’Envoyeur” (Return to Sender) by the French.

Figure 72, below. Postcard from a French internee to France written July 22, 1940. The card is cancelled with the second version of the internment cancel, now with the central inscription “Franc de port” (postage free).

Figure 73. Letter from a Polish internee in Birmenstorf bei Baden to another Polish internee at the Elgg bei Winterthur internment camp. The card is cancelled with an internment cancel without the dots on either side of “en Suisse”.

Figure 74. Postcard from a young Polish cadet to another Polish cadet at the Münchenbuchsee office.
Internment camps in the Italian-speaking part of Switzerland used cancels in Italian. Figure 83 on a following page shows a cover from the Pollegio internment camp in Canton Ticino. The internment camp cancel has the standard wording but in Italian – Campo d’internamento militare Svizzera.

Figure 84 on a following page shows a cover with three languages from the Italian internment camp at Kerzers (Chüitäres in French, in Canton Fribourg which straddles the German-French language line)! The standard French-language internment cancel has the camp name in German, a handstamp, Camp d’Interns Italiens Chiètres, in French, and a handstamp of the interned unit, Savoia Cavalleria – Gruppo Squadroni Complementi (Savoyan Cavalry Reserve Squadron), in Italian.

Appendix 2 of this article is a selection of various internment camp cancels and associated handstamps.

In the period from June 20, 1940, through December 31, 1945, a total of 104,886 military personnel were interned in Switzerland, a huge burden in relationship to the total population of Switzerland. The breakdown by nationality was:

Figure 74. Postcard from a Polish internee in Münchenbuchsee to another Polish internee at the Grangeneuve internment camp written April 9, 1941. The card is cancelled with the 28mm diameter version of the internment cancel.

Figure 75, above left. 1939-1940 French-language souvenir postcard issued to raise funds for the Welfare Fund for Internees. Sent from the Büron internment camp, French-language label.

Figure 76, left. 1940-1941 French-language souvenir postcard. Sent from the Thalheim internment camp, Polish/French-language label.

Figure 77. 1940-1941 French/Polish-language souvenir postcard. Sent from the Stalen bei Brugg internment camp, Polish/French-language label. Note blue printing.
Figure 78. 1940 Polish-language souvenir postcard with “indicia” issued to raise funds for the Welfare Fund for Internees. Sent was the Wauwilermoos internment camp with the internment cancel in French with the camp name Schötz.

Figure 79. 1940 French-language souvenir postcard with “indicia” issued to raise funds for the Welfare Fund for Internees. Cancelled with the mute internment camp stamp.

Figure 80, above. Polish-language interment label.

Figure 81, left. French-language internment label.

Figure 82. Souvenir postcard printed for a lottery to raise funds for the internees. See endnote 20 for a translation of the lottery conditions.
France 32,621  Britain 5,139  Belgium 783
Italy 29,213  Yugoslavia 2,921  Czechoslovakia 516
Poland 14,972  United States 1,742  Finland 105
Russia 8,415  Greece 846  Others 81
Germany and Austria 7,532

As a neutral, Switzerland would not allow military personnel to cross through the country headed south to Italy or north to Germany. This also meant that military aircraft were not allowed to traverse Swiss air space. This resulted in both German and Allied airplanes being either shot or forced down into Switzerland.

BASLE, Switzerland, April 21 (UP)

A German bombing plane, returning from a long reconnaissance flight over France, ran out of gas today and landed amid a group of Swiss soldiers on the runway of Basle’s civil airport—only three miles from the Rhine frontier.

The German officer and three men surrendered immediately and will be interned for the duration of the war.

The plane was placed under guard and Swiss authorities began an investigation of the Germans’ story that they landed in Switzerland rather than try a forced landing in the midst of the French Maginot Line.

The New York Times April 22, 1940

SWISS SHOOT DOWN AMERICAN BOMBER
Fighters Destroy Fleeing Plane While 12 Other U. S. Craft Land as Directed

By Telephone to The New York Times. BERNE, Switzerland, April 13

Thirteen more American bombers—one of them shot down by Swiss pursuit planes — landed in Switzerland today after intensive attacks on southern Germany. The official Swiss Army communiqué has released no details, but it is understood that the loss of life was minimal.

Ten of the planes were forced down on Zurich’s mammoth airdrome, Duebendorf, between 1:30 this afternoon and 3 o’clock. The eleventh came down at Altenrhein and the twelfth at Oberglatt, both in the northeastern part of the country. All of the twelve, according to available information, immediately conformed to flying directions issued by the formations of the Swiss fighter planes that took off to intercept, and therefore landed safely.
Swiss Report Orders Ignored

The thirteenth, which failed to obey the Swiss summons to land and ignored “other communications” as it continued its route through central Switzerland, was finally attacked near Siebnen, in the canton of Schwyz.

Eyewitnesses said that after a few shots from the Swiss pursuit planes the American bomber caught fire and went into a dive, finally crashing in an uninhabited region. Would-be rescuers, arriving on the scene a few minutes later, were held at a distance by exploding ammunition in the burning plane. Search parties later found nearby a leather jacket and a parachute. Previously “several” members of the crew had been seen to bail out, though the Army communiqué made no mention of their fate.

Under international regulations all members of the crews of the planes brought down today have been rounded up and interned, while their planes have been seized. Unofficial tabulations to date show that there are about fifty-three American bombers in more or less good condition in Switzerland.

*The New York Times*, April 14, 1944

German airmen whose planes either crashed or were forced down in Switzerland for violating its air space were also interned. An internment camp at Lenk in the Simmental was established early on for German internees. Figure 85 shows a cover from this camp with an internment cancel in German, “Kriegsgefangeneninternierung Schweiz” (Prisoner of War Internment). As Switzerland was not at war with Germany, this cancel is misleading. A similar cancel was used at Kienthal (see Appendix 2). These are the only two camp cancels with this wording.

Over the course of the war more than 230 aircraft either crashed or were forced to land in Switzerland. The largest number of these was 186 for the United States Army Air Force, followed by 53 for the German Luftwaffe, 12 for the Royal Air Force, five for the Italian Air Force, and one each for the Canadian, French, and Hungarian Air Forces.

Figure 85, above. Letter from the Lenk (Simmental) internment camp cancelled with a German-language version of the internment cancel. Stamped on the back of the envelope are the words “Geöffnet von der schweiz. Militär-Behörde” (Opened by Swiss military authority).

Figure 86, right. Registered letter from Bulawy, General Government (occupied Poland) to a Polish internee at the Aigle internment camp. Internee had moved to the Aigle internment camp. Orange label alerts the post office at Aigle that the letter is an incoming foreign registered letter. Censored in Frankfurt, Germany, and in Switzerland by censor #377, resealed with Swiss military censor tape.
Mail to Internees

Incoming mail to internees offers some very interesting franking. Some countries, the United States among them, allowed postage free mail to prisoners of war and military internees. Figure 86 shows a letter dated December 20, 1942, from Bulawy in the General Gouvernment (occupied Poland) to a Polish internee at the Affeltrangen internment camp. The orange label at the lower right was affixed to alert the postal staff that it was an incoming foreign registered letter.

Figure 87 is a 1944 letter from Ivenets in Belarus occupied by the Germans at that time. It is addressed to a Russian internee at the Losone internment camp but forwarded to the Alpnach Dorf internment camp as the internee had moved. From the diminutive form of the first name in the address, the letter appears to have been addressed to the writer's son.

Figure 88 shows a 1943 letter from Tamaris in Vichy France (now occupied by the Germans) to a Polish internee at the Münchenbuchsee internment camp.

Figure 89 on the next page shows an August 1942 letter from London, England, to an internee at the Tavanasa internment camp. This letter is interesting in that the British censor blacked out the town name in the cancel. As the letter was registered, it received the orange label.

Figure 90 is another British cover, this dated March 9, 1942, from Dundee, Scotland, to a Polish internee at the Heinrichsbad-Herisau internment camp. Again, an incoming registered letter with the orange label.

Figure 87. Late 1944 letter from Ivenets, Belarus, to a Russian internee at the Losone internment camp. Censored at Königsberg and resealed at right, again at Frankfurt and resealed at bottom, and again in Switzerland by Censor #313. Forwarded to the Alpnach Dorf internment camp. Unknown where or by whom the Hitler stamp was added and where the brown neutral tape was applied over the Königberg tape but under the Frankfurt tape.

Figure 88. 1943 letter from Tamaris in now-occupied Vichy France to a Polish internee at the Münchenbuchsee internment camp. Censored in Lyon and inspected but not opened by Swiss censor #301.
Finally, Figure 91 is a letter dated May 10, 1944, from Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, to an American internee at the Adelboden internment camp, named Camp Moloney after the first American to die in a Swiss internment camp. It is written to the son of the writer of the letter.

**Camp-Detached Internees**

Since there was continuous military service for the Swiss, there was an acute labor shortage particularly in agriculture. Polish, Italian, and some other nationality military internees were allowed to work and live on farms or in certain businesses. Like their camp-bound brothers, their mail was also postage free but had to be cleared through their so-called “Home Camp”. For this purpose the Army Mail Service issued special directives with envelopes to be used for sending letters via civilian mail to the “Home

Camp” where the mail was censored, the camp cancel applied, and then forwarded to other camps or put into the civilian mail stream. Figure 92 one of the forwarding envelopes and Figure 93 shows one of these instruction sheets. These later envelopes are very similar to those used in interoffice mail in the United States.

Figure 89. August 1942 registered letter from London to an internee at the Tavanasa internment camp. Orange label added by Swiss. Censored by the British Civil Censor and resealed. Town name in circular date stamp blacked out by the British censor but left visible on the registration label!

Figure 90. Registered letter dated March 9, 1942, from Dundee, Scotland, to a Polish internee in the Heinrichsbad-Herisau internment camp. Orange label added by the Swiss. Censored by the British Civil Censor and resealed at left, censored again in Switzerland by censor #354 and resealed at right. Arrival date in Herisau, March 23, 1942.

Figure 91. Letter dated May 10, 1944, from Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, to an American internee in Camp Moloney in Adelboden. Censored in the United States and resealed at left. Inspected by Swiss censor #380 but not opened – treated as escaped prisoner of war mail.
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Figure 94 on the next page shows a cover mailed by an Italian military internee who was working on a camp-detached basis at the farm of the State Home for the Aged in Oeschberg-Koppigen. Dated December 1, 1944, the letter is to the military internees’ shoemaker’s workshop in Herzogenbuchsee. Figure 95, also on the next page, shows a similar cover, this from a Polish military internee who was working at a furniture workshop on a camp-detached basis. The letter is addressed to the Commander of Military Internment for the Emme Sector, Employment Office, at Field Post Office 5104.

Camp-detached internees also received mail via their camp-detached employer. Figure 96, on the next page, shows a letter from Schierling, Germany, dated June 16, 1941, to a Polish camp-detached military internee working on a farm in Langnau bei Reiden. The internee was detached from the Schötz internment camp where the letter first went. There the camp officials affixed the Feldpost form 516 which directed the mail to the village to the attention of Frau Hodel, who must have been the owner of the farm where the internee was working. The letter was also censored (#355) at the Schötz internment camp, sealed with military censorship tape, and transferred from the military mail system (Zuzustellen) to the civilian mail system and delivered to Frau Hodel and the internee.

Censorship of Internee Mail

Beginning on June 26, 1940, both outgoing and incoming military internee mail was censored by the Swiss. At first, such mail was censored and simply stamped “Feldpostdirektion” (Army Mail Service Administration) (Figure 97 on a following page). Very quickly however, the censors began using resealing tape, a rubber stamp indicating who censored the mail, and a second rubber stamp reading “Zuzustellen – Feldpostdirektion” (To Deliver – Field Post Direction) (Figures 98 and 99). The first resealing tape read “Opened – Military Censor” in German, French, and Italian. In
1944, the wording was changed to “Opened – Censorship Service for Internee Mail” in the three languages (Figure 100).

Sometimes the internee would violate the regulations of internee mail and the item would be returned to him. Figure 101 on a following page shows a piece of a package wrapper. The package was returned because it contained three letters (only one letter per envelope was allowed). It received a rubber stamp “Contraire au règlement, Retour à l'expéditeur, Censure militaire” (Contrary to regulations, return to sender, military censorship).

Searching for Military Internees

Loved ones back home, knowing their husbands, sons, fathers, or brothers had been interned in Switzerland, tried to contact them. With some 105,000 military internees from 17 countries in over 600 military internment camps across Switzerland this could be a problem. To help, the Swiss established an information office for internees in Bern. This office had world-wide free postage privileges. A special cancel was used by the office which read “Internement de militaires en Suisse, France de port, Bureau de renseignements, Berne” (Military Internment in Switzerland, Postage free, Information Office, Bern). An example of a letter from this office is shown in
Figure 102 on a following page. Equivalent offices were located in other countries. Figure 103, also on a following page, shows a cover from the French Centre National d’Information sur les Prisonniers de Guerre (National Center for Information on Prisoners of War) in Paris to a French internee supposedly in the Elgg internment camp.

Figures 104 to 107 on the following pages show some of these search letters with their repeated forwarding as the Swiss tried to locate the internee. And sometimes mail was misdirected to the
Figure 101. Piece of a wrapper of a package which had contained three letters contrary to internee mail regulations. It was returned to the sender after being censored and stamped “Retour à l’expéditeur” (Return to Sender).

Figure 102. Cover from the Bern Information Office on military internees with its special cancel.

Figure 103. Letter from the French National Center for Information on Prisoners of War in Paris to an internee supposedly in the Egg interment camp. Not there, the letter was forward first to the camp at Balterswil and finally to the camp at Kalchraun. Censored in Frankfurt, Germany, and twice by Swiss censors, #318 and #356. Note the stamp “Franchise postale, Centre national d’information sur les prisonniers de guerre”.

Figure 104. Letter dated December 11, 1940, from St-Geniez d’Olt, France, trying to locate a French internee thought to be in the Ganterschwil internment camp but not there. Forwarded to Anstalt (Refuge) Bitzi, then to the post office in Mosnang, and finally to Kalchraun where it found its way to the internee. (T.S.V.P. means Tournez s’il vous plâit, Turn over please)
The cover in Figure 108, on the next page, is one such example. The writer in Poland was trying to contact a Polish worker in Baden, Germany, through the International Red Cross in Geneva. Someone along the way read the “Baden” and sent the mail to the Swiss internment camp at Baden, Switzerland. The staff at the Baden internment camp then applied the Feldpost forwarding form #516 (see Figure 96), forwarding the mail in the civilian mail system to Geneva to the attention of the Red Cross.

Not all searches were successful. Figure 109 shows a cover from France looking for an internee by the name of Eugène Olivier, thought to be at the Röthenbach internment camp. Not found there, the letter was forwarded successively to the camps at Reichenau, Elsau, and Pitasch.

Figure 105, right. Letter dated September 5, 1940, from a Mrs. Riant of Avignon, France, trying to locate her husband thought to be in the Fraubrunnen internment camp but not there. Forwarded to the Kernenried camp and finally to the Brunnadern camp. Not censored in France but it was in Switzerland by censor #321 and rseealed with the first version of the closing tape.

Figure 106, below. Postcard from Slatina, Romania, written August 30, 1941, trying to contact an internee at the Wauwilermoos internment camp and forwarded to the camp at Büren an der Aare. Censored in Romania (“Cenzurat”) and in Switzerland by censor #332.

Figure 107. Having a “correct” address for the same internee as in Figure 98, the writer in Slatina, Romania, wrote December 16, 1941, to the camp at Büren an der Aare only to have the internee moved again, this time to the camp a Niederosch. Censored in Romania (“Cenzurat”) and in Switzerland by censor #316.

internment camp mail system. The cover in Figure 108, on the next page, is one such example. The writer in Poland was trying to contact a Polish worker in Baden, Germany, through the International Red Cross in Geneva. Someone along the way read the “Baden” and sent the mail to the Swiss internment camp at Baden, Switzerland. The staff at the Baden internment camp then applied the Feldpost forwarding form #516 (see Figure 96), forwarding the mail in the civilian mail system to Geneva to the attention of the Red Cross.

Not all searches were successful. Figure 109 shows a cover from France looking for an internee by the name of Eugène Olivier, thought to be at the Röthenbach internment camp. Not found there, the letter was forward successively to the camps at Reichenau, Elsau, and Pitasch.
Figure 108. Misdirected letter from Dzia/Oszy, Poland, to a Polish worker in Baden, Germany, via the International Red Cross in Geneva. Missent to the Swiss internment camp at Baden, Switzerland, where the Feldpost forwarding form 516 was affixed to the edge of the envelope and the letter was put back in the civilian mail stream to Geneva. The form 516 was folded back to show the entire envelope front. The form itself is shown at the left.

Figure 109. Letter from France trying to contact a French internee thought to be in the Röthenbach internment camp but not there. Forwarded then to Reichenau, Elsau, and Pitasch and finally returned to France via the French Red Cross. Note the red “Croix Rouge Française, Service des Prisonniers de Guerre” (French Red Cross Prisoners of War Service) handstamp.

Figure 110. Letter from a Polish internee Stefan Kwasmenski who was at the University Camp Fribourg at Grangeneuve trying to contact his brother Michal at the Schönenberg creamery at Wengi bei Büren an Aare. Not found there it was forwarded to the camp at Schönenberg an der Thur where he was also unknown. The letter was then sent to the Information Office for Internees in Bern where no record was found of the person in their files (pencil “pas de fiche” and red stamp “Ne figure pas dans le fichier des internés militaires en Suisse”). The letter was then returned to the sender at Grangeneuve (black pencil “Retour Grangeneuve”).
At Reichenau there evidently was an internee by the name of Eugène Olivier but not the correct Eugène Olivier and someone wrote on the envelope “Switzerland – This letter is not for the internee Eugène Olivier at Vogelsang-Reichenau” and “unknown at Reichenau”. Having not been able to locate the addressee, the letter was put back in the civilian mail system (Zuzustellen) and returned to France via the French Red Cross Prisoners of War Service.

Even internees in Switzerland were not always successful in finding fellow internees. Figure 110 shows a cover from a Polish internee at the University Camp Fribourg in Grangeneuve to his brother at the Creamery Schönemberg in Wengi bei Büren an Aare. Not known there, the letter was forwarded to the camp at Schönemberg an der Thur where he was also not known. Finally the letter was sent to the Central Information Office for Internees in Bern where no file on him was found. The letter was then returned to the sender.

**Higher Education for Internees**

The Swiss established five internment camps for higher education. With permission, internees could pursue their interrupted studies and even attend Swiss universities. There was one camp designated as a high school (Lycée) at Wetzikon, specifically for Polish internees. Four camps were designated for university level instruction (Hochschule) at Burgdorf, Fribourg, Winterthur, and Sirmach. The Sirmach camp was later relocated to Herisau. Figure 111 shows a letter from a Polish internee at the high school camp at Wetzikon. Figure 112 shows covers from four university camps.

**Figure 111, above.** Letter from a Polish internee at Camp Lycée Wetzikon to a Polish engineer at the University Camp Fribourg. Note the purple handstamp reading “Camp High School of Polish Internees in Switzerland” in Polish and French.

**Figure 112.** Letters from University Camps, from top: Grangeneuve/Hautrive, Burgdorf, Herisau, and Winterthur.
A military hospital was established at Leysin to treat wounded soldiers from Belgium and France. Initially the Swiss Postal Administration hoped to get an overall contract covering the mailing costs of all internees from the Federal Commission for Internment and Hospitalization. The postal administration did not think these soldiers had the right to postage free privileges. The result was a change in the wording of the internment cancel for the hospital at Leysin. Instead of reading “Camp militaire d’Internement Suisse” (Swiss Military Internment Camp), the cancel read “Hospitalisation militaire en Suisse” (Military Hospitalization in Switzerland); and instead of “Franc de port” (postage free) is read “Affranchi à forfait” (Exempt from Contract). These hospitalized soldiers were permitted to write four postcards and four letters per month. Figure 113 shows three covers from the hospital at Leysin.

Some of the internees did not behave like officers and gentlemen. Some were considered security risks and were put in a high-security camp in Büren an der Aare (Figure 114). And some got into trouble with the law and were put in a penal camp at Wauwilermoos near Schötz (Figure 115).

There was one special case of internees, Italian partisans. To the Swiss they were neither fish nor fowl. They were not regular Italian military internees, nor were they civilian internees. All the Swiss knew was that they had to keep them separated from the regular Italian military internees. The result was “Speziallager” (Special Camp) established in late 1943 in Schwarzsee in Canton Fribourg (Figure 116).
There was a special case of internees and that was of prisoners of war who had made their way into Switzerland. Called *Evades*, their mail was not subject to censorship which caused problems as they were often placed in the same internment camps as their interned countrymen whose mail was subject to censoring. To address this problem, mail from escaped prisoners of war was supposed to be specially marked with the words “Evades Post”, “Evade Post”, or “Evades” (Figures 117-119).

If there was no indication on the envelope that the mail had come from an escaped prisoner of war, confusion occurred. Figure 120, on the next page, shows a letter from an escaped Polish prisoner of war who had interned with other Polish
soldiers at the Kradolf internment camp. Censors were reticent to mark Evade mail in any manner so the letter was forwarded directly to the indicated address. The receiving civilian post office, not being aware of the status of the sender, returned it to the military mail system with the stamp “Contraire au règlement, Retour à l’expéditeur, Censure militaire” (Against regulations, Return to sender, Military censor), crossed out the addressee in orange crayon, and returned it to the military mail system. The military mail system then marked out the return to sender stamp in red pencil and stamped the letter in red “To Deliver, Army Mail Service Administration”.

Figure 118, above. Letter from escaped prisoner of war K. George, an American flyer interned at the Adelboden internee camp. Note the red “Evade Post” handstamp.

Figure 119, right. Letter from an escaped prisoner of war interned at the Wil (St. Gallen) Camp d’Evades. Note the black “Evades” handstamp.

Figure 120, left. Letter from escaped Polish prisoner of war interned at the Kradolf internee camp. Having left the military mail service with no markings to indicate the sender was an Evade, the civilian post office stamped it with the (faint) purple handstamp “Against regulations, Return to sender, Military censor”, crossed out the addressee in orange crayon, and returned it to the military mail system. The military mail system then marked out the return to sender stamp in red pencil and stamped the letter in red “To Deliver, Army Mail Service Administration”.

The War Ends

As the war in Europe was coming to a close, on February 20, 1945, the Swiss Postal Administration issued a souvenir sheet and two semi-postal stamps for the benefit of the Swiss Fund for the Victims of War (Zumstein WIII 19-21, Figure 121). And, anticipating the end of hostilities in Europe, the Swiss Postal Administration had the printers prepare a long set of stamps which are known as the Pax set, the word Pax being Latin for peace. The stamps were issued on May 9, 1945, the first day of the armistice (Zumstein 262-274, WIII 24, Figure 122).
Afterword

General Guisan, because of his strong leadership during the war, is thought by the Swiss as one of their great heroes. On the occasion of his sixtieth birthday on October 21, 1944, two special Soldier stamps were issued in his honor (Figure 123). At Christmastime 1944, another special Soldier stamp was issued and used on a special thank you card sent to all soldiers on active duty (Figure 124).

In 1946 a certificate was given to all who served the country during the war (Figure 125). The certificate reads:

War Mobilization 1939-1945
The army has fulfilled its assignment.
Throughout years of vigilance you preserved our country from the suffering of the war.

Figure 121. Stamps and souvenir sheet issued for the Swiss Fund for the Victims of War.

Figure 122. Stamps from the Pax set issued to mark the European armistice.

Figure 123. Soldier stamps issued in 1944 to honor the 60th birthday of General Guisan.

Figure 124. Christmas card from General Guisan sent to all soldiers on active duty. It reads:

Removed from loved ones, many of our soldiers have to celebrate Christmas in active military service. With their magnanimous devotion and performance of duty the independence of the country has been eased.

My heart felt thanks go to you.

Christmas 1944
General Guisan
Soldiers, faithful to the oath to the flag
You manned your post
You deserve the thanks of your country

General Guisan

The General Guisan Foundation was established in 1946 with Guisan as its president. The Foundation provides assistance to soldiers who have fallen ill or have been hurt in accidents while on active service but who were not eligible for other assistance for whatever reason. A special slogan cancel (machine cancel 2.1.25, Figure 126) was used in February and March of 1946 to help raise funds for the Foundation. The slogan cancel occurs in three languages – German, French, and Italian – and was used in 17 post offices across Switzerland. The Foundation is also responsible for the upkeep of Guisan’s home Verte Rive which is now the Guisan Center for History and Culture.25

In 1969 the General Guisan Foundation for the Swiss Youth26 was established to promote understanding between the youth of the various language regions of Switzerland and a stamp was issued with the General’s portrait (Zumstein 472, Figure 127). In 1989, on the 50th anniversary of his election to General and the Mobilization of the Swiss Army, a silver 5 franc coin was issued with his portrait (Figure 128).

…In World War II Switzerland has taken over the monumental task of representing U.S. interests in every occupied European country and every country with which the U.S. is at war. The International Red Cross in Switzerland provides the only contact for the Allies with their war prisoners in Axis hands.…

TIME Magazine February 1, 1943

The government and people of Switzerland performed with honor during the Second World War. They kept the flame of humanity burning in darkest Europe.
Endnotes

1. The senior author was living in Switzerland from 1936 to 1946 and at times worked with military internees on farms. He appreciates very much the fine cooperation, effort, and work Mr. Hall put into the preparation of this article.

2. This and other quotations from TIME magazine are taken from the archive found on the www.time.com web site.


4. All references to machine cancels are to Giovanni Balimann, Handbuch der Maschinenstempel der Schweiz, des Fürstentums Liechtenstein und der UNO-Postverwaltung in Genf, Schweizerischer Verein der Poststempelsammler, 2009.


6. For a detailed discussion of the Landi see a series of articles in TELL (September 2010, May 2011, July 2011, September 2011) and an article in the American Philatelist, April 2011.

7. All references to Sondercancels are to Zumstein & Cie., Sondercancel Schweiz, Bern, Switzerland: Zumstein & Cie., 2006.

8. These views of the Landi are from postcards sold at the Exposition.


13. Packard, ibid, p. 150.

14. Packard, ibid, pp. 151-152.

15. No verbatim record of Guisan’s remarks was made, the quote is a later official reconstruction of his remarks. It is quoted from Neither Friend nor Foe, which quoted it from Urs Schwarz, The Eye of the Hurricane: Switzerland in World War Two, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980.)

16. Taken from Halbrook which adapted it from Hans Rudolf Fuhrer, “Renseignement,” Relations Internationales, Summer 1994, No. 78, p. 236.


18. This and other quotations from The New York Times are taken from the archive found on the www.query.nytimes.com/search web site.

19. Appendix 1 to this article is a reprint from the American Jewish Congress Book 1944, Appendix V, pp. 591-595, giving a list of camps and homes for emigrants and internees in Switzerland. Data on individual camps are taken from this work.


21. The inscription on the postcard reads in French, German, and Polish:

The official results of the drawing will be posted in all camps and in the Polish newspaper Goniec Obozowy.

Paying for winning tickets will be as usual by presenting the ticket. Payments will be made for Sfr. 50 to 500 through the war commissioner of the F.C.I.H. and smaller values directly through the camp. Winnings not cashed by 12-31-42 will go into the Aid Fund.


24. The person receiving this certificate, Girl Scout Alice Adler, was the future wife of the senior author of this article.
26. www.fondationjeunessesuisse.ch

About the authors

Ernest L. Bergman was raised in a Jewish family in South Germany. When life became very difficult in the then Nazi Germany, his uncle in Switzerland took him in. There, he completed his secondary school education and also graduated with a diploma from a cantonal agriculture school. As a refugee and an ag school graduate in Switzerland he was permitted to work on farms. In 1941 he lost his German citizenship and in 1946 came as a stateless person to the United States where he became a U.S. citizen in 1952. Until then he worked on farms in New York and Oregon. He attended Oregon State College, graduating with a major in horticulture-pomology. He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. in horticulture-plant nutrition at Michigan State University, and then for 29 years was on the horticulture faculty of The Pennsylvania State University.

He built an award-winning collection of the Swiss Landscape issues, which was stolen from his home and never recovered. As a life-long stamp collector, he started over and rebuilt an award-winning exhibit of Swiss internee and refugee mail that along with his personal experience and historical study, are the basis for this monograph.

Ernie has been active for 50 years in APS and APRL where he served on the Board of Directors and for many years in the American Helvetia Philatelic Society; he was president of AHPS from 1993 to 1996, and has written and translated articles for publication in TELL. He is also a member of VSPhV.

With love and appreciation for his adopted country, Ernie has also been active in local government for over 40 years as an elected or appointed member. For 10 years he was a member of the Ferguson Township Board of Supervisors, served on the Regional Council of Governments, the County Planning Commission, on Sewer Authorities and is a long-time distinguished member of Kiwanis.

Ernie married his sweetheart Alice (from St.Gallen) after she immigrated to the US; he was not permitted to do that while a refugee in Switzerland. Alice passed away in 2008.

Richard T. Hall is a graduate of MIT, and earned his Ph.D. in physical chemistry at UC Berkeley. His working career was with The Aerospace Corp., first in the Laboratory Division in El Segundo, CA where he helped design and build a far-infrared interferometer. In 1976 the company opened an office in Washington, DC where Dick ran a program to develop electric and hybrid vehicles that resulted in the current generation of these vehicles. A while after Aerospace moved him back to California, he took early retirement and worked briefly for Hughes on a weather satellite.

He and his wife Yolanda moved to Asheville, NC on Dick's full retirement; they are heavily involved in community affairs, such as the board of the Asheville Symphony Orchestra, the North Carolina Arboretum Society, the Rotary Club of Asheville, and RiverLink, which works to develop Asheville's riverfront. They have two sons and two grandchildren.

Dick began collecting stamps as a boy, and joined the APS at age 15, so is approaching the 60-year mark. He bought stamps from R. Edwin Elliot in Canada, the North American agent for Amateur Collector Ltd., the British dealer in Swiss philately. Dick was attracted to the beauty of the Pro Juventute and Pro Patria issues of Switzerland, and his interest in Swiss philately grew from there. Knowing he would never be able to afford the early Swiss material, he began his Swiss collection with the 1907 issues. He has rather esoteric tastes, which led him to the Pro Juventute and Pro Infirmis postal stationery and the 1938 Landi – see his April 2011 article in the American Philatelist, among other specialties. He also has a collection of British Commonwealth from George V to 2000, and "the obligatory US collection up to 2000."

Dick enjoys writing. For years he wrote the "Alpine Album" column for the Western Stamp Collector, and of course is familiar to readers of TELL for his "Matterhorn Meanderings" column, now in its 16th year! He did the incredible work of soliciting and cajoling the chapters of the magnificent AHPS book Philately of Switzerland, and editing them into a coherent and very useful compendium, which has won high acclaim in several philatelic literature competitions. More recently, he formatted the impressive and very attractive book by Michael Peter and Ralph Soderberg, The Industrielle Kriegswirtschaft Issue of Switzerland 1918-1919, just published. He admired Ernie Bergman's exhibit of Swiss refugee mail, and volunteered to Ernie to help make it into the monograph published here. Ernie tells us that Dick did most of the writing.
# Appendix 1

*American Jewish Congress Book 1944, Appendix V, pp. 591-595*

## LIST OF CAMPS AND HOMES FOR EMIGRANTS AND INTERNEES IN SWITZERLAND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labor Camps and Homes</th>
<th>Nov. 30, 1943</th>
<th>Kind of Inmates</th>
<th>Kind of Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labor Camps for Internees:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Ampferrhöhe, Aargau</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Road-building, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Andelfingen near Winterthur</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>Gentiles (French, Yugoslavs)</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Arisdorf, Baselland</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Road-building, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Birmensdorf near Zurich</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Clearing of woodland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bourrignon near Delemont</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>Orthodox Jews</td>
<td>Land clearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Buerten, Baselland</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Road-building, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Chalais, Valais</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>In preparation</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Cossonay, Vaud</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>French students</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Davosco near Lugano</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>Camp for youths</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Egetswil near Kloten</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>Gentiles (French, Yugoslavs)</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Gordolo, Ticino</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Political internees</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Granges Lens, Valais</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Disciplinary camp</td>
<td>Ground leveling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Granges near Sion, Valais</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>Italians</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Hedening near Zurich</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Hinteregglenthal, Solothurn</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Gentiles (Yugoslavs)</td>
<td>Building drainage systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Innerkirchen</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Gentiles (Poles, etc.)</td>
<td>Gathering wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Lajoux, Berner Jura</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Gentiles (French)</td>
<td>Building drainage system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Laufen, Berner Jura</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Jews, Yugoslavs</td>
<td>Road-building, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Le Chalute near Court</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>Orthodox Jews</td>
<td>Road-building, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Les Enfers, Berner Jura</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>Gentiles (French, Yugoslavs)</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Les Verrières, Neu-Aarau</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Hollanders, Belgians</td>
<td>Road-building, farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Mezzovico-Vira, Ticino</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Mühlin, Aargau</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Road-building, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Montana, Valais</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>In preparation</td>
<td>Excavations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Murimoos near Muri, Aargau</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>Deserters, lawbreakers</td>
<td>Peat-digging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Olsberg, Baselland</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Road-building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Pian San Giacomo, Graubünden</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Pont de la Morge</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>Gentiles (French)</td>
<td>Farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Raron, Valais</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Sierre, Valais and Montana</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Tramelan, Berner Jura</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>Gentiles (French, Germans)</td>
<td>Farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Visp, Valais</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>Gentiles (French, Greeks)</td>
<td>Reclamation of land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Waldegg, Baselland</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Road-building, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3,729 inmates**

**Labor Camps for Emigrants:**

1. Locarno | 89 | Jews and Gentiles | Earthwork |
2. Schauenberg, Baselland | 74 | Jews, mostly Orthodox | Road-building |
3. Welach, Canton Zurich | - | In preparation | Farming |

**Retraining Camps:**

1. Zürichhorn, Zurich 8 | 90 | Jews and Gentiles | Carpenters, shoemakers, tailors
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labor Camps and Homes</th>
<th>Nov. 30, 1943</th>
<th>Kind of Inmates</th>
<th>Kind of Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Installation Detachments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Granges-Chalais</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Camp Installations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Laufen</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Camp Installations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Central Administration, Technical Division</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Camp Installations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><em>38</em> camps</em>*</td>
<td><strong>4,032 inmates</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The detachments are not reckoned among the camps.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homes for Families:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Chamby near Montreux</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>Hollanders</td>
<td>Housework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Clarens near Montreux</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>Hollanders</td>
<td>Housework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Finhaut, Valais</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Jews and Gentiles</td>
<td>Housework, mending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mont Pèlerin, ob Vevey</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>Hollanders</td>
<td>Housework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Morgins, Valais</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>Orthodox Jews</td>
<td>Housework, mending</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homes for Women and Girls:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bienenberg, Baselland</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>Mostly Jewesses</td>
<td>Mending, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Brissago near Locarno</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>Mostly Jewesses</td>
<td>Mending and laundering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. La Chassotte, Freiburg</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Jewish and Gentile women</td>
<td>School for the young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Moudon, Vaud</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>Mostly Jewesses</td>
<td>Mending, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Neuhausen, Schaffhausen</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Jewish and Gentile women</td>
<td>Mending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sonnenberg ob Kriens</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>Jewish and Gentile women</td>
<td>Mending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sumiswald, Bern</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Jewish and Gentile women</td>
<td>Mending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tivoli, Luzern</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>Jewish and Gentile women</td>
<td>Mending, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homes for Women and Children:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Langenbruck, Baselland</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>Mothers with small children</td>
<td>Housework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. La Rosiax and Beau Soleil</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>Mothers with infants, expectant mothers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Serneus, Graubünden</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>Mothers with small children</td>
<td>Housework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. St. Niklaus, Valais</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Mothers with small children</td>
<td>Housework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Victoria-Montana, Valais</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>Mothers with small children</td>
<td>Housework</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homes for Men:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hasenberg, Aargau</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Jews of various countries</td>
<td>Making slippers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Magliaso, Ticino</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Jews and Gentiles</td>
<td>Light indoor work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Schloss Burg near Flueh</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>Jews and Gentiles</td>
<td>Light indoor work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Vicosoprano, Graubünden</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>Jews and Gentiles</td>
<td>Light indoor work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convalescent Home:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Monte Bré near Lugano</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Jews and Gentiles</td>
<td>Light indoor work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuberculosis Station:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leysin</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>Jews and Gentiles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Home:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Herzberg, Asp, Aargau</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>Jewish and Gentile women</td>
<td>Domestic science school, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**64 camps** | **7,755 inmates** | | |
### Central Management Enterprises in Zurich:

1. **Central warehouse, Zurich**
   - No. of Inmates: 55
   - Kind of Inmates: Emigrants
   - Kind of Activity: Fresh supplies, etc.
   - Workshops, Zürichhorn: 8 Inmates
     - Kind of Inmates: Emigrants
     - Kind of Activity: Carpenters, shoemakers, tailors
   - Dental and Technical Service: 14 Dentists and technicians
     - Kind of Activity: Dental treatment, technical work
   - Administration: 9 Women and men
     - Kind of Activity: Clerical duties

2. **Repair Shop, Zurich**
   - No. of Inmates: 189
   - Kind of Inmates: Women and men
   - Kind of Activity: Laundering, mending, etc.

### 66 camps 8,030 inmates

---

**LIST OF REFUGEE RECEPTION CAMPS EXISTING AT THE END OF OCTOBER, 1943**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ter. Insp. 1</th>
<th>Ter. Insp. 2</th>
<th>Ter. Insp. 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. La Rosiaz, Lausanne</td>
<td>2. Guetschm, Luzern</td>
<td>2. Adliswil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tour Haldimand, Lausanne</td>
<td>5. Geishubelbad</td>
<td>5. Plenterplatz am Uetliberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Champel, Geneva</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Cropettes, Geneva</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Varembe, Geneva</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Grand Hotel, Les Avants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These reception camps contained from 5,000 to 6,000 refugees, who were under the control of the respective Territorial Inspectorates of the Swiss Army.
Appendix 2
INTERNEE-RELATED HANDSTAMPS

Internee Camp Handstamps

Unless otherwise noted, all internee camp handstamps are 28mm in diameter

First version
No “Franc de port”
31mm diameter

Second version
“Franc de port”, • en Suisse •
31mm diameter

Second version
“Franc de port” “en Suisse”
(no dots)
31mm diameter

All capital letters
French language

“Franc de port”, • en Suisse •
All capital letters
German language

Italian language version

“Franc de port”, * en Suisse *
black ink

“Franc de port”, * en Suisse *
purple ink

German language version
“Portofrei”

German language version
“Portofrei”

Change to
“Camp militaire d’Internement”
stars with “Suisse”
Internee Camp Handstamps

Change to "Camp militaire d'Internement" asterisks with "Suisse"

Hospitalisation militaire (at Leysin)
Canton Vaud

Spexiallager
Special camp (for Italian partisans)
23.5mm diameter

Bureau de renseignements
Berne
Canton Bern

Leysin
Military Hospital
Canton Vaud

Adelboden
French language
Canton Bern

Adelboden
German language
Canton Bern

Ausserglas
Canton Graubünden

Bevaix
Canton Neuchâtel

Büren a.d. Aare
Canton Bern

Buren an der Aare
Canton Bern
Internee Camp Handstamps

Burgdorf
University Camp
Canton Bern

Büron
Canton Luzern

Busswil b. Büren a. Aare
Canton Bern

Claro
Canton Ticino

Dättwil
Canton Aargau

Dieterswil
Canton Bern

Elgg
Canton Zürich

Ems
Canton Graubünden

Eriswil
Canton Bern

Eschenz
Canton Thurgau
Escaped Prisoner of War Camp

Fraubrunnen
Canton Bern

Fribourg
Canton Fribourg
Internee Camp Handstamps

Ganterschwil
Canton St. Gallen

Gonten
Canton Appenzell-Innerrhoden

Grangeneuve/Hauterive
University Camp Fribourg
36mm diameter

Grünenmatt
Canton Bern

Gudo
Canton Ticino

Herisau
University Camp
Canton Appenzell-Ausserrhoden

Herzogenbuchsee
Canton Bern

Hinwil
Canton Zürich

Iffwil
Canton Bern

Ilanz
Canton Graubünden

Illarsaz
Canton Valais

Kandersteg
Canton Bern
Internee Camp Handstamps

Kemenried
Canton Bern

Kerzers
(French – Chiètres)
Canton Fribourg

Kienthal
Canton Bern

Koppigen
Canton Bern

Kradolf
Canton Thurgau

Langwies
Canton Graubünden

Lauterbrunnen
Canton Bern

Lenk (Simmental)
Canton Bern

Lützelflüh/Goldbach
Canton Bern

Menziken
Canton Aargau

Mürren
Canton Bern

Nebikon
Canton Luzern
Internee Camp Handstamps

Passugg-Araschgen
Canton Graubünden

Pfaffnau
Canton Luzern

Pollegio
Canton Ticino

Les Ponts-de-Martel
Canton Neuchâtel

Quinto
Canton Ticino

Rapperswil
Canton Bern

Reichenau
Canton Graubünden

St. Urban
Canton Luzern

Schönbühl-Urtenen
Canton Bern

Schönenberg a.d. Thur
Canton Thurgau

Schötz
Canton Luzern

Schüpfen
Canton Bern
Internee Camp Handstamps

Schwyz
Canton Schwyz

Sirmach
Canton Thurgau

Stalden b. Brugg
Canton Aargau

Thalheim
Canton Aargau

Thalkirch
Canton Graubünden

Trimmis-Dorf
Canton Graubünden

Ursenbach
Canton Bern

Utzenstorf
Canton Bern

Wasen (Emmental)
Canton Bern

Wattwil
Canton St. Gallen

Weier (Emmental)
Canton Bern

Wengen
Canton Bern
Internee Camp Handstamps

Wengi b. Büren a. Aare
Canton Bern

Wetzikon
Camp Lycée
Canton Zürich

Wiesendangen
Canton Zürich

Wil
Canton St. Gallen
Escaped Prisoner of War Camp

Wil
Canton St. Gallen

Wiler b. Seedorf
Canton Bern

Winterthur
University Camp
Canton Zürich

Yvonand
Canton Vaud

Zollbrück
Canton Bern
Miscellaneous Handstamps

**Amtlich**
Official
27mm long

**Camp d'Internés Italiens**
**Chiètres**
Italian Internment Camp
Chiètres
8.5 x 42.5mm

**Censure**
Censored
41.5mm long

**Contraire au règlement**
**Retour à l'expéditeur**
**Censure militaire**
Contrary to regulations
Return to sender
Military censor
17.5 x 54mm

**Evades**
Escaped Prisoners of War
42.5mm long

**Feldpostdirektion**
Field Post Administration
33.5mm long

**Franc de port**
Postage Free
6.5 x 22.5mm

**Kriegsgefangenenpost**
Prisoner of War Mail
46mm long

**Ne figure pas dans la fichier des Interns militaires en Suisse**
Not found in the files of miliary internees in Switzerland
10 x 38mm

**Officiel**
Official
23.5mm long
Miscellaneous Handstamps

Retour à l’Envoyeur
Return to Sender
11.5 x 32.5mm

Vorschriftswidrig
zurück an Absender
Militär-Zensur
Contrary to regulations
Return to sender
Military censor
18 x 56mm

Zensuriert
Censored
47.5mm long

Zuzustellen
Feldpostdirektion
Deliver
Field Post Office Administration
14.5 x 31.5mm

Bureau International d’Éducation
with Motto
35mm diameter

Bureau International d’Éducation -
Geneve
34mm diameter

Comite International de la Croix
Rouge - Genève
28mm diameter