

Reflecting the Rise of Tourism During La Belle Epoque

Hotel Schweizerhof, Luzern: 1871-1914

Purpose

The exhibit illustrates the social history of postal communication to and from the Hotel Schweizerhof, Luzern, Switzerland, during the period known as La Belle Epoque, 1871 to 1914.

This forty-three year period, free of European war and characterized by economic prosperity and optimism, saw a burst of cultural, scientific, and technological innovation, which led to a boom in tourism.

Industrialization of the late 19th Century created wealth and the *nouveau riche*, who, along with established aristocrats, chose to tour Europe with their families and servants. Tourists took advantage of the expanded railway systems for Grand Tours in a Grand Style, especially visiting Switzerland for its famed "natural" vistas.

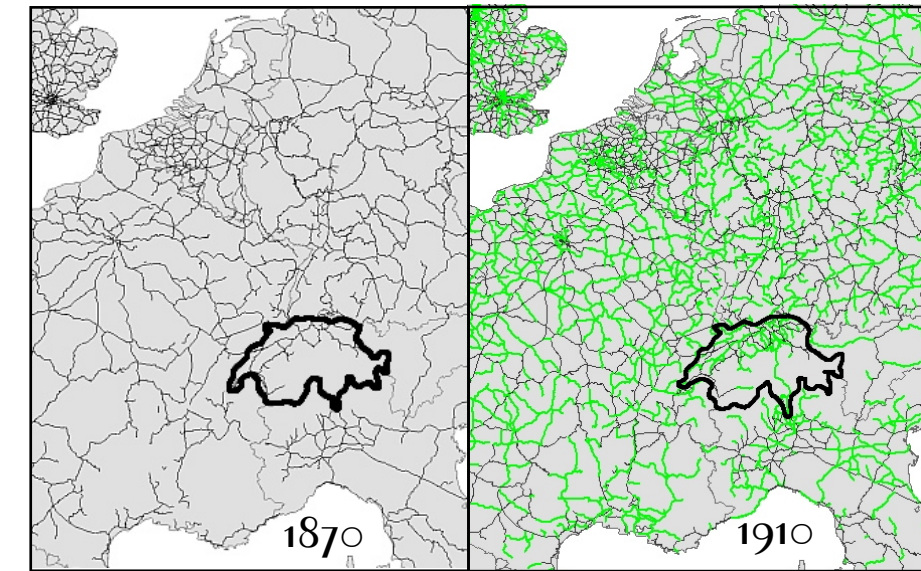
Scope

All examples in this exhibit of personal and business communications transited the mail room of this luxury Swiss hotel. Postal items originating from, or addressed to, the following countries are exhibited: Argentina, Austria, Baden, Bavaria, Belgium, Canada, Canary Islands, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Japan, Serbia, Sweden, and the United States.

Types of international and domestic communication include: 1st class letters, registered letters, value letters, printed matter, letter cards, postal cards, picture postcards, postage due, forwarded, returned, and unclaimed mail.

Railway System - Europe

The expansion of railways, 47,980 miles in 1870 to 257,750 miles in 1910, facilitated faster and more comfortable travel for high end clientele travelling to Switzerland.



16 September 1856, Paris, France to Post Restante, Bern, received 18 September, forwarded to Hotel Schweizerhof, Luzern 19 September, re-forwarded to Hotel Baur au Lac, Zürich, received 20 September. Pre-UPU international letter.

Earliest postal item associated with Hotel Schweizerhof ever seen by this exhibitor.

Exhibit Organization

Frame 1 - 1856-1887

Early markings by Swiss hotels.
First hotel date stamp (rectangular)
First hotel corner card.
Second hotel date stamp (oval)
Functions of the Mail Room

Frame 2 - 1888-1895

Type 1 circular hotel date stamp
Not claimed, forwarded, registered
Self advertising
Variety of destinations and origins
Postage due

Frame 3 - 1895-1901

Destinations and origins
Type 2 circular hotel date stamp
UPU 25th Anniversary issue
Officially sealed, unclaimed

Frame 4 - 1901-1913

Type 3 circular hotel date stamp
Origins and destinations
Hotel postcards
Type 4 circular hotel date stamp
Epilogue



Hotel Schweizerhof, circa 1850

The Hotel

The hotel was built in 1844 by Xaver and Josef Plazidus, with a major expansion in 1855 prior to the purchase by three Hauser Brothers in 1861. The Hauser Brothers, now owners of the Schweizerhof, catered to the high-end traveller by providing luxury services. Advertising emphasized the convenience of the hotel's central location in Europe along with its dazzling view of Lake Luzern and views of the summits of Pilatus and Rigi.

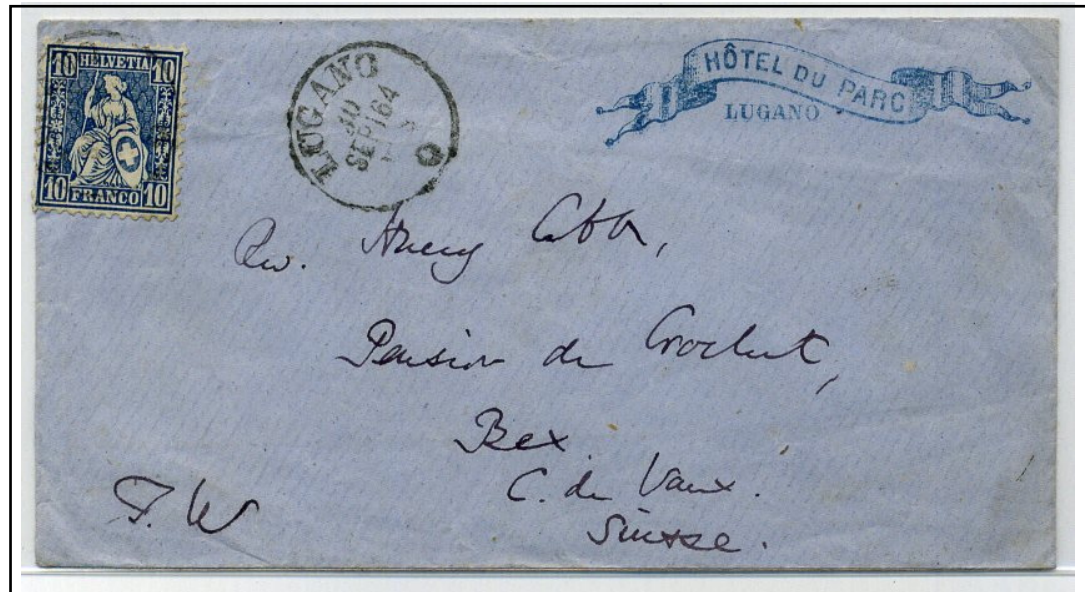
One of the most important services the hotel provided was processing incoming and outgoing correspondence for both guests and hotel business. The mail room was the nerve center of the hotel just as the internet is for travelers today.

Hotel Schweizerhof, postcard circa 1910



Luzern, Hotel Schweizerhof

Early Promotion by Swiss Hotels



Hotel du Parc, Lugano 30 September 1864 to Pension du Crochet, Bex. Domestic letter.



Sent to Hotel de la Dents du Midi, Champéry, forwarded to Hotel Byron, Villeneuve. Cancelled on board the Geneve-Sion Railway 17 July 1865. 10 centimes due because letter held at first hotel prior to reentering the mails.



Hotel des Salines, Bex, 18 June 1872 to Bavaria. International letter. This hotel used numerous circular marks including one used the following year which included the date.

Tourist Guides

"Principal hotels are, Schweizerhof . . . Besides being one of the best kept houses in Europe, its position is one of great beauty.

The dining-room is the largest and most magnificent in Switzerland, and. . . . has the best tables and service in Lucerne."

*The American Traveller's Guide
Harper's Hand-Book for Travellers in
Europe*
by William Pembroke Fetridge.

THE AMERICAN TRAVELLER'S GUIDE.

HARPER'S HAND-BOOK
FOR
TRAVELLERS IN EUROPE
AND THE EAST:

BEING A GUIDE THROUGH
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, FRANCE, BELGIUM, HOLLAND, GERMANY,
ITALY, EGYPT, SYRIA, TURKEY, GREECE, SWITZERLAND, TYROL,
DENMARK, NORWAY, SWEDEN, RUSSIA, AND SPAIN.

By W. PEMBROKE FETRIDGE, M.S.G.,
AUTHOR OF "THE RISE AND FALL OF THE PARIS COMMUNE," "HARPER'S PERSIAN-BOOK," ETC.

WITH ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN MAPS AND PLANS OF CITIES.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOLUME III.
SWITZERLAND, TYROL, DENMARK, NORWAY, SWEDEN, RUSSIA, AND SPAIN.

SEVENTEENTH YEAR.

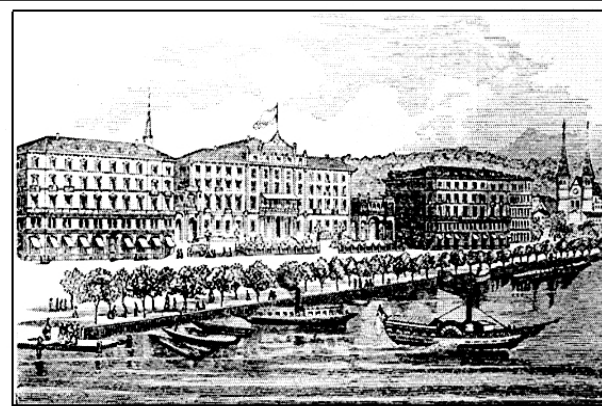
NEW YORK:—HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS.
PARIS:—GALIGNANI & CO., No. 24 RUE RIVOLI.—MARTINET, GRAND HOTEL.
LONDON:—W. J. ADAMS & SONS, 59 FLEET STREET.
Florence, GOODMAN.—Rome, PIAZZA.
Frankfort, J. BARR.—Vienna, GEROLD & Co.—Berlin, ASNER & Co.

1878.

HOTEL SCHWEIZERHOF,
WITH ITS DEPENDENCIES,
AND
LUZERNERHOF.

First-class Establishments; splendid position on the Lake; view of the Righi and Pilate. Apartments for Families and Tourists. Restaurant; Table d'Hote a la carte.

HAUSER BROTHERS, Proprietors.

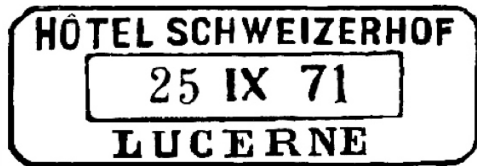


Postkarte
Carte postale
Cartolina postale

Hôtel des Balances, Propriétaire: G. Bindschedler

Adresse: *Sara Fritz Buehler & Co
Dagmersellen.
Luzern.*

Hotel des Balances, Luzern, 18 February 1879, to Dagmarsellen. After the introduction of postal cards by the Swiss postal service in 1870, private businesses learned to take advantage of this new format by customizing post cards to advertise themselves. Most used only text, but a few early cards were illustrated with elaborate images later restricted to the message side of the card.



First Hotel Schweizerhof date stamp used on outgoing mail just after the end of the Franco-Prussian War [10 May 1871]. In later years different hand stamps were created and used.



25 September 1871 to Dobb's Ferry, New York, USA. Transit Basel, 25 September; transit New York, 12 October. International letter. Single weight [15gms] direct packet rate to United States, 50 centimes.

Tourism Rebounds After the Franco-Prussian War

Excerpts of letter from Annie Cheavers, daughter of Mrs Thaddeus Nichols, whose husband was a Boston ship owner:

".....The Doctor telegraphed to the best Hotel for rooms, and when we arrived here we found a charming room reserved for us on the front of the house overlooking the lake....."

"I might mention the Hotel which is superb. The Dr. says there is nothing to compare with it in America, because there trained servants are wanting. . . ."

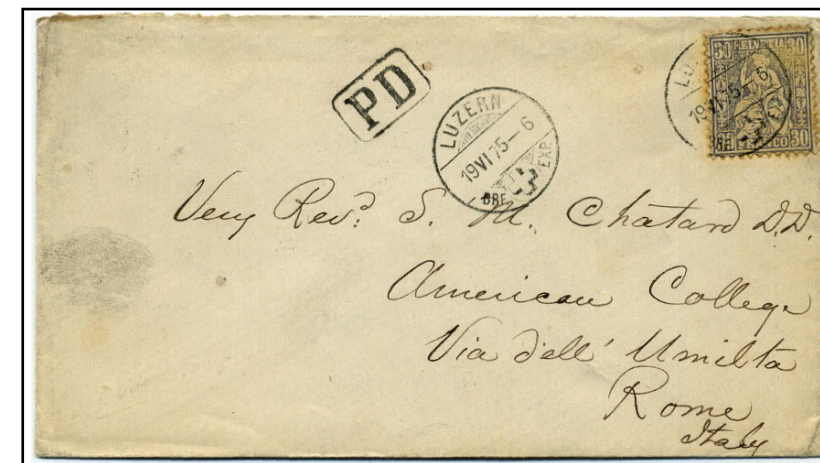


17 July 1872 to Boston, MA, USA, transit Basel, 17 July, transit New York, 30 July. International letter. Single weight [15gms] direct packet rate to United States, via Ostende, Belgium. Rate in effect 1 July 1872 to 30 June 1875, 50 centimes.

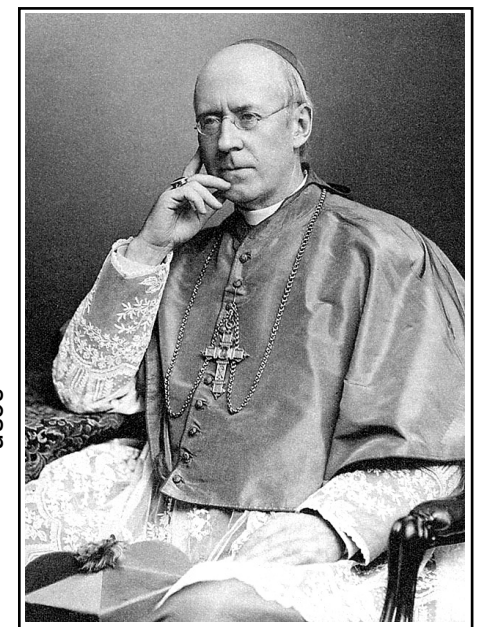
Hotel Name Printed on Envelopes

19 June 1875 to Rome, Italy. Transit Luzern-Fluelen lake steamer 20 Jun [76 error]. Over Gotthard Pass by diligence, transit Lake Maggiore on steamer "Verbano" 21 Gui 75, received Rome 22 Gui 75.

Pre-UPU rate to Italy 30 centimes. Two weeks later, 1 July 1875, rate reduced to UPU 25 centimes.

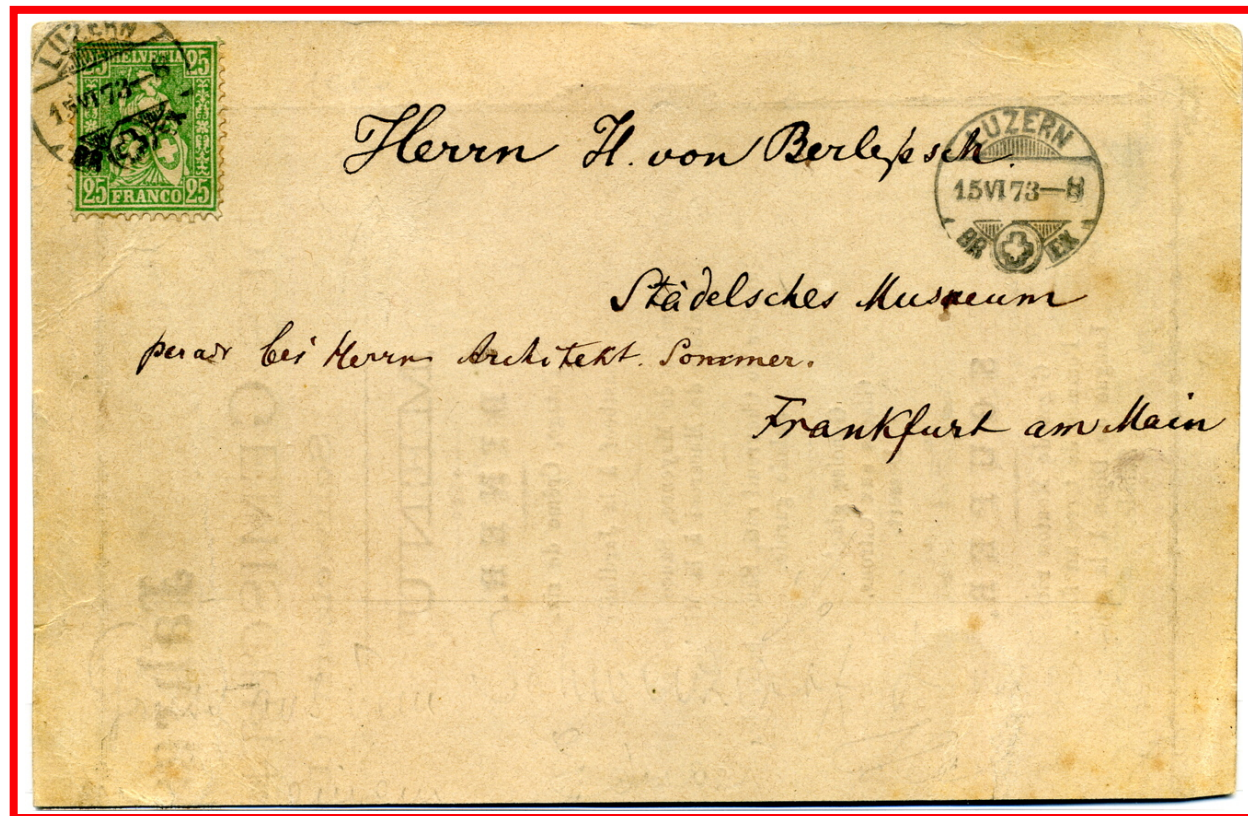


The addressee of this cover the Very Reverend S.M. Chartard, Rector of the North American College in Rome later became the Bishop of the Diocese of Vicennes in Indiana.



scan

Dining Room Menu as Postcard

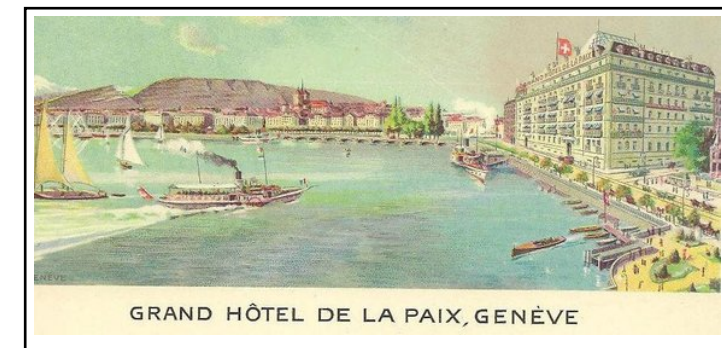


Forwarded by both Agent & Hotel

Scan



22 July 1878 from Bar Harbor, Maine, USA, transit Boston 23 July to Brown, Shipley & Co, London, received 6 August. International letter. Forwarded by Shipley 6 August to Hotel de Paix, Geneve, received 8 August, forwarded to Hotel Schweizerhof, Luzern, received 8 August, delivered 9 August to Room 86.



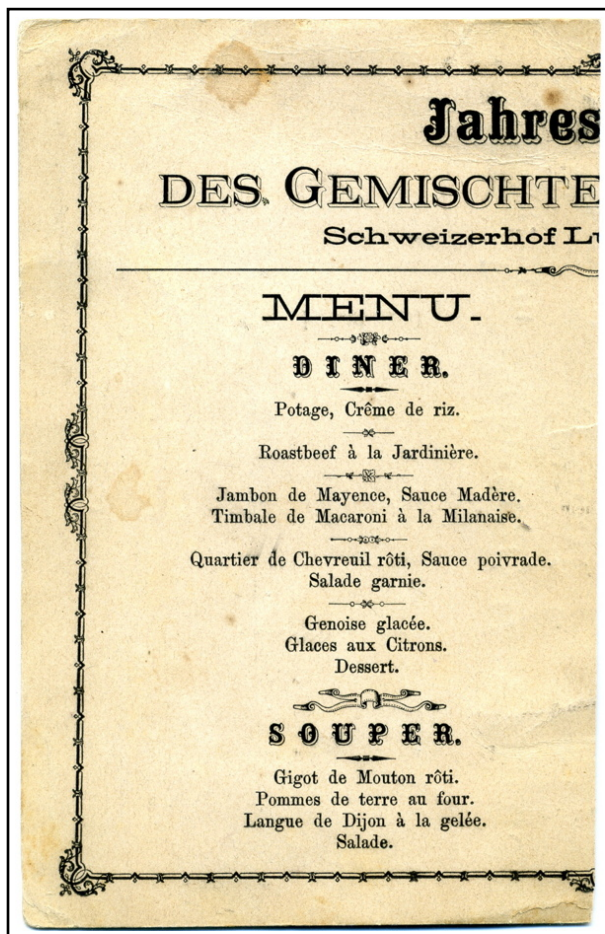
Scan

13 June 1873
to Frankfurt am Main, Germany.
Oversize homemade postcard rated
as pre-UPU letter.



This should be considered an
early private postcard making
it extremely rare, especially
since it is printed matter.

Postal cards had yet to be
accepted by most countries
and picture postcards were
still twenty years in the future.



[Scan, back side of card.]

Oval Date Stamp

This date stamp was used on outgoing guest mail, placed on the back of letters and on the front of postal cards. No message was allowed on the address side of cards, therefore, the date stamp never obliterated a guest's message. Last use of the rectangular date stamp is not known.



18 July 1877 to Troy, NY, USA
Transit New York 1 August, received Troy 2 August.
25 centimes UPU rate to USA.



The earliest oval found by the exhibitor.



Oval Date Stamp



16 August 1878 to Philadelphia, USA, via Queenstown, transit New York 29 August, received Philadelphia 30 August. UPU rate to USA, 25 centimes.

Unclaimed



30 August 1878
from London.
International letter.

PAS RÉCLAMÉE
The boxed blue mark is consistent with later hotel unclaimed marks. "Lucerne" crossed out in blue crayon by Luzern Post Office. On reverse a red "F" and boxed red "UNCLAIMED", both London Foreign Branch marks.



Rohde Hawkins circa 1860

The reverse has two Luzern date stamps, 1 September 1878 and 4 October 1878 indicating the letter was held for one month before being returned to the Luzern Post Office. The Swiss post office then sent it to England to be processed at the London Dead Letter Office. Mr Hawkins was a well known architect who designed many public buildings in London. Delivery of this letter should not have been difficult.

Addressed to Management

Business correspondence was addressed to the Propriétaire, Manager, or member of the Hauser family. This large business required ongoing communication between the hotel and its suppliers, travel agencies, and guests. Examples on the following pages demonstrate the importance of international communication required to operate a luxury hotel.



3 October 1879 from Milan, Italy.
International printed matter wrapper.

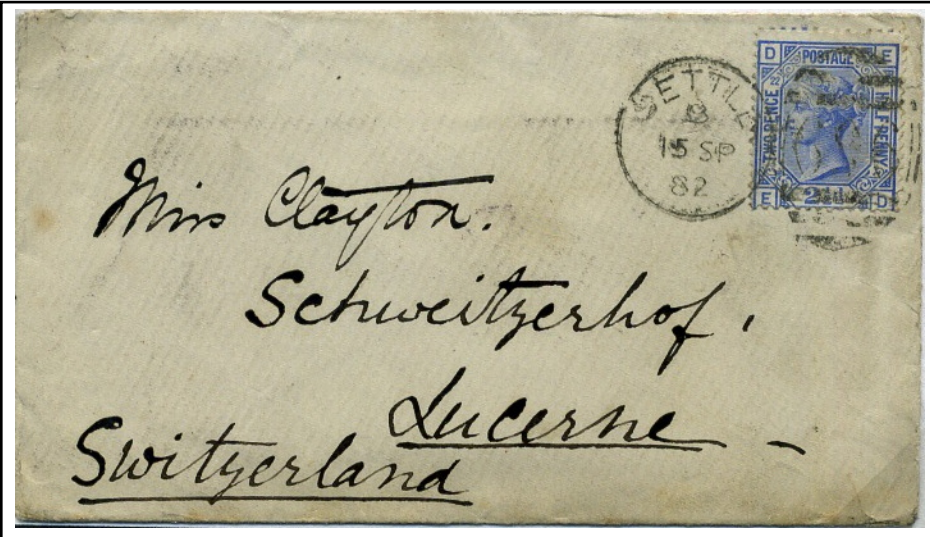


3 November 1879 from Zürich. Cut down printed matter.



12 April 1879 from Beaujeu. France, received Luzern, 13 April.
International letter.
This letter from Philippe Sons & Co, wine merchant, described a shipment of wine to the Schweizerhof. Total value Fr 2,600.00.

Addressed to Guest



13 September 1882 from Settle, UK, via Ambulant (TPO) 17 September. Received Luzern 17 September. International letter.

London Forwarding Agent Brown, Shipley, and Company

Paste-on labels were used by this company for over twenty years. Sometimes one finds rubber stamped instructions on the reverse and other times no label.



30 July 1883 from New York, USA. to London, England. Received 10 August and forwarded from London 11 August. Received Luzern 13 August. International letter.

Tourism and the Mail Room

Alpine tourism extended the traditional Grand Tour of Europe by English and wealthy Americans. The mountain scenery, without the congestion of city life was the main attraction. The tourists expected comfortable accommodation with first class services. They expected to maintain state-of-the-art communication with their family and businesses. The Hotel Schweizerhof catered to this upscale clientele and provided a mail room which acted as the intermediary between guests and the postal system.

Oval Date Stamp

Scarcity of the 1877 oval has led the exhibitor to finding only five examples, and he is aware of only one other in Switzerland.



26 July 1885 to North Hampton, NH USA. Transit Basel 27 July, transit New York 7 August. International letter.

Forwarding Responsibilities

Travelers left their itineraries with forwarding companies, which acted as mail distribution centers. Guests also left forwarding addresses at their hotels in case mail just missed them during their travels. This sometimes resulted in letters following travelers throughout Europe! A short note from the traveller to their agents could update any changes in an itinerary, thus not having mail lost and returned to the sender.



3 June 1885 to Baden-Baden, Germany. Transit Basel 3 June, received 4 June. International postal card.



26 January 1886 to Bern. Received 27 January. Domestic postal card.



scan

Schmidlapp was a wealthy financier and businessman from Cincinnati, Ohio.

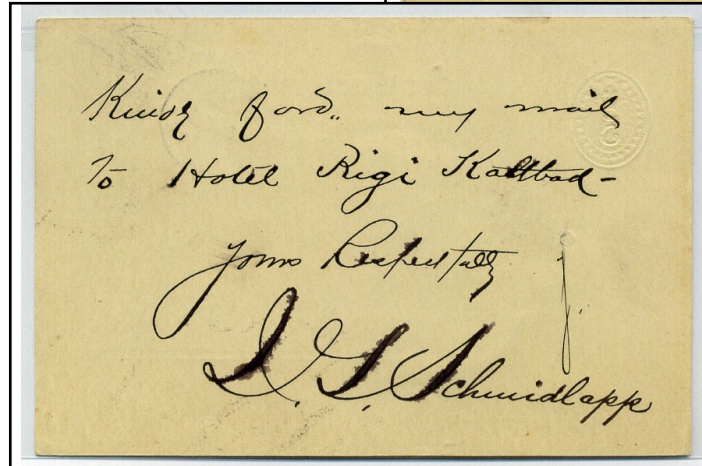


31 August 1886 from Rigi-Kaltbad Hotel. Domestic postal card.

Kindly fwd my mail to Hotel Rigi Kaltbad.
Yours Respectfully,
J G Schmidlapp

← Fourteen years later in 1900 national news report—

HORRIFYING SCENES AT A TRAIN WRECK - Women Burned to Death in Full View
KANSAS CITY, Mo., Feb. 27.— The blizzard prevailing. . . fast St. Louis day express was delayed by a freight train stuck in a snow drift . . . The St. Louis local passenger train, . . . came on through the blinding snowstorm and crashed into the express train ahead, . . . coals from the furnace of the shattered engine having fallen among the debris of the splintered coach, soon the whole wreck was ablaze. . . Dead: MRS. J. G. SCHMIDLAPP, Cincinnati; instantly killed; . . . Injured: J. G. Schmidlapp, Cincinnati, will recover. Miss Schmidlapp, Cincinnati, scalded; will lose sight of both eyes. . . "



scan

Correspondence Addressed to Management

Scotland

This was addressed to Mrs. Williamson, though the message was intended for The Manager. It instructs that any letters received by the hotel be returned to Leith, rather than forwarded to further hotels on her itinerary. These instructions would have been followed by the hotel mail room.



14 September 1886 from Leith, Scotland, transit Ambulant No43, 16 September, received Luzern 16 September. International postal card.

England

This card requests that a letter mailed from London on 12 September for a Miss Copeland, which should have been delivered before she left for Basel on the 15th, be forwarded to her residence in London.



23 September 1886 from London, England, received Luzern, 25 September. International postal card.

Bavaria

Addressed to [Adolph] Hauser-Spath, Director of Schweizerhof [next frame]. The sender of this letter must have taken this envelope from the hotel and mailed it from Lindau back to the hotel owner.



23 January 1886 from Lindau, Bavaria, received Luzern 24 January. International letter.

Only example of a Gothic illuminated manuscript corner card known to this exhibitor.

Undelivered and Returned



Returned to the Schweizerhof.
"Not in Biberstein retour"



scan

Addressed to Madame La Baronne Rogalla de Biberstein [Prussia]. Error made when writer at the Schweizerhof associated the de Biberstein family with the small town of Biberstein, Aargau. Chateau de Biberstein has no apparent connection to the Prussian Rogalla von Bibersteins.

2 September 1886 to Chateau de Biberstein, near Aarau.
Transit Aarau 3 September, 5am; received Biberstein 4 September, returned via Aarau 4 September Received Luzern 4 September. Domestic letter.



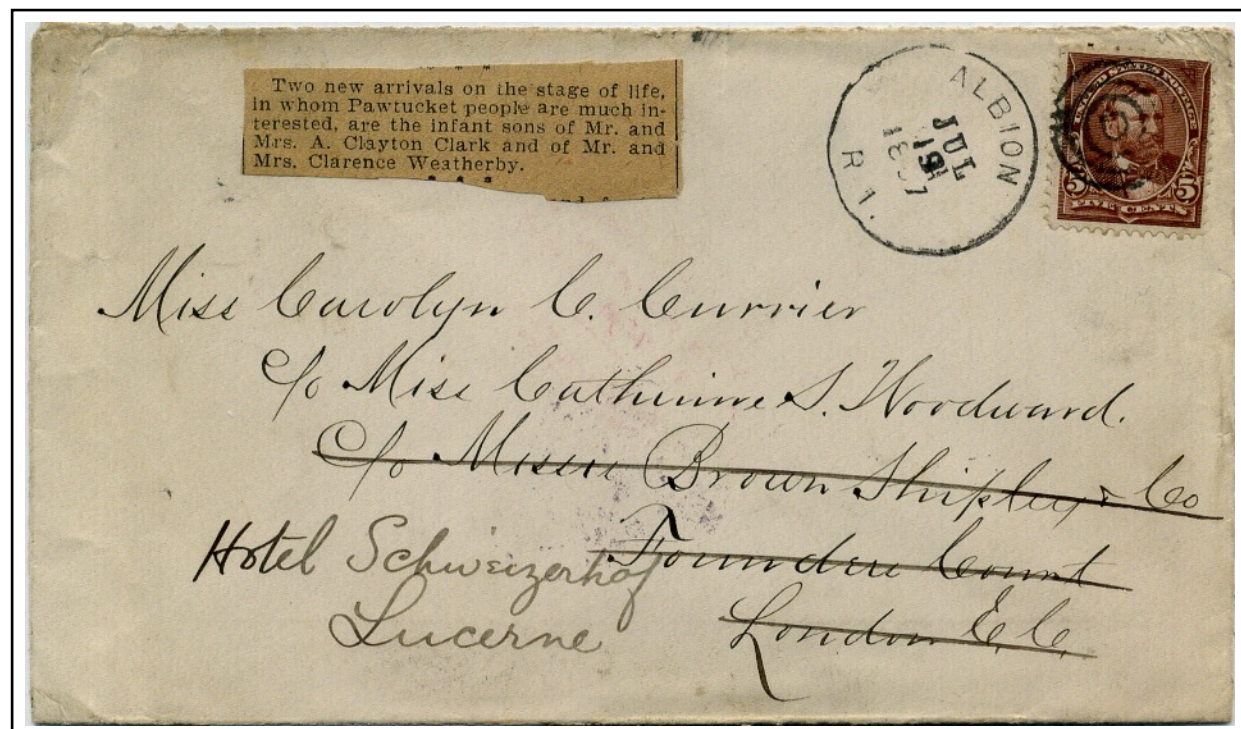
Value Letter
to Hauser
Frères

Decorative advertising
envelope containing
100 Francs cash.

14 September 1886 from St Cécile, Paris, France,
via Pontarlier-Neuchatel Ambulant 15 September,
via Ambulant No37 15 September,
received Luzern 15 September.
International letter 25 centimes,
plus 25 centimes registration,
plus 10 centimes value letter <100Francs



scan

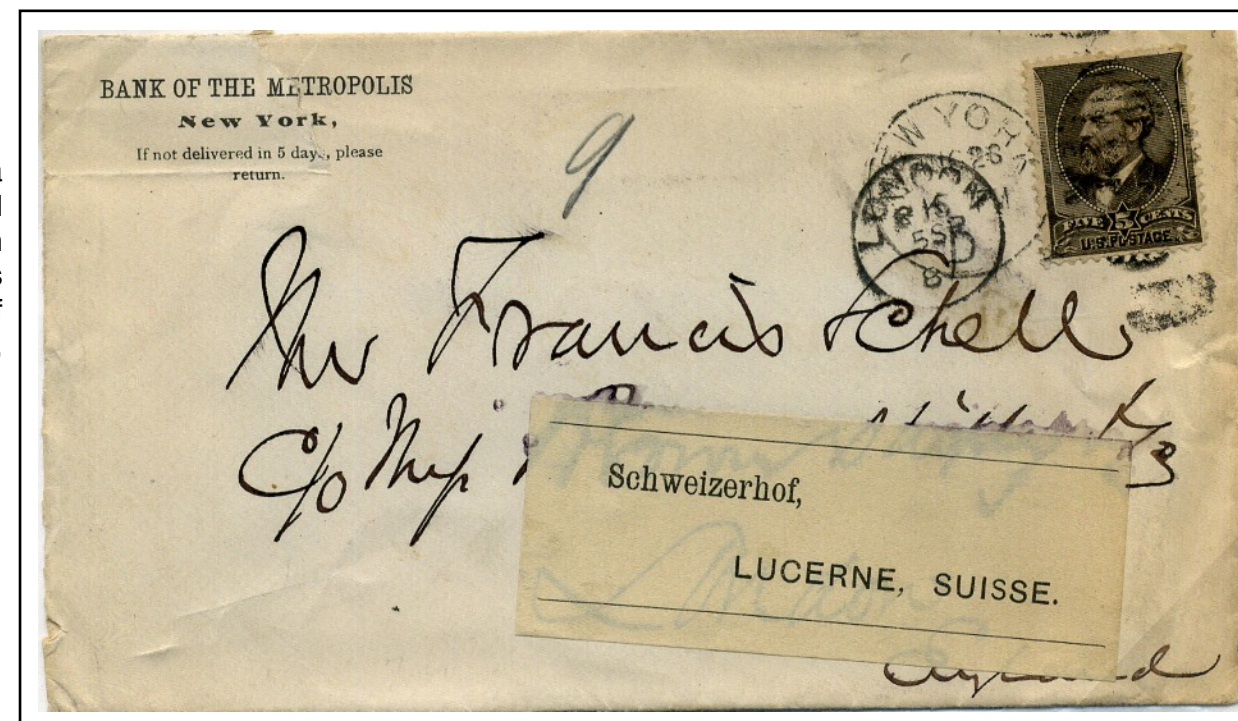


Forwarding Agent Brown, Shipley & Co, London

Mr Francis Schell was a New York lawyer and Fellow of the American Geographical Society. His father was President of the Bank of Metropolis, New York.

The newspaper clipping, which one must assume was inserted within the letter, announces the birth of a baby to Mr A Clayton Clark of Pawtucket, RI. Later Mr Clark became managing director of the Raritan Copper Works in New Jersey, "one of the most important executive positions in the state of New Jersey." [1906]

19 July 1887 from Albion, RI, USA. Received London July 28, forwarded 29 July, received Luzern 29 July. International letter. Brown, Shipley & Co back-stamp in red.



26 August 1887 from New York, USA to London. Forwarded from Brown, Shipley, London 5 September, received Luzern 7 September. International letter.

England



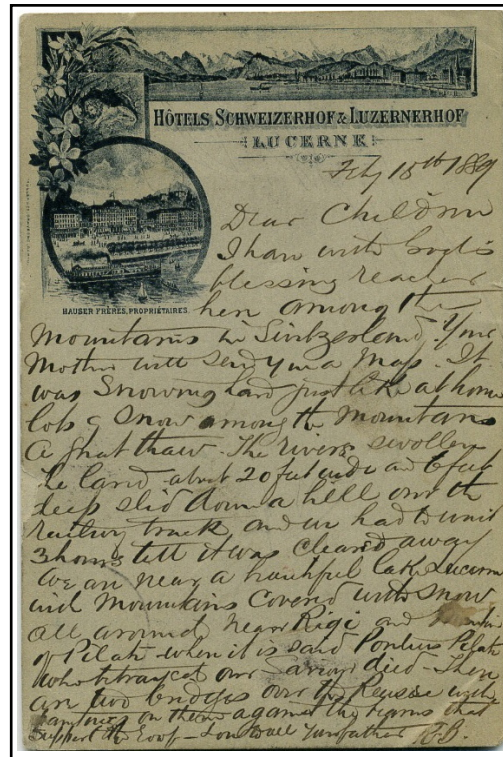
2 May 1888 to Folkestone, England. International postal card.



17 May 1889 to Dover, England. International postal card.

From Hauser Freres - "We have reserved the rooms for you for May 21."
 This is the only item I have found proving the hotel used postal cards to communicate with its guests. This confirms the hotel had a supply available for guests.

Frame 2: 1888-1895



A very early illustrated post card sent to Nova Scotia.



15 February 1889 to Digby, Nova Scotia, Canada, via London. International postal card.

Only Swiss postal item to Nova Scotia ever seen by this exhibitor.



Round Type 1: 1888-1899

This round device was the first metal circular date stamp used by the hotel. It is recorded in the Güller proof books and shipped 13 February 1888. The hotel used blue ink until June 1899.

Date stamps made for businesses appeared different than postal cancels by order of the Swiss post office department.

Postcards and postal cards were typically stamped on the address side, while normal letter envelopes were stamped on the back. The example on the right is an exception to this standard.



Dorchester House London, England.



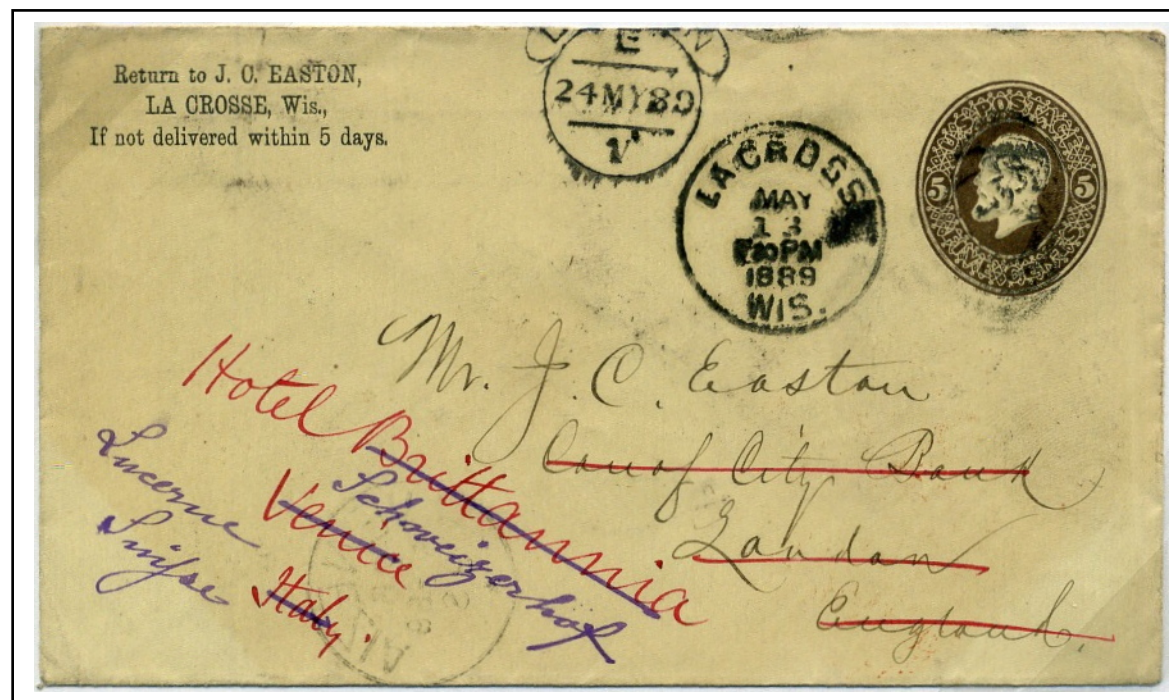
8 May 1890 to London, England. International letter.

Addressed to Mrs [Mary Anne] Holford, Dorchester House, Park Lane, London. Dorchester House, built by R.S. Holford in 1853, was described as the "finest private dwelling in London". When rented to the American Ambassador in 1907, "four thousand guests were invited to the 4th of July party."

Forwarded From Wisconsin via City Bank, London

Hotel guests received mail from home in a timely manner by leaving their itineraries with forwarding companies, which acted as mail distribution centers. Guests also left their forwarding addresses at hotels. This sometimes resulted in mail trailing them throughout Europe.

13 May 1889 from LaCrosse, USA,
via New York 16 May,
received London 23 May,
forwarded from London 24 May,
received Venice, Italy, 26 May,
forwarded via Milano RPO 27 May,
and Swiss Ambulant 28 May,
received Luzern 28 May.
International letter.



To Mr. J.C. Easton, Banker and Director of the Southern Minnesota Railroad.

To Wisconsin



24 September 1890 to Kenosha, Wis, USA. Transit New York October 5, received Kenosha October 7. International letter.

NON RÉCLAMÉ

Schweizerhof Lucerne

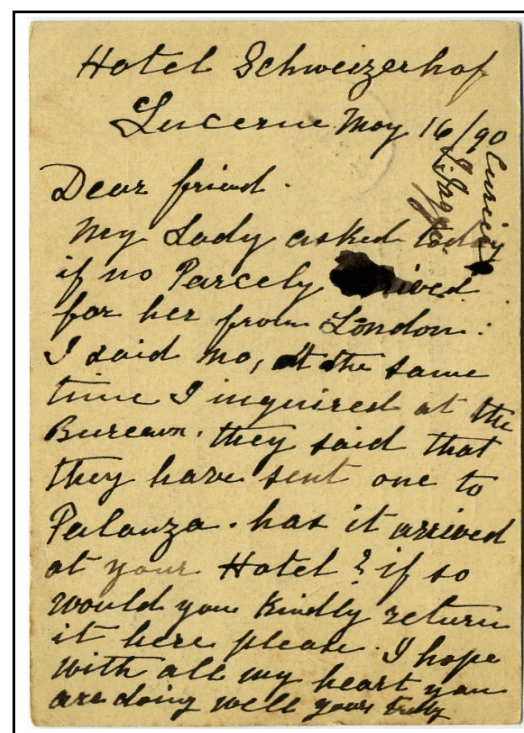
Only two known by this exhibitor.

Not Claimed from Sweden via Berlin



27 August 1889 from Sundsvall, Sweden, to Berlin, Germany, received 30 August.
Forwarded to Luzern, received 31 August, delivered to Schweizerhof.
Marked "Non Réclamé" and returned to Luzern Post Office 31 August, 8pm.
International postal card.

The card was NOT held for one month. It must be assumed the guest had already left the hotel without a forwarding address.



scan

Italy

16 May 1890 to Palanza, Italy. International postal card.
Inquiry about misdirected parcel.



Items with the Schweizerhof date stamp normally entered the post at the Luzern Main Post Office, only 450 meters from the hotel. This has an ambulant cancel, therefore, was hand carried and mailed at the Luzern railway station, which is across the street from the post office. Since it also has a hotel date stamp, a hotel porter must have carried the card from the mail room. It went south on Ambulant No 20, the St. Gotthard route, to Palanza, Italy. The expedited service may be related to the concerns of the sender about a misdirected parcel from London.

Forwarded

American Exchange in Europe Limited, London

30 July 1890
from Chelsea Station, USA,
via Boston 30 July.
To American Exchange,
London; forwarded from
Charing Cross, 10 August.
Received Luzern
12 August.
International letter.



Mrs Edward Farnsworth, the addressee, was the wife of the most successful shoe and leather merchant in Boston.
"It is safe to say that every manufacturer of boots and shoes in Massachusetts and nearly every other state has been or is a customer of this firm (Farnsworth Hoyt & Co)." The Bostonian 1895

The Bains du Gurnigel, a 560 bed hotel, was owned by Johann Jacob Hauser, father of the three Hauser brothers who owned the Schweizerhof. This letter was sent to his son, Adolf Hauser-Spath, possibly a personal private letter.



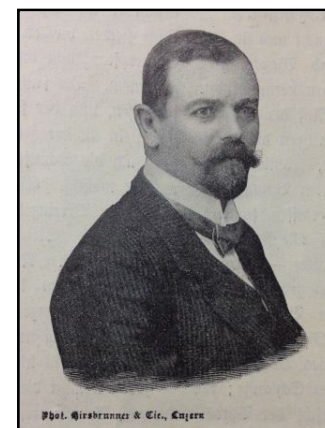
Adolf Hauser-Spath
addressee, Director/
owner of the Hotel
Schweizerhof.
(b1831-d1892)



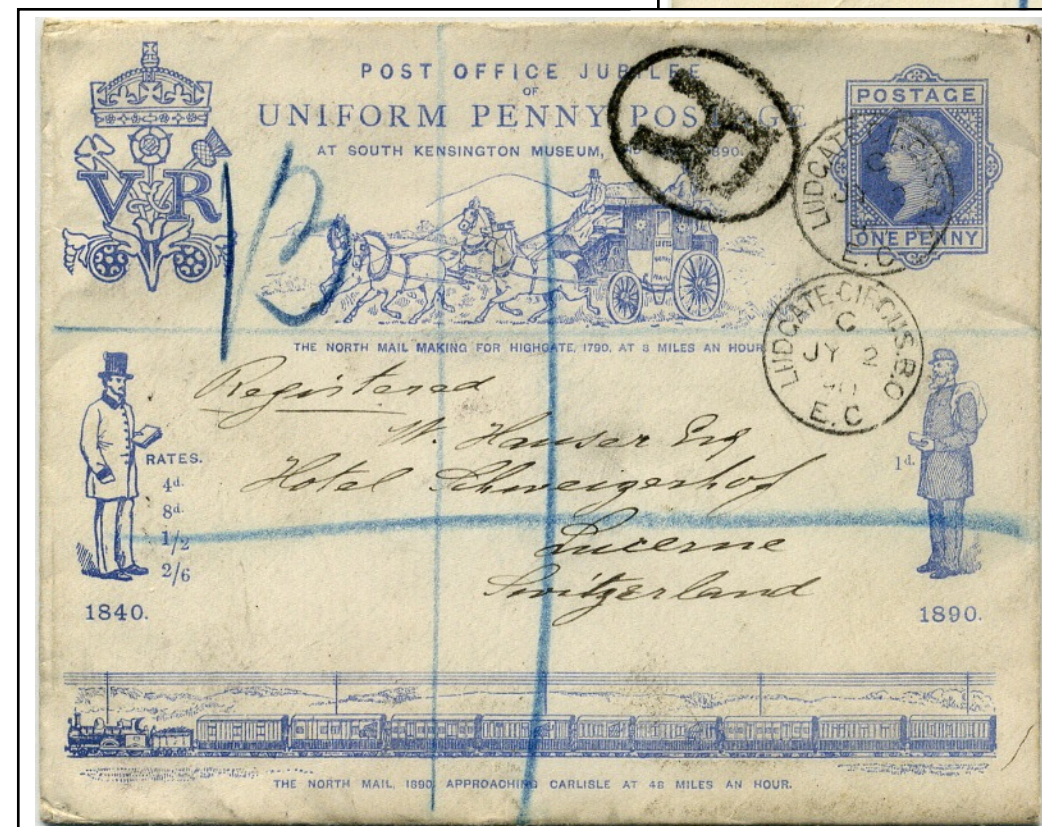
13 March 1890 from Rüthi bei Riggesberg transit Bern 13 March.
Received Luzern 15 March. Domestic registered letter, 10 centimes postage
plus 10 centimes registration.

Registered Letters

23 October 1890
from Purley, England.
Received Luzern
24 October
Domestic 1d postal
stationary uprated for
international registration.
International letter 2 1/2d
plus 2d registration.



Kaspar Wilhelm
Hauser-Döpfner
(Willy)
son of Adolph.
Addressee,
manager/owner of
Hotel Schweizerhof
after 1892.
(b1863-d1912)



Great Britain Uniform Penny Postage Jubilee First Day of Issue

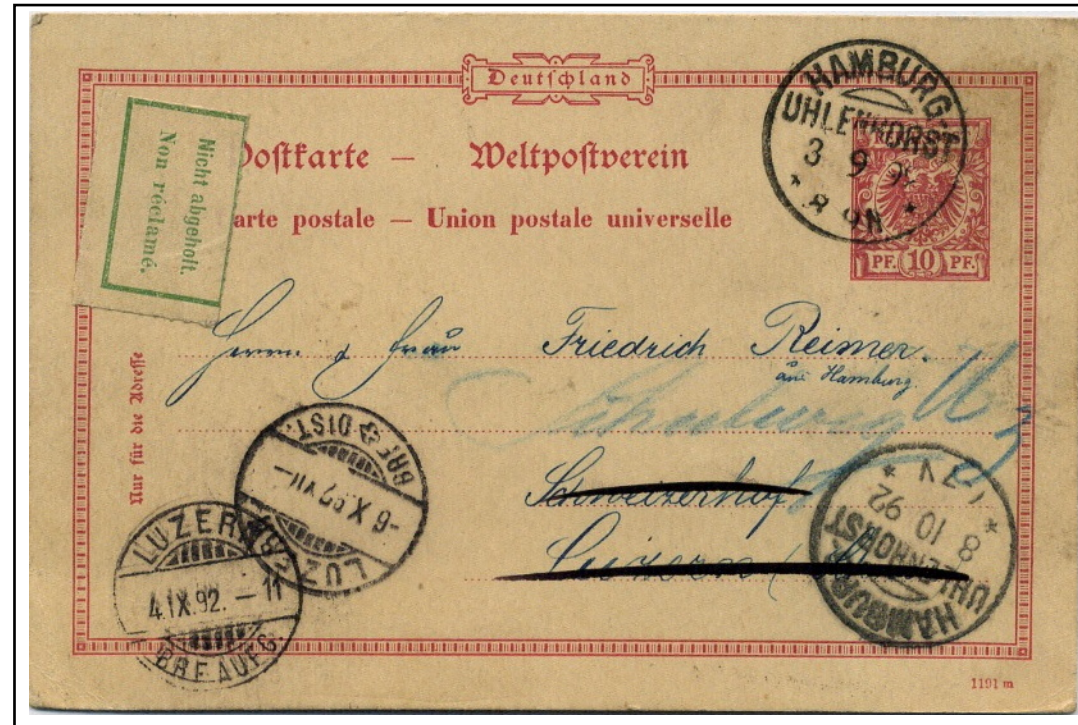
2 July 1890
from Ludgate Circus,
London.
Domestic 1d postal
stationary uprated for
international registration.
International letter 2
1/2d plus 2d registration,
total 4 1/2d.

To Concierge

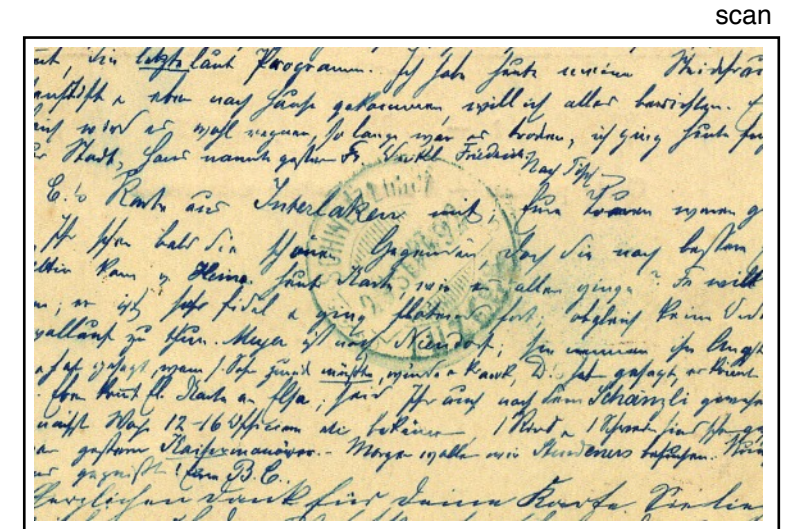


29 November 1891 from Luxembourg-Ville, received Luzern 30 November.
 Uprated domestic postal card. Paraphrased message:
*Monsieur Kellerhals,
 ... I left post cards in the library. I do not have Swiss stamps. Please send the post cards. I will reimburse you for the 25 centimes next time. M. Hoffman*

Not Claimed



3 September 1892 from Hamburg, Germany, received Luzern 4 September.
 International postal card.



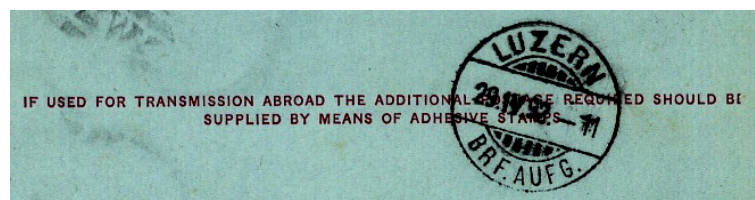
Delivered to hotel and held for one month.
 Returned to Luzern post office with Schweizerhof date stamp 29 September. "Non réclamé" label added at PO Luzern 6 October, returned to Hamburg, received 8 October. Delivered in Hamburg (blue pencil).

Letter Card

28 April 1892
 from London, received
 Luzern 29 April.
 Uprated domestic
 letter card.



Note on reverse reminding customers stamps are necessary for international use.



scan

Misdirected in Egypt

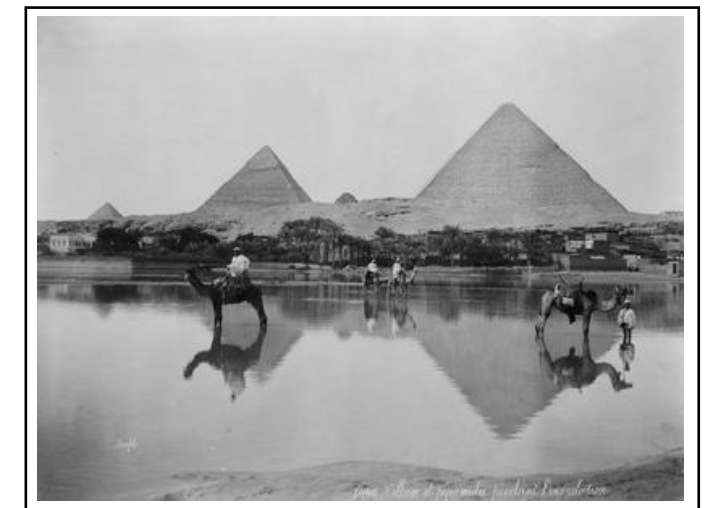


22 December 1892 from Cairo, Egypt, via Luxor 26 December, transit Alexandria 29 December. received Luzern 1 January 1893.
 International printed matter [greeting card?]

Many 19th century tourists visited Egypt to see the wonders of the pharaohs, then sent messages back to their friends in Europe.



Postal clerks in Cairo misread Luzern as Louxor which is 400 miles south of Cairo. The item was redirected via Alexandria to Switzerland.



scan

scan



Canary Islands

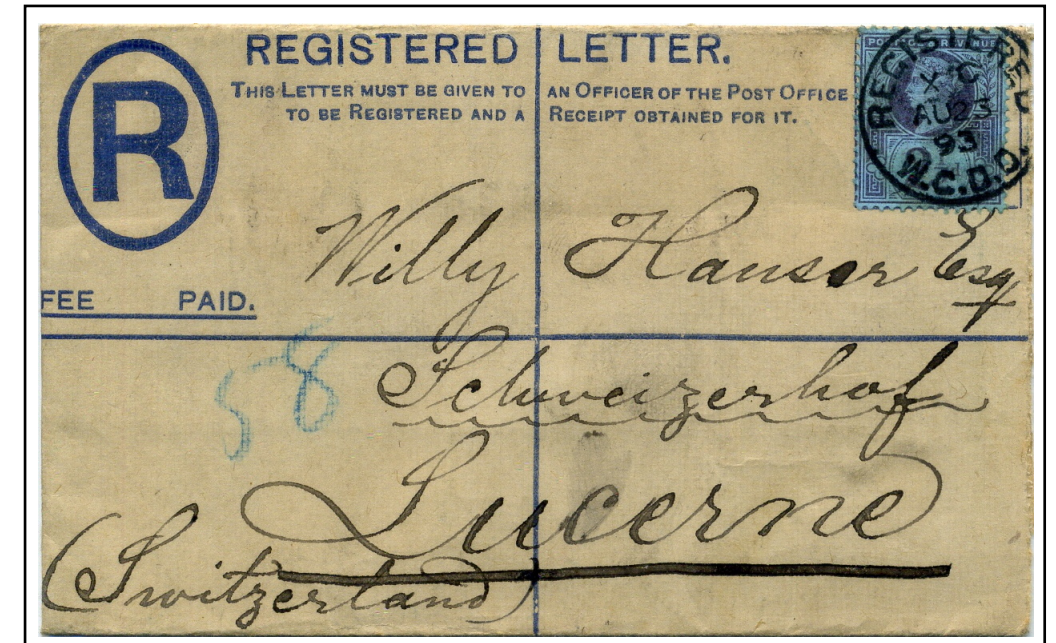
16 May 1893 from Las Palmas, Canary Islands, via London, received Luzern 25 May. International letter.

Very few Canary Islands to Switzerland philatelic items are known.

Hotel Santa Catalina opened in 1890 catering to British living in West Africa. It was a way-point for ships on both outgoing and home-bound voyages. This historic hotel is still open for business.



Registered



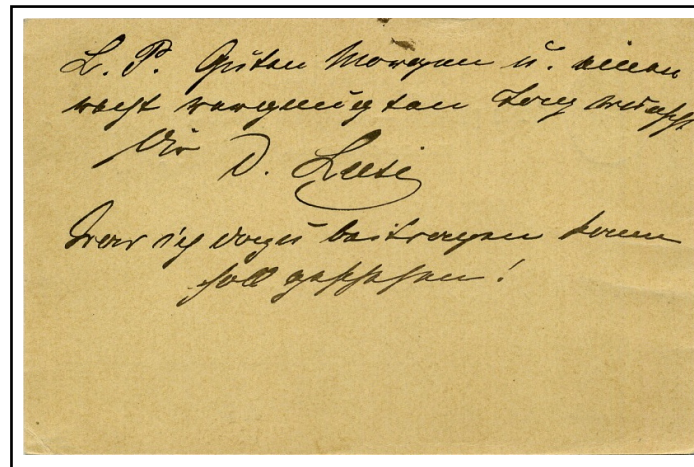
23 August 1893 from Holborn B.O., London, received Luzern 24 August. Updated domestic registered stationery.



10 September 1893 within Luzern. Domestic postal card.

Hotel date stamp 10 September indicates card was mailed inside the hotel then carried to the Luzern Post Office, where it was cancelled at 8pm. It was then delivered back to the hotel the next morning for delivery to Mr Muller in Room 128.

One Guest to Another



Translation:
Dear Paul, A good morning and wishes for a pleasurable day.
Your Luise And what I can add to it shall happen!



5 July 1894 from Paris, France, received Luzern 6 July. International registered letter.

Estonia (Russia)

Few known 19th century items from Estonia to Switzerland.



12 January 1894 [24 January Gregorian] from Weseberg [modern Rakvere, Estonia] Russia. Received Luzern 28 January. Domestic postal stationery uprated as registered letter, 10 kopeks postage plus 10 kopeks registration.

Perfin holes in envelope flap - ROCHT - (Rohu) was a large baronial manor house// estate 38km south of Rakvere, residence of Woldemar Alexander Michael Baron Hoyningen, a suitable guest for the hotel.

England



8 August 1895 from Warwick, England. Received Luzern 10 August. International letter.

Too Late from England



22 August 1894 from London, received Luzern 24 August. International letter rate 2 1/2d plus insufficient 1/2d inland late fee.

Posted Too Late, after 6pm, for the evening dispatch to the continent. Added 1/2d insufficient for international late fee of 1d, (hexagonal date stamp "L1"), therefore, 'Too Late' by the London Foreign Branch and transported the next day.

Registered from England



18 May 1895 from National Provincial Bank of England, Honiton, England. International single weight registered letter, 2 1/2d plus 2d fee. No arrival or transit back stamps.

Schweizerhof Dependance



8 July 1895 from Charing Cross, London, received Luzern 9 July. Uprated postal stationery for international letter. Impressed on back flap - "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge 1698"

BOOK-STORE
A. GEBHARDT
 Schweizerhof Dependance LUCERNE
 Guide Books Tauchnitz Edition
 Maps English Library
 Prayer Books Views of Switzerland
 Stationery and Souvenirs
 English and American Newspapers
 Playing cards
 Circulating Library of English Books

SCAN

Ad from: *Guide to Lucerne, etc, etc. . . Environs*, by J.C. Heer, Official Commission of Traffic, Lucerne, second edition 1893.

A. Gebhardt was a publisher and book seller in Luzern. His retail store was located within the Schweizerhof Dependance, which was the shopping arcade of the hotel. [See also F 4 P 7]

Postage Due

14 May 1895 from Munich, Bavaria, received Luzern 15 May, postage due 16 May, uncollected with refused label applied at post office 17 May, returned to Munich and received 18 May. International printed matter (drucksache), unsealed envelope franked for Bavarian domestic rate.

Short paid 2 pfennig = 2 centimes + 2 centimes penalty, rounded up to 5 centimes due.

The Karl Dürrewanger Brewery was a large Munich company that had recently started shipping beer in bottles. It is very possible this was a sales letter intended to interest the Schweizerhof in a different line of beer other than brands typically shipped and stored in barrels.



31 March 1895 from Bournemouth, England, received Luzern 2 April, postage due applied 2 April.

Undersize international post card, no UPU "carte postale" designation. Treated as letter, 1 1/2d short = 15 centimes + penalty 15 centimes total 30 centimes.

*From Miss Ford. March 31st 1895.
Broadwater House, Broadwater,
Bournemouth, England.
In writing to you yesterday
as to terms in relation, I in-
advertently omitted to state
6 francs per head, per client, which
would be 12 francs a day for two
Euro. I trust this card will be in
time to prevent misunderstanding.*

scan

5 August 1895 from Titisee, Germany, received Luzern 5 August, postage due applied 6 August. Underfranked international letter.

Titisee is a resort in the black Forest region of Southern Germany. One might expect this letter to contain a room request for accommodation at the Schweizerhof.



27 March 1895 from Berlin, received Luzern 28 March. Underfranked international letter, postage due applied 28 March.

←
What rules did clerks follow when postage due items arrived at the hotel mail room? We do not know.

On this back flap is a small coat of arms with the motto - *ich bau auf gott* - which is associated with Heinrich XIV The Prince Reuss Younger Line. Reuss was established in 1080 by King Henry IV, certainly an old established family. The perfect guest for the Schweizerhof.

Postage due both lower letters: Short 10pf = 12 1/2 centimes; penalty double = due 25 centimes.

Belgium



6 July 1895 to Kortenberg, Belgium, received 8 July.
International postal card.

Frame 3: 1895-1901



It is probable this letter was franked at the Savoy Hotel where the staff had 5d stamps available. For convenience two were applied prior to a messenger carrying the letter to the Strand Branch Office a short distance away. The letter then transited the West Central District Office.

England



16 January 1896 from London, England. No receiving marks. International triple weight registered letter. 2 1/2d x 3 plus 2d registration total 9 1/2d.

Scarce origin for mail to Switzerland.

El Salvador



One half of a perforated letter card with the back missing. The Schweizerhof date stamp means the letter was forwarded from the hotel – that is the only manner the item could have received the date stamp. All further forwarding would have been on the reverse side.

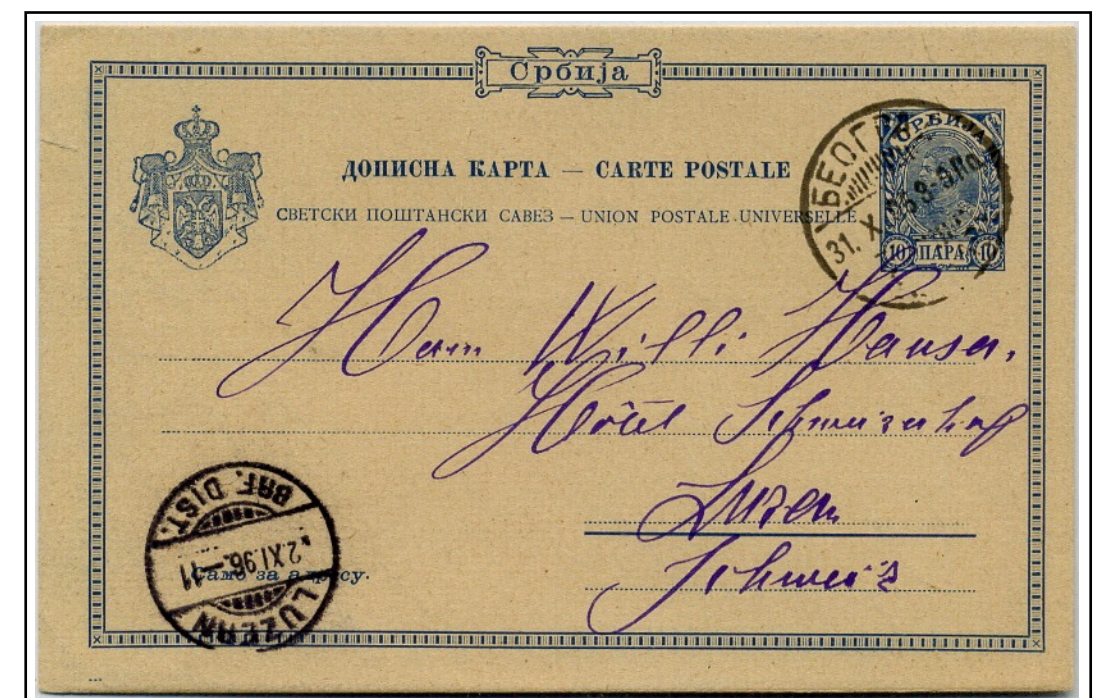
8 September 1896 from San Salvador, El Salvador, via Panama to c/o Lazard Frères & Co, Paris. Forwarded to the Hotel de la Paix, Geneve, forwarded from Geneve 29 September to Hotel Schweizerhof. Forwarded from Schweizerhof 3 October to Hotel Trois Rois, Basel.

France



4 June 1895 from Paris, France.
Upgraded domestic wrapper for double weight rate international use.

Serbia



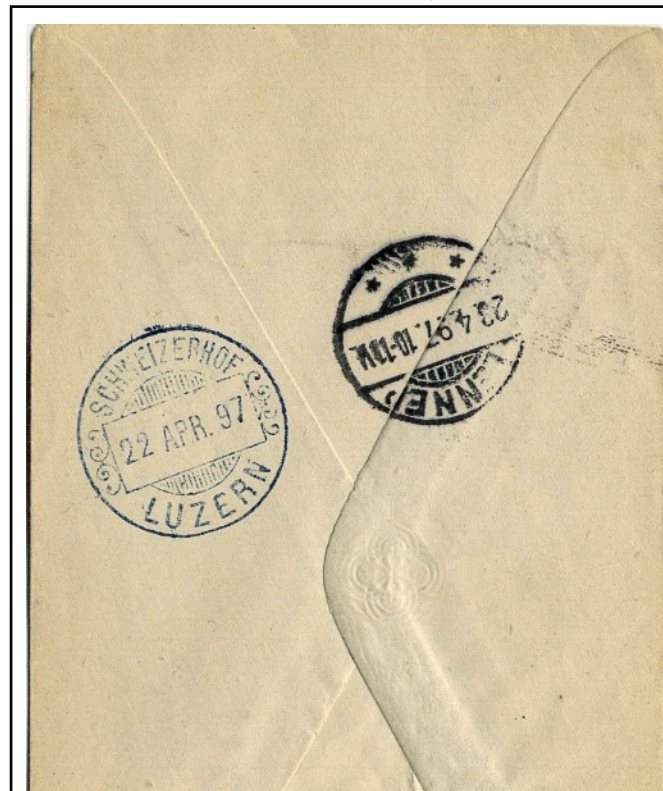
31 October 1896 from Belgrade, Serbia, received Luzern 2 November.
International postal card.

U.S.A.



28 July 1896 to Stony Point, New York, USA, received 5 August. International letter.

Germany



22 April 1897 to Lennep, Germany, received 23 April. International letter.

Oskar Hauser [1867-1935] along with his brother Willy, was a Director of the Hotel Schweizerhof from 1892, then alone from 1912 to 1935. He was President of the Swiss Society of Hoteliers [1909-1915] also a member of the Lucerne Grand City Council [1892-1935].



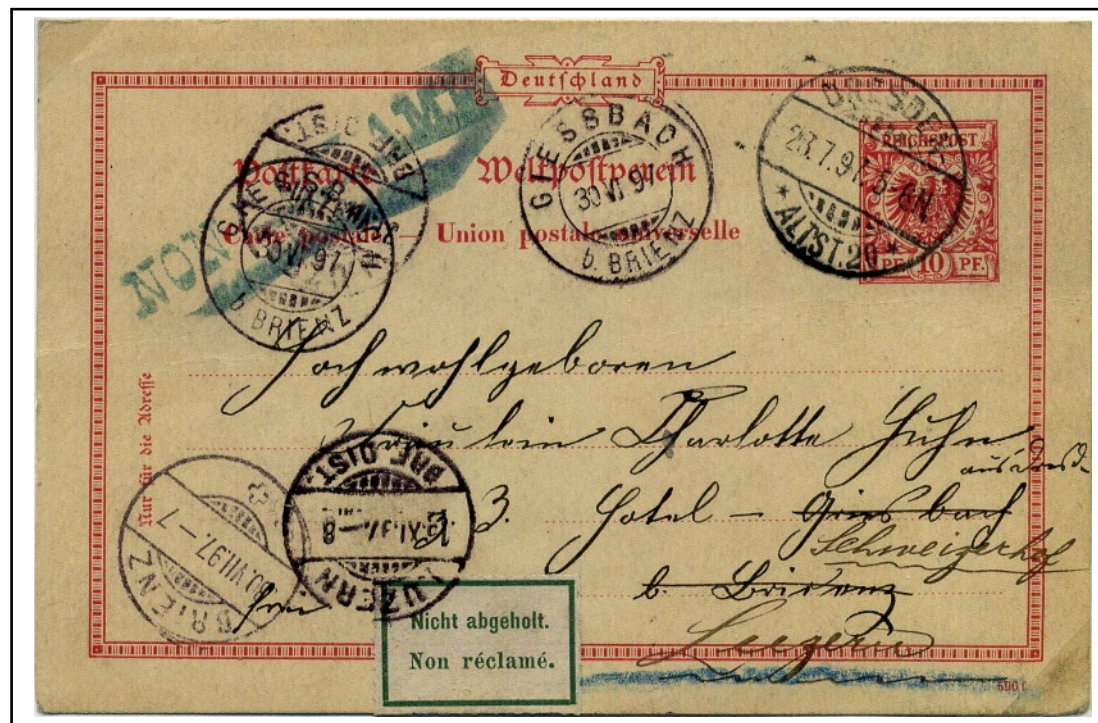
scan

Scotland



10 May 1897 from Edinburgh, Scotland, received Luzern 12 May. International letter. [Blue pencil is Room #]

Unclaimed



28 July 1897 from Dresden, Germany, to Giessbach bei Brienz. Transit Brienz 30 July received Giessbach 30 June (error) 30 July. Forwarded to Schweizerhof received Luzern 31 July, marked 'Non Réclamé'. Returned to the Luzern Post Office 16 October, label applied and returned to Dresden. International postal card.

Argentina



30 September 1897 from Buenos Aires, Argentina. Forwarded, Schweizerhof date stamp on reverse 23 October, to Hotel Steinbock [another Hauser property], Chur, received 24 October. International letter.



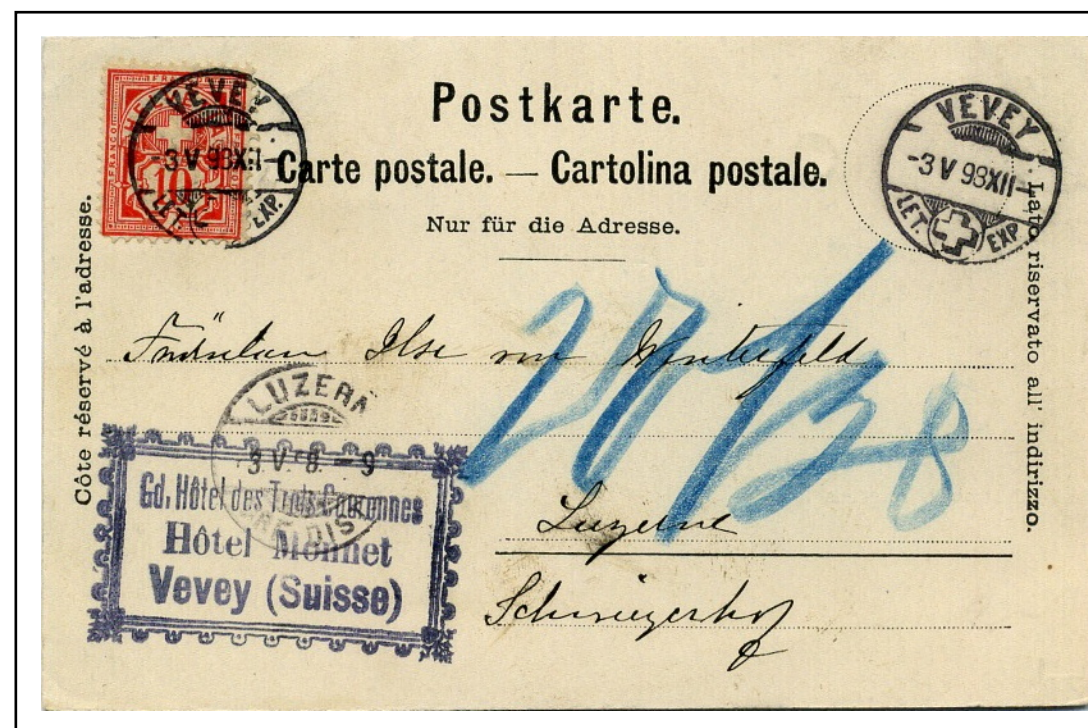
7 January 1898 from Naples, Italy.
Received Luzern 8 January, postage due applied 9 January.
Underfranked international letter.

Italy

Double weight letter short paid
25 centissimi + 25 centimes
penalty = 50 centimes due.

The mail room clerks would have seen the return address on the back flap: Parker's Hotel, Naples, implying personal letter or guest request.

Parker's was described in Murray's Handbook, 1900 :
'An English house. Recommended to English and American Visitors. Tariff and Electric Light in every room. Lift, Fixed charges, always including Baths in the Rooms, light and attendance.'



Domestic

3 May 1898 from Vevey,
received Luzern 3 May.
[Blue pencil is Room #27/28]
Overpaid domestic postcard.

Hotel des Trois Couronnes

This card sent from the Hotel des Trois Couronnes, a hotel in Vevey, built in 1842 under the name Hotel Monnet, the name of the owner. It still is rated a 5-star hotel.

Belgium



22 May 1898 to Lüttich, Belgium, received Liege 23 May.
International post card.

A young woman writes to her brother that she will be leaving for Lugano at 11am and then traveling on to Bellagio, Italy. Signed 'les vagabonds Fanny et Pierre'



Bavaria

24 July 1898 from Bergzabern, Bavaria.
Received Luzern 24 July.
International postal card.

Germany

10 July 1898 to Schlangenbad bei Wiesbaden, Germany.
International postcard.

Destination is a small spa town. Probably catered to the same clientele as the Schweizerhof.



SCAN



Austria

→
Emanuel Braun & Co, Vienna, was one of the most respected suppliers of clothing and textile goods in Europe, eventually being appointed purveyor of textiles to the Austrian Imperial Court in 1913.



19 August 1898 from Karlsbad, Austria, received Luzern 20 August 10am, postage due 11am.
Short 5 kreuzer = 12.5 centimes, 12.5 centimes plus penalty total 25 centimes due.
Underpaid international letter.

Japan

10 September 1898
to Nagasaki, Japan,
received Osaka 15 October.
International postcard.

Frau Helma Müller-Beck married German Consul F.G. Müller-Beck in 1892. He also represented Italy, Norway, Sweden and Holland while stationed in Nagasaki, 1889 – 1906.



Unusual destination from Switzerland.



Germany

22 September 1898
from Berlin, Germany,
received Luzern
23 September.
Underfranked double weight
international letter.

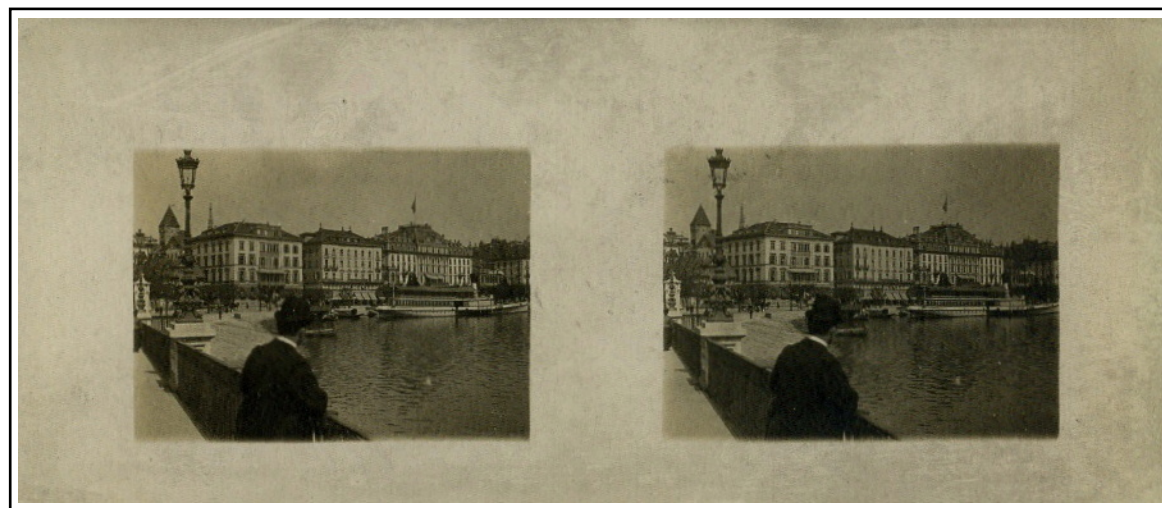
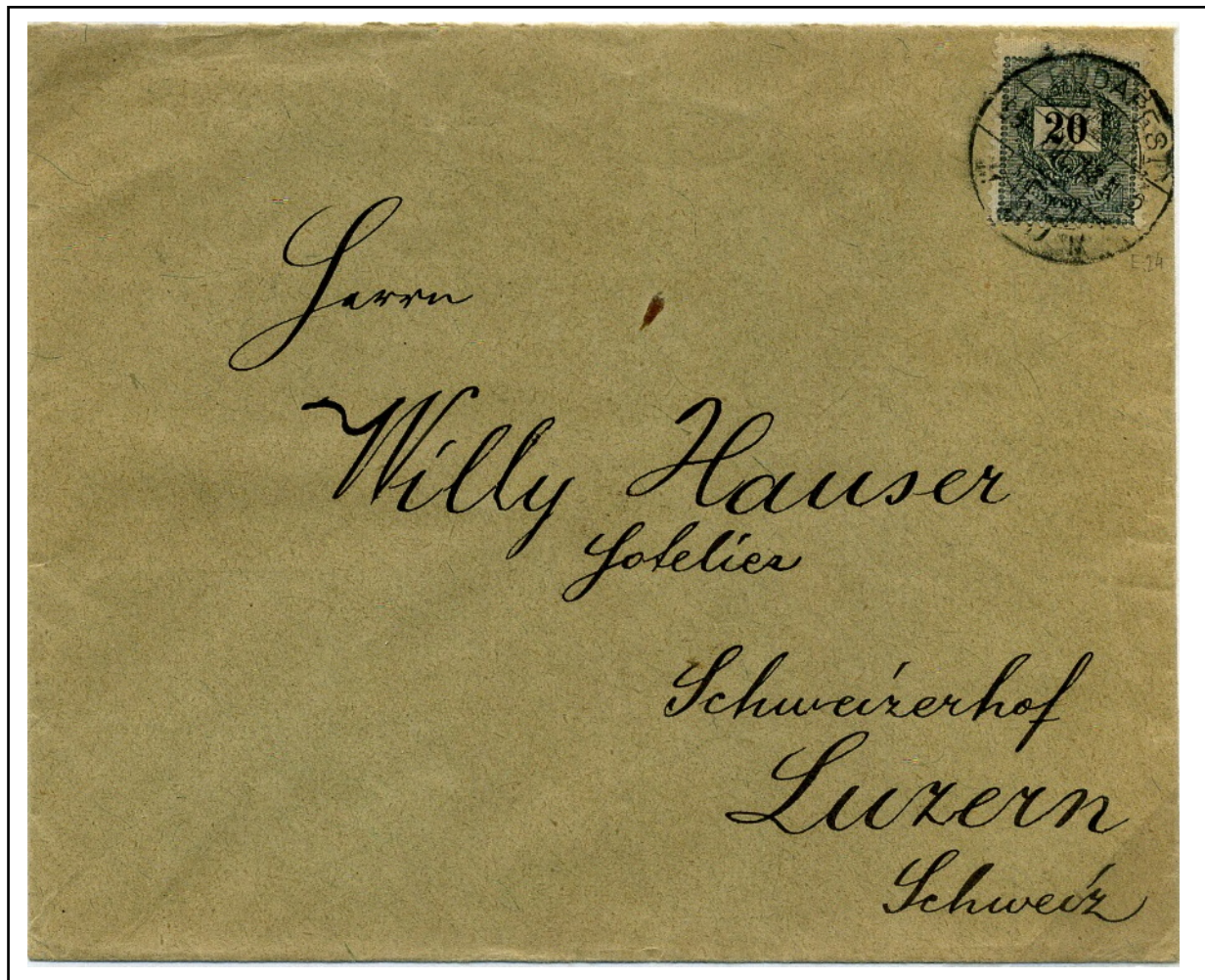
Berlin marked this underpaid for being over 15gms = short 20pf. (20 pfennigs = 25 centimes). Short 25 centimes plus penalty 25 centimes = total 50 centimes due.

Fee probably paid by the mail room, then added to the guest's bill.



Greece

28 January 1899 from Athens, Greece, received Luzern 10 February.
International printed matter.
Unsealed envelope from the Society of Commercial Oriental Museums, Athens.



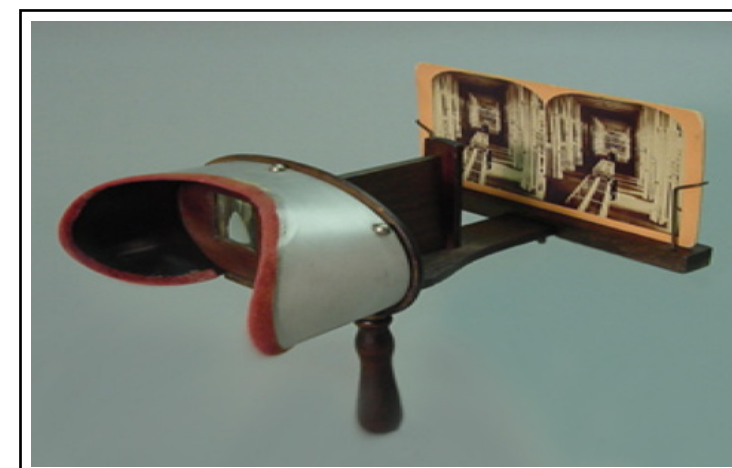
View from the Seebrücke towards the Hotel Schweizerhof and Luzernerhof. Photographic print, circa 1900.

Stereographs Bought by Tourists

To view these without a stereoscope, stand about 18" from frame and merge images using eyes to bring them together.

Hungary

16 July 1899
from Budapest, Austria-Hungary,
received Luzern 18 July.
International letter.



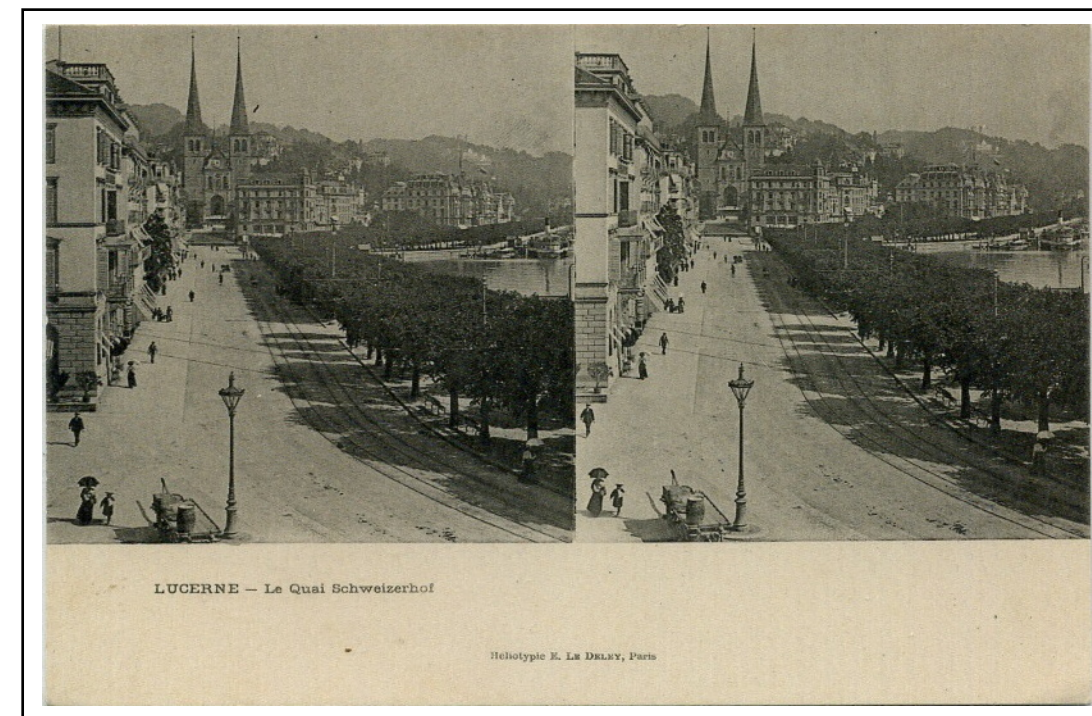
SCAN

Stereoscopic Postcard

Forwarding Agent Brown, Shipley, & Company

12 September 1899 from Duane, NY,
USA, via New York 13 September
to London, England.
Received and forwarded
from London 22 September,
received Luzern 23 September.

Alice Hyde frequently traveled throughout Europe with her banker uncle Clark J. Lawrence, vice-president of the Farmers' National Bank of Malone, and her aunt. When Miss Hyde died of cancer in 1909, her uncle donated significant funds to help establish the Alice Hyde Medical Center of Malone, New York which opened in 1913 and exists today.



Postcard of Schweizerhof Quai, the promenade in front of the Hotel Schweizerhof (left). Unused undivided back postcard indicating pre-1904 publication. Heliotype E. Le Deley, Paris, a major publisher of postcards.



Last known blue date stamp.

23 May 1899 to Grand Hotel Eden, Pallanza, Italy, received 24 May. International postal card.

Last known use of Type 1 with hachure lines.



20 July 1899 to Duane, New York, USA, received 31 July. International post card.



Grand Hotel Eden, Pallanza, Italy

Round Type 2 1899-1900



Removal of vertical hatchures

The exhibitor believes that after eleven years of use this date stamp was sent for servicing at the Güller factory at which time the vertical lines above and below the date bridge were excised. This **modified date stamp** was in use for only two more years prior to being replaced.

The **ink color also changed** in mid-1899 from blue to red. This may have been a post office requirement to make the private date stamps appear different from postal date stamps.



21 April 1900 to Grand Hotel Eden, Pallanza, Italy, received 22 April. International postal card.

First known use of Type 2, no hatchures.



4 August 1899 to Anvers, Belgium received 5 August. International postal card.

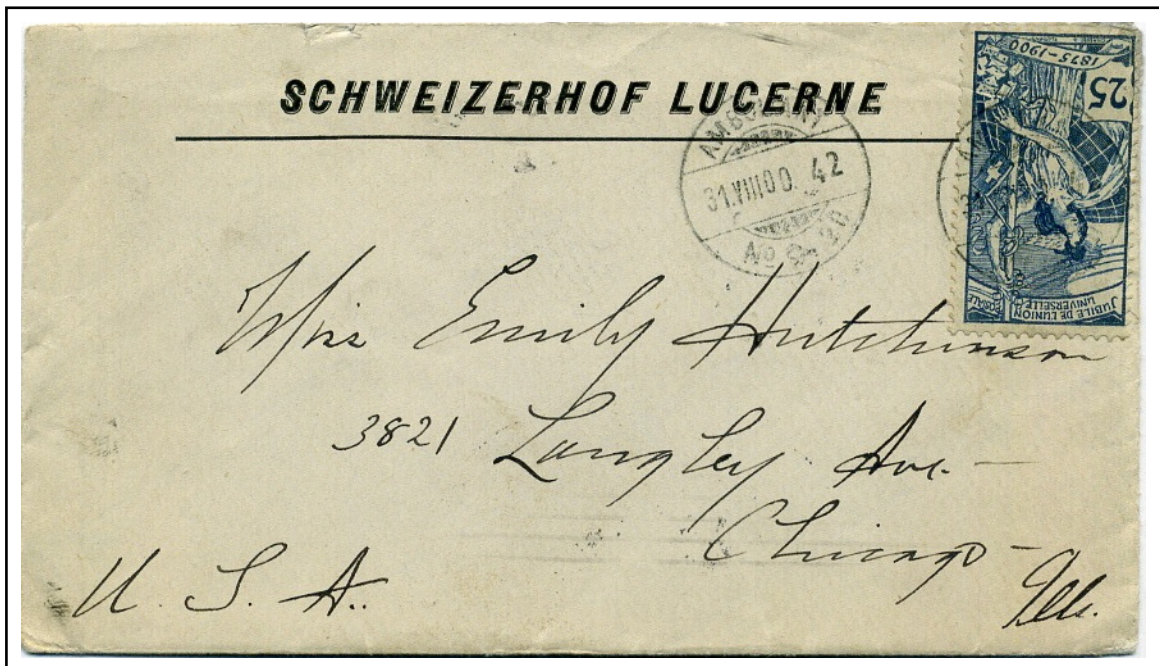
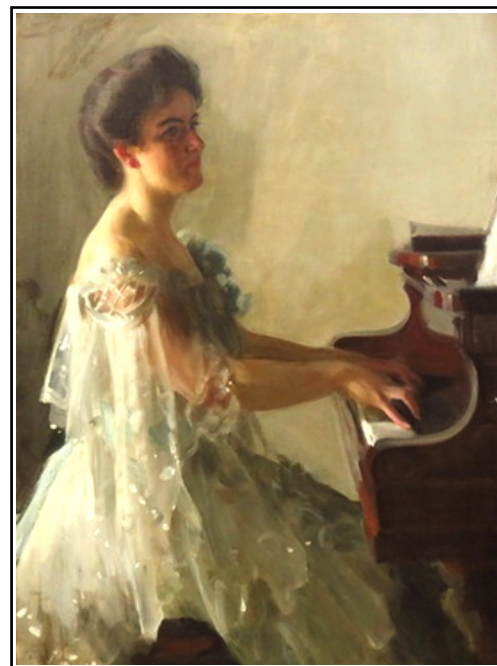
25th Anniversary of UPU First Swiss Commemorative Stamps

12 July 1900
from Basel,
received Luzern 12 July.
Domestic letter.

←
The Compagnie des Wagon-Lits, founded in 1874, built a network of international long distance luxury trains, including the legendary Orient-Express, and the Trans-Siberian Express. First it specialized in providing luxury sleeping cars, then in 1894 entered the luxury hotel business.



9 November 1900 from Spiez, received Luzern 9 November.
Domestic registered letter, 10 centimes + 10 centimes registration.



31 August 1900 to Chicago, USA, transit New York 10 September,
received Chicago 11 September. International letter.

Mrs William Linn, who wrote this letter, was married to a Chicago Board of Trade member. . . [we] have had a delightful trip to Zermatt-Italian lakes-Milan-Venice-Innsbruck-Munich-Zurich and tonight arrived in Lucerne. . .
Nellie B. Linn



31 December 1900 from Luzern. Local letter.
Last day of validity for the UPU series stamps.

scan

Officially Sealed



19 August 1901 to Oberfriedersdorf, Germany, via Neusalza-Spremberg where it was sealed. International letter.



scan

Three large official seals seen on back. German clerk wrote on reverse: 'Beschädigt eingeg., deshalb amtlich verschlossen' (Received damaged, therefore, officially sealed.)

Postage Due

13 October 1900 from London, England. Double weight international letter. Short paid 2d = 20 centimes + 20 centimes penalty = total due 40 centimes.



Souvenir Postcard

Sent from Altdorf the evening of the 28 July performance, this card was a souvenir of attending the Tell play. Mrs. A Schwabacher sent numerous picture postcards of her day trips in Switzerland to the hotel. The exhibitor has cards dated 25, 28, 30, and 31 July to her Room 32 from various other locations.



28 July 1901 from Altdorf, received Luzern 29 August. Domestic postcard.

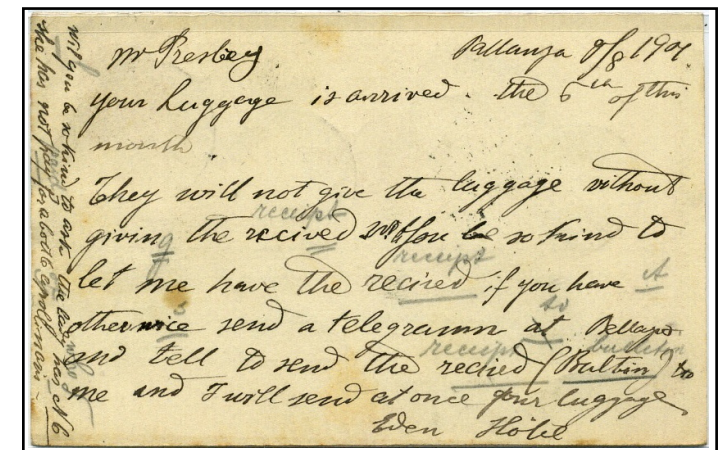
10 August 1901 from Pallanza, Italy, via Arona-Locarno train, received Luzern 11 August. Held at Schweizerhof until 15 October and returned to Luzern PO where 'Not Claimed' label applied. Returned to Pallanza received 18 October. International postal card.



Unclaimed

It is strange that this card was held for two months since the message seems of immediate importance. Message paraphrased:

'Your luggage has arrived at Hotel Eden, but will not be released without a receipt. Send receipt or telegram to Bellagio so the luggage can be released.'



scan

Italy



23 November 1901 to Pallanza, Italy.
International postal card.

(Dark violet ink, not found on any other
Schweizerhof item of this period.)

Frame 4: 1901-1913

Round Type 3 1901-1913



This device is found in Güller's proof book, 3 August 1901. At 33mm the diameter is larger than the earlier Type 1 and Type 2. The text is a mix of both serif and sans-serif fonts. The earliest date in this exhibitor's collection is 23 November 1901.

The red ink impressions are generally poor, and no examples are seen with the complete design intact. Last known use 12 January 1913.

Monaco



6 March 1902 to Principality of Monaco, received 8 March.
International letter.

France

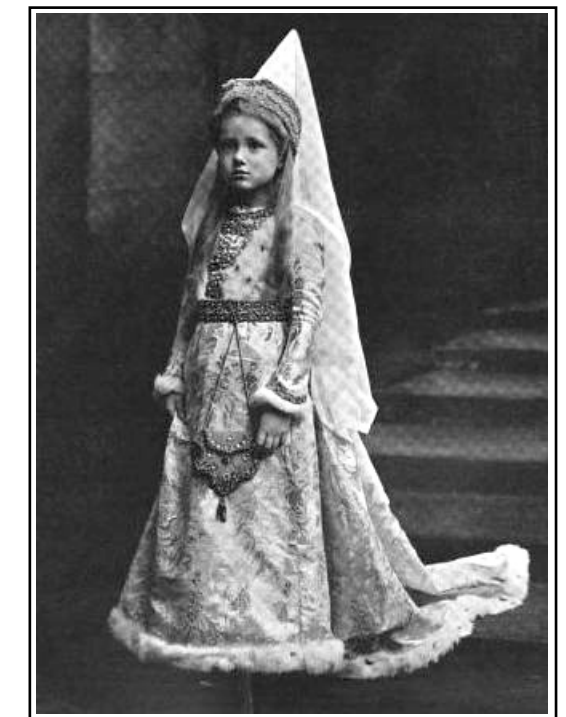


22 April 1903 to St Jean de Luz près Biarritz, France, forwarded to Paris.
International postal card.

England



23 February 1904 to London, England.
International postal card.



Dorothy, daughter of Sir Charles Swinfen
and Lady Eady
Country Life, 22 July 1905

Italy

7 January 1902 from Milan, Italy, received Luzern 8 January. International registered letter.



scan



Denmark



15 February 1902 from Kjøbenhavn, Danmark, received Luzern 17 January. International letter. (It is not possible to determine whether the Danish cancel or the Luzern receiver is the wrong month.)

USA Forwarded from London



18 September 1903 from Germantown, USA, received and forwarded from London by Brown, Shipley & Co, 26 September, received Luzern 27 September. International letter.



scan

Mr J. Mitchell Elliot of Germantown, was a professional photographer who exhibited this image at the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain Exhibition of 1902. He was touring Europe in 1903.

Egypt



17 November 1903 from Cairo, Egypt, received Luzern 25 November. International postcard.

Shepherd's Hotel, the origin of this card, was famous: 'It was the playground for international aristocracy where every person of social standing made it a must to have tea, to see and be seen.'



12 April 1904 from Paris, France, received Luzern 13 April.
International printed matter.

20 April 1904 from Lyon-Perrache, France, received Luzern 21 April.
International letter.



France

England

19 May 1904 to London, England,
received Luzern 21 May
International postcard.



Austria

19 May 1904 to Meran, Sud-Tyrol,
forwarded to Gmunden a Traunsee, Austria,
received 21 May. International postcard.



↖ Mailed Same day

These two cards were mailed Thursday, 19 May, to two different countries. The card below was mailed two days later on Saturday, 21 May.

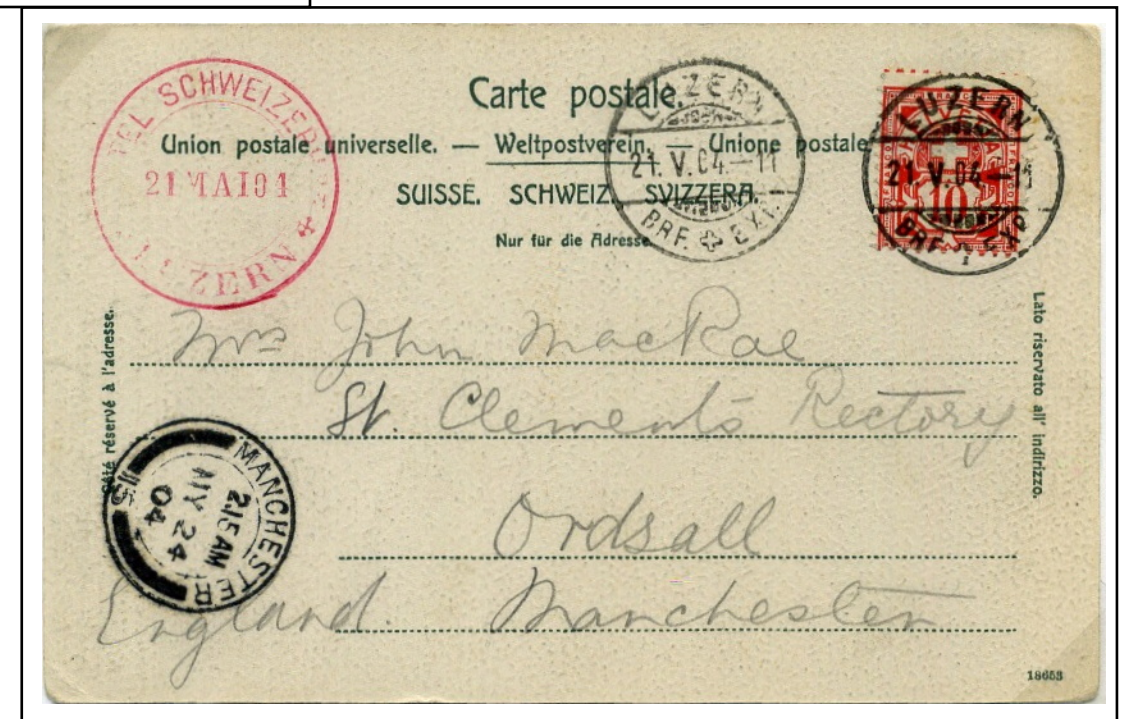
Note the poor strikes of the Schweizerhof date stamp and postal marks above. Embossed cards became popular for a short while, but proved very difficult to write on and also contributed to indistinct postal markings!



England

21 May 1904
to Ordsall, Manchester,
England,
received 24 May.
International postcard.

Charlions & Pourailly was a trading house providing hotels, cafes and restaurants with china, crystal, glassware and silverware, as well as furniture such as tables and pedestal terraces.



Forwarded



16 May 1904 from Kjøbenhavn, Danmark, to Dresden, Germany, received 18 May, Forwarded to Luzern received 19 May. International postcard.

Returned

27 August 1904 from Lustleigh, England, received Luzern 29 August-11am, postage due added 29 August-noon. Unpaid with forwarding address applied by hotel and returned to post office. Forwarded to Regent's Park, London, England.



Writing not allowed on address side. Rated as letter 2 1/2d. Short 1 1/2d = 15 centimes + penalty 15 centimes = 30 centimes due. Uncollected in Switzerland, returned to London due 3d Foreign Branch.



29 February 1904 to Wilhelmshaven, Germany. International postcard. (Schweizerhof date stamp in red on reverse)

Hotel Postcards

Card text printed in dark brown ink above, and orange brown ink, left. Color change could indicate delivery of new cards for 1904 summer season.



8 June 1904 to Chemnitz, Saxony. International postcard.

12 July 1904 to Vienna, Austria. International postcard.



No writing for abroad allowed here! →

Many countries did not allow messages on address side of postcards until March 1907. Nearly all messages were written on the picture side as seen above. Tourists sometimes made mistakes which resulted in postage due for the recipients as seen to the left.



Luxembourg Forwarded to Paris

21 March 1906
from Grevenmacher, Luxembourg.
Received Luzern 22 March,
Schweizerhof date stamp applied
22 March on reverse, forwarded
leaving Luzern 22 March, received
Paris 23 March.
International letter.



Belgium Registered

11 August 1906 from Bruxelles,
received Luzern 12 August.
International registered letter.

Reverse shows photo of
Bruxelles Tourist Offices.



Greece



23 March 1907 from Athens, Greece. No receiving date stamp.
Domestic postal card uprated for international use.

Savoy Hotel Egypt Palace Hotel



29 December 1907 from Savoy Hotel, Cairo, Egypt.
International printed matter. Unsealed envelope.

The Savoy was only open for 16 years, closing in 1914.
'It was aimed at the class of people who might find Shep-
heard's and the Grand Continental, then Cairo's leading hotels,
a bit vulgar.'



28 January 1907 from Ghezireh, Egypt, received Luzern 4 February.
International postcard.



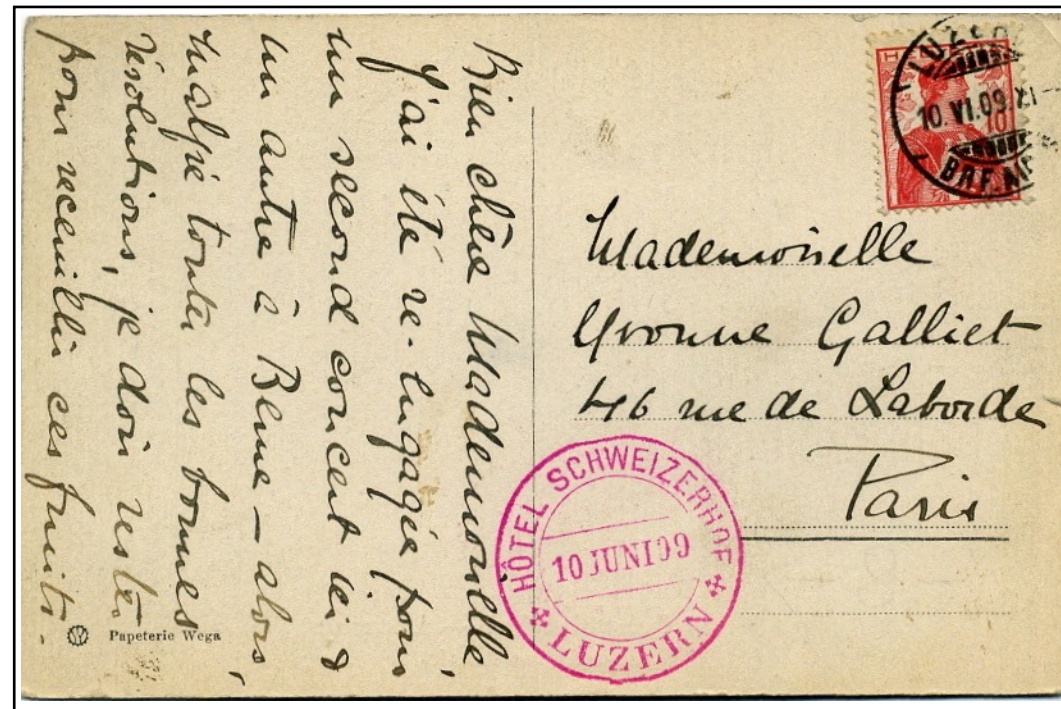
21 February 1907 to Paris, France.
International postcard.

21 September 1907 to Oakland, USA.
International postcard.



Excerpt from message:
We went up the Rigi. . . and had a wonderful panorama of the Alps in a circle around us. . . tour of the lakes by boat. . . walked through the Axenstrasse. . . and visited the Chapel of William Tell.

Schweizerhof Promenade



10 June 1909 to Paris, France.
International postcard.

MEDAILLE MUSIQUE 1906-1907 Music Theory
awarded to Yvonne Galliet

"A charming pianist, Miss Yvonne Galliet, with a talent full of charm, gave a concert in which we heard, with great success, various works by Bach, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Rubinstein, Saint-Saëns, Duvernoy; she was much applauded. . ."



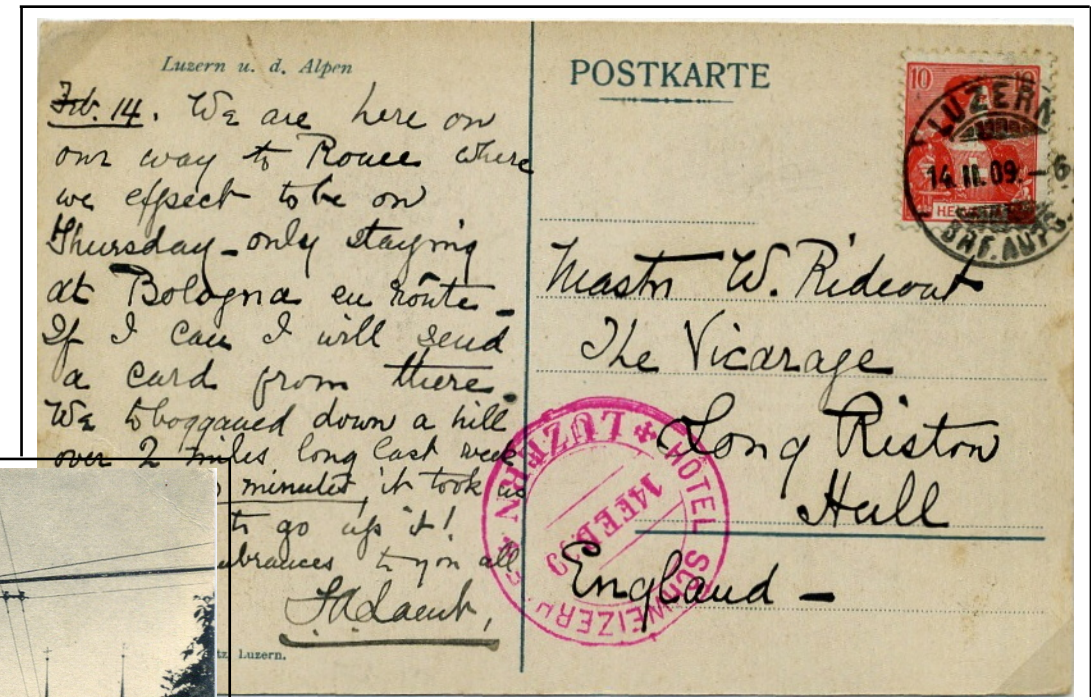
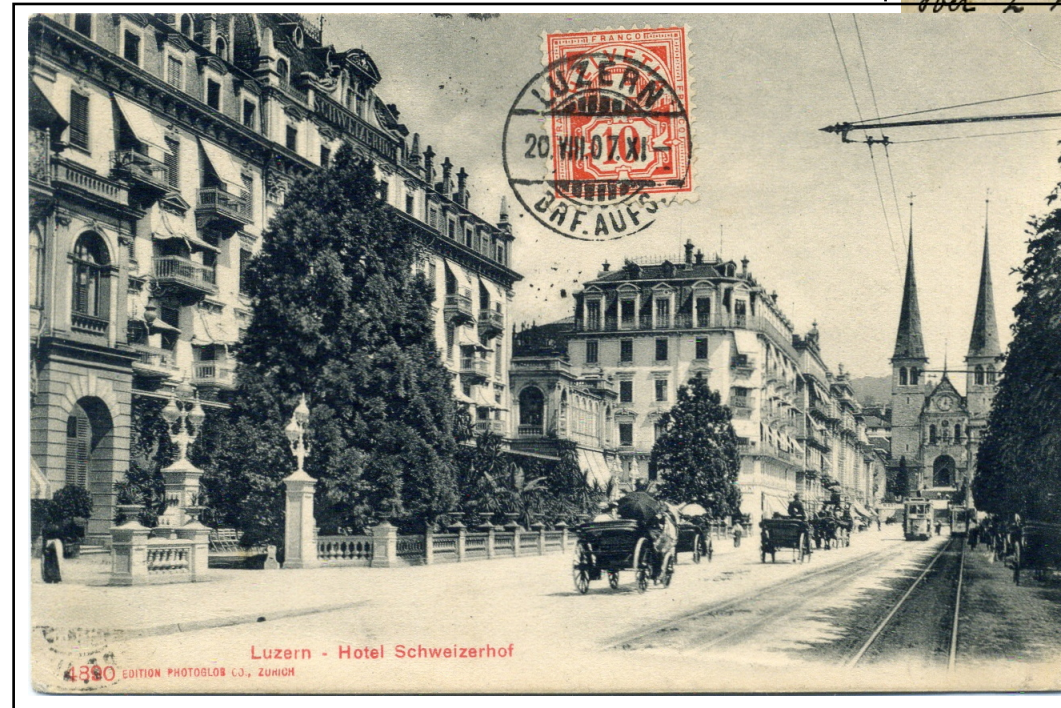
scan

Les Annales politiques et littéraires

14 February 1909 to Long Riston, England.
International postcard.

Adoption of Divided Back PostCards

New regulations adopted by the 1906 Rome UPU Congress came into force on 1 October 1907 allowing messages on the address side of a postcard. Prior to this date there were many bilateral agreements and this page shows that the UK, USA, and France already allowed messages on the front prior to that date.



Excerpt from message:
'We are here on our way to Rome. . . Only staying at Bologna en route. . . We tobogganed down a hill over 2 miles last week in just 10 minutes, it took us one hour to go up it. . .'

20 August 1907 to Paris, France.
International postcard.

To the right of this picture is Lake Luzern and a vista of Swiss mountains. The view from a hotel window is magnificent.



27 June 1909 to New Albany, IN, USA.
International letter.

The recipient of this letter, Laura Todd, was the wife of a Louisville, businessman, George Todd, who founded the Todd-Donigan Iron Company. He also served as mayor of Louisville, 1896-97.

Schweizerhof Dependance

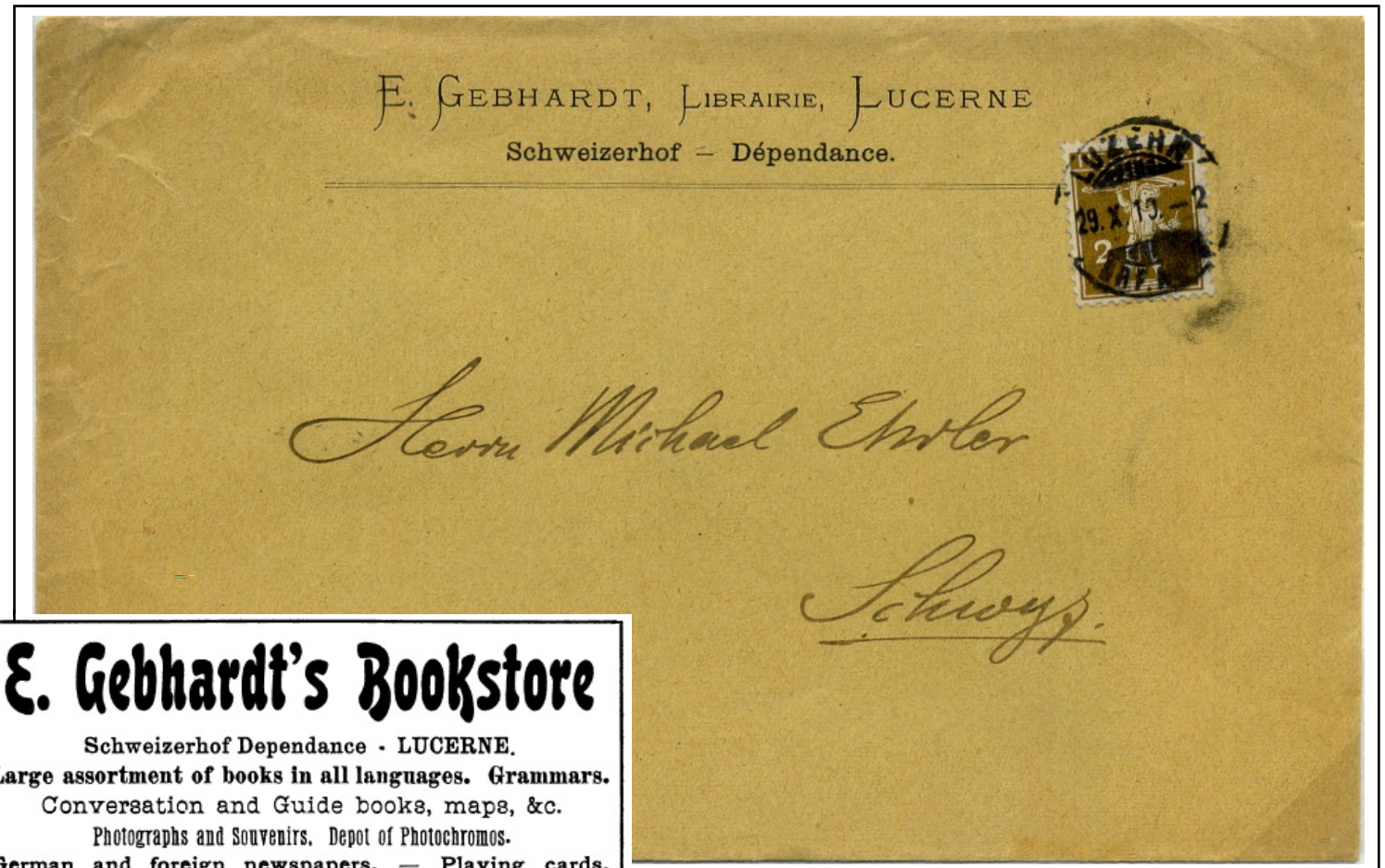
29 October 1910 to Schwyz.
Domestic printed matter.

E. Gebhardt became proprietor in 1908. I have not been able to determine his relationship with the previous owner A. Gebhardt, who had owned the concession since the mid-1880s.

Advertisement from:
Guide to Lucerne, The Lake, and Its Environs, 1908

E. Gebhardt's Bookstore

Schweizerhof Dependance - LUCERNE.
Large assortment of books in all languages. Grammars.
Conversation and Guide books, maps, &c.
Photographs and Souvenirs. Depot of Photochromos.
German and foreign newspapers. — Playing cards.



Morgan, Harjes & Co, Paris



3 August 1910 from Center Harbor, NH, USA to Paris.
Forwarded to Luzern received 14 August.
International letter.

Forwarded



London-Munich-St Moritz-London-Luzern
Mrs August Thomas (Lisle Colby Thomas) was the wife of a famous, distinguished American playwright who wrote or adapted more than 100 plays

Brown, Shiple & Co, London



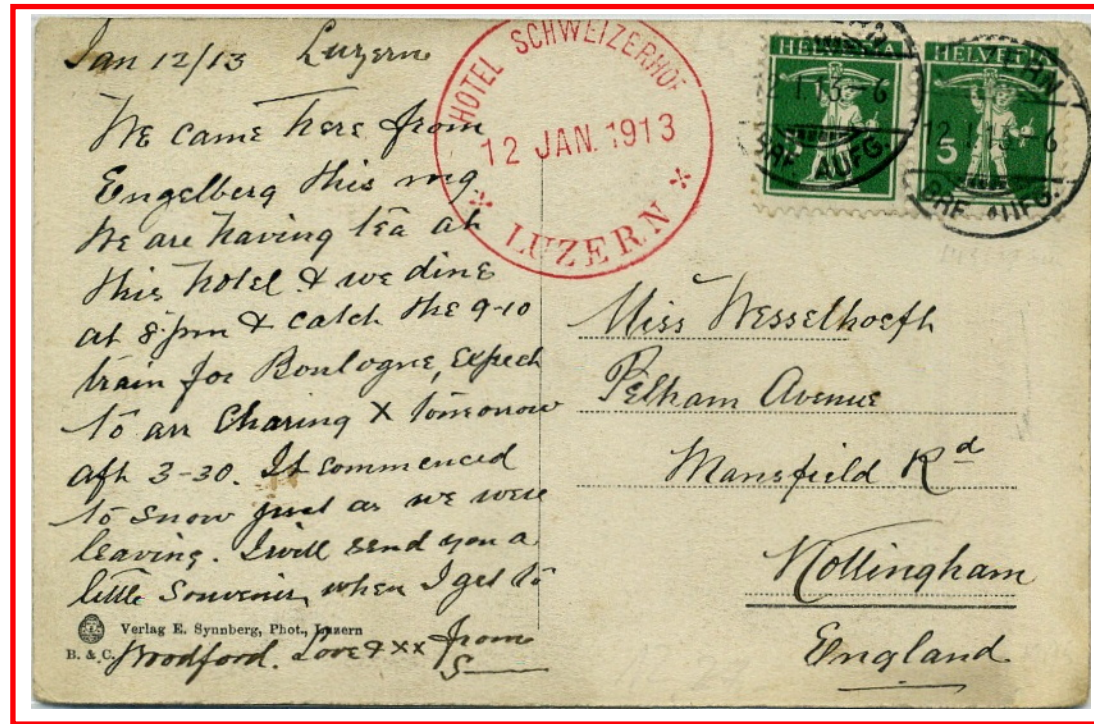
13 July 1911 to Brown, Shiple & Co, London.
Forwarded London SW 13 July to Pallast Hotel, Munich, forwarded from Munich 15 July to Engadiner Kulm Hotel, St Moritz, received 16 July. Undelivered, departed St Moritz 16 July, returned to Brown Shiple, London.
Schweizerhof label applied at Brown Shiple & Co, departed London 18 July, received Luzern 19 July.
International letter.

Guest Dinner Bill

No. <i>227</i> 918	
RESTAURANT Hôtel Schweizerhof LUCERNE	
Lucerne, le <i>26.9</i> 1911	
Appt. _____	
	Frs. Cts.
<i>1 Entrecôte grillée</i>	<i>0</i> -
<i>Pommes frites</i>	<i>1.50</i>
<i>2 Glaces</i>	<i>3. -</i>
Pour le <i>M. Hauser</i> Schweizerhof, Lucerne	
<i>Boisson</i>	<i>2. -</i>
<i>1/2 Médoo</i>	<i>2.25</i>
	<hr/> <i>14.75</i>

26 September 1911

Dining bill for grilled rib steak dinner with fries, two ice creams with an Evian and glass of wine.

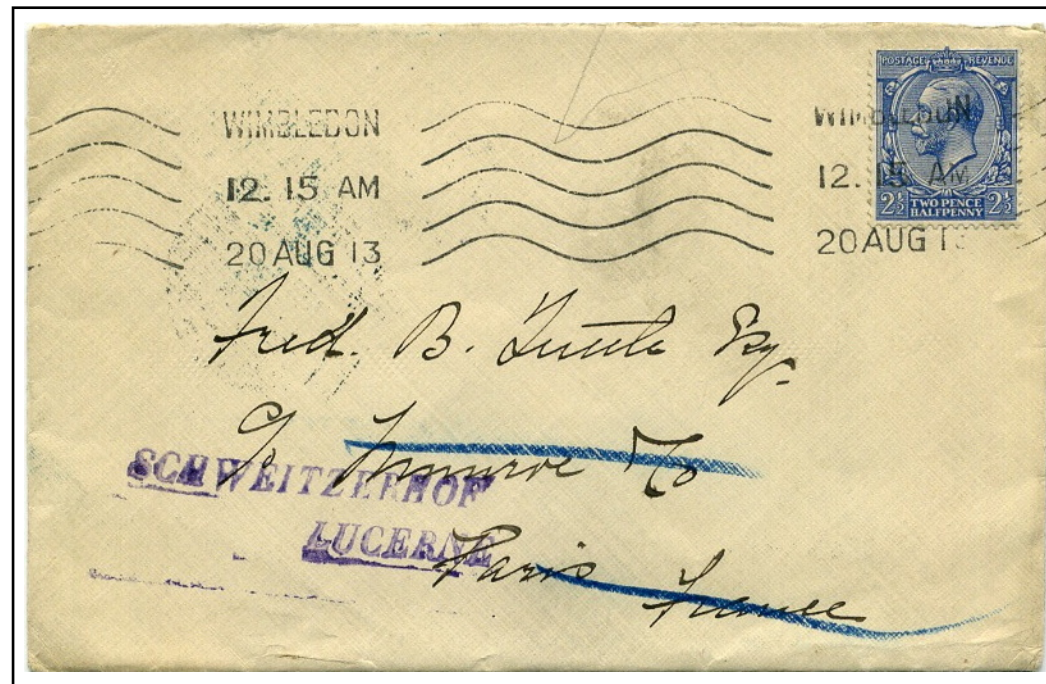


↑ 12 January 1913 to Nottingham, England. International postcard.

"We came here this morning. We are having tea at this hotel and we dine at 8pm and catch the 9-10 train for Boulogne. . . . expect train Charing X tomorrow 3-30. . . ."

Many travelers stopped at the Schweizerhof, if only for a meal, an experience to be retold to family and friends.

Forwarded Monroe & Co, Paris



20 August 1913 from Wimbledon, England.

Sent to forwarding agent Monroe & Co, Paris, date stamp on back 21 August. Letter forwarded to 'Schweizerhof', Lucerne, received 22 August. International letter.



Round Type 4
1912-1932

Seenachtsfest

Seenachtsfest souvenir card with Hotel Schweizerhof on the right side of the picture. This mid-summer fireworks festival started in 1885 and is still celebrated. This card from 1905.



End of the La Belle Epoque

World War I brought an end to the luxuries of the Victorian and Edwardian Grand Tour Era. It wasn't until the late 1920's that the Swiss tourist industry regained some strength. After a short period of peace, World War II again interrupted the European travel industry, which didn't recover until the 1960's when families became the demographic market for the Swiss. Though luxury accommodations were still in demand for a few, the industry had changed, catering more to the middle class. Shorter vacations were in order and communications were often reduced to guests sending post cards home rather than extended letters. This is reflected in the difficulty of finding mid to late 20th century examples of guest communications. The hotel is still managed by two Hauser brothers.

The exhibitor has only found three examples of this date stamp. This in the exhibit, one on the back of an envelope, 1913, and another on a 1932 Kur-Karte.

A Kur-Karte was a guest discount booklet created by the Luzern Visitors Bureau providing discounts to various attractions in Luzern. The one issued in 1932 by the Schweizerhof was non-philatelic.