

Martin Baer

SWITZERLAND
Postal Stationery
Handbook

Postcards

Swiss Postal Stationery Collectors Society

Preamble

After four years of intensive work, I am pleased to present you herewith the first part of the Swiss Postal Stationery Handbook. This Postcard Handbook is the most extensive section of this monster project and, thanks to the active participation of many collectors, is the most extensive work on postal cards to date. Naturally, there will be future amendments and corrections to this handbook. The nice thing is that you will not need to buy a new handbook because all additions and corrections will be uploaded to the website of our society, from where you can download and print them.

The internet address (URL) for the download is:

www.ganzsachen.ch ==> [Ganzsachen Handbuch](#) ==> [Handbuch-Nachtrag](#)

This service is also the reason for the lack of consecutive numbering of the pages in the handbook. The insertion of the pages can easily be done by following the Zumstein numbering sequence. Also the loose-leaf concept with one-sided printing follows the same reasoning. This way you can keep your manual always up to date.

I would like to encourage all collectors to inform me of any postcards not yet listed and also to advise me of any errors, even seemingly small ones. To enable me to produce a high quality illustration, I would like to ask you to send me the original, which will, of course, be returned immediately after I have made a copy. Please send it to the following address:

Martin Baer, Hagenholzstrasse 25, CH-8302 Kloten or by Email to: mbtaxcards@gmx.ch

For the important support received, I would like to express my gratitude to the following ladies and gentlemen:

Giovanni Castioni, Ingo Debrunner (†), Bodulf Grabner, Ulrich Heiniger, Herbert Höhn, Irène Keller, Peter Keller, Heinz Leemann, Eric Lienhard, André Meylan, Johannes Müller, Roland Müller, Kurt Promberger, José Rocha, Beatrice and Rolf Rölli, Judith Salzman, Ernst Schätti, Georges Schild, John Schneider, Bernd Vogel, Albrik Wiederkehr and Paul Wüthrich.

My thanks go also to Robert G. Wightman for reviewing the translation into English.

Naturally I would also like to thank Mr. Christoph Hertsch for permission to use the Zumstein numbering sequence.

Would you please consider our advertisers for your purchases and sales.

I wish all collectors great pleasure in using this handbook and lots of fun in your continued collecting.

Martin Baer

Literature references / Sources

Illustriertes Postkarten Handbuch von Louis Senf 1890
Zumstein Handbuch 1924
Zumstein Ganzsachen Kataloge 1949, 1975, 1984 und 2002
Zumstein Spezialkatalog Schweiz 2000
Zumstein Sonderstempel Schweiz (Pen Sonderstempel-Katalog)
Michel Ganzsachen Katalog Europa West 2003/04
Michel Schweiz/Liechtenstein Spezialkatalog 2008
Der Ganzsachensammler Nr. 1-91 (1965-2009)
Die Lupe (1985 -2009)
Suchard-Karten von F. Barnier/Fréjus
Die Bildpostkarten P 139 und ihre Klischeeunterschiede von
Paul Day - v. Steiger (2002)
Die Postkartenheftchen von Ernst Jaeger (2002)
Postgebühren Inland und Ausland 1976 - 2007 von Markus Seitz

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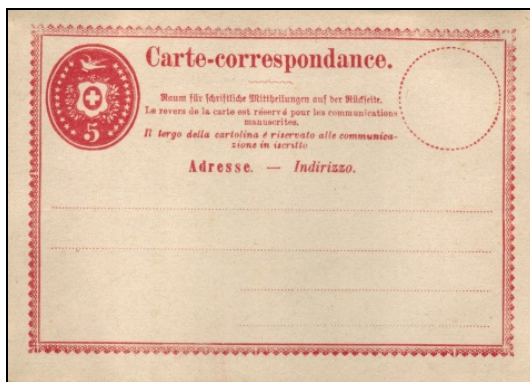
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Short history of Swiss Postcards

- 1870** On October 1, 1870, the first postcard for domestic use in Switzerland was issued. The postcard was entitled "Carte-correspondance" (correspondence card).
- 1874** During the year 1874, the first postcard for international use and the first double postcard for domestic use followed (designated "Correspondence Card").
- 1879** Issue of the first double postcard for international use. The title of the postcards is now in three languages: "Postkarte", "Carte postale" and "Cartolina postale".
- 1909** The first two postcards with pictures were issued in 1909 on the occasion of the inauguration of the U.P.U. monument in Bern.
- 1912** Beginning in mid 1912, perforated postcards were placed. Postcards with perforations on the left-hand side were sold in postcard booklets. Postcards perforated at the top and bottom could be ordered in strips of 8 cards. These were intended for use in typewriters.
- 1918** The first issue to use up stocks due to postal rate increase. The postcards on hand were recalled and overprinted with the new value.
- 1923** Beginning in 1923, a new type of carton with watermark was used for the production of postcards.
- 1963** During this year, the first postcards with a luminescent marking added were placed on sale. This marking was used to facilitate the mechanical sorting of postcards.
On PK 180, the additional print is above the value imprint (visible when holding the card askew against a light) and on PK 194 it is at the left-hand side of the value imprint (clearly visible).
- 1985** Beginning in 1985, the production of postcards reverted to card stock without watermark.
- 1998** Beginning in 1988, postcards without a value imprint were issued. These "postage prepaid" cards were valid for worldwide priority mailing.

Federal resolution concerning the introduction of correspondence cards

- Art. 1 The postal administration is authorized to issue correspondence cards at 5 cents each for domestic use.
- Art. 2 The cards can be used for registered mailing by prepaying a fee of 5 cents in stamps. Express mailing can be requested under the same conditions as for letters. Cash on delivery with cards is also possible under the same conditions as for letters.
- Art. 3 The Federal Council is authorized to introduce correspondence cards for mailing to other states, laying down an analogous fee.



PK 002

Note: The correspondence cards were called “Carte-correspondance”.

The excerpts given below are taken from the Ordinance promulgated September 23, 1870 concerning the introduction of correspondence cards to be implemented on September 25, 1870:

- 1. Production:** The mint receives instructions to award the printing contract for an initial edition of 5 million cards. The order was given to the firm of Stämpfli in Bern. They printed the cards in sheets of 36, which were then delivered to the mint for cutting and assembling into packets of 100 cards. The cost was Fr. 2.75 per thousand cards.
- 2. Delivery to post offices and private resellers:** An individual order must be for at least 100 cards.
- 3. Sale to the public:** Sales price 5 cents (no surcharge for the paper).
- 7. Statistics:** When counting the items of correspondence, the postcards are not counted. On the other hand, the postcards supplied by the post office are noted in a special column and included in the general statistics.
- 9. Usage:** The address and the written messages on the reverse may be applied in ink, pencil or any other form. Also the indications “registered”, “chargé”, “express” etc. These indications must be made clearly in the lower left corner of the address side of the card, where there is free space.

No correspondence must be put on the address side of the card. Cards which do not meet these conditions must not be forwarded.

11. Affixing the postage stamp: The fee should be covered whenever possible by postage stamps, as per Art. 5 of the Ordinance.

This stamp should be affixed to the card over the circle in the upper right corner. Should more than one stamp be used, then the remaining ones are to be affixed to the left of the first stamp, over the title. The value imprint must in no case be covered or even touched by a stamp.

13. Mailing: The ordinary correspondence cards are to be cancelled by a date stamp in the upper right corner of the address side.

The correspondence cards are not to be stamped by the transit offices, but the destination post office must put a date stamp on the back of the card, whereby utmost care must be used not to hinder the readability of the text. (Per Postal Bulletin 5/1871, these instructions were superseded: the arrival date stamp then had to be put on the address side between the value imprint and the dispatch marking).

Initially, the postcard did not have the same success in Switzerland as it had abroad. Of the initially planned issue of 5,000,000 cards per year, the sales during the first three months were only 220,000 cards per month. During 1871 the sales were 1,733,000 and in 1872 already 2,346,000 cards. The turning point was reached when the Swiss Post introduced a surcharge of 1 cent per postal stationery envelope during the 3rd quarter of 1877. As a consequence, the sales of postcards rose to 6,800,000 in 1878, 8,600,000 in 1880 and 15,880,000 in the year 1890.

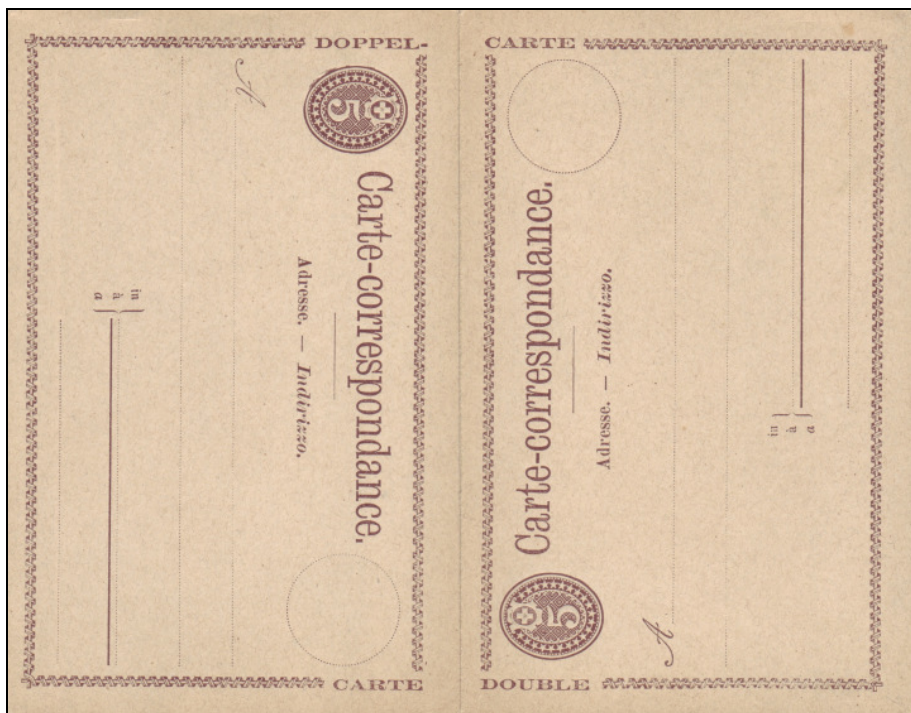
The use of the postcard has gradually decreased over the years as the initial advantage in postage cost over letter mail no longer exists.

Printing of the postcards: The mint, with its director Escher, received instructions to conclude the printing contract. Initially the order was given to the firm of Stämpfli in Bern, which printed the cards in sheets with a printing surface of 732 x 510 mm, i.e. 36 cards (6 x 6). The sheets were delivered to the mint for cutting. The larger postcards (140 x 90 mm), as per the Federal resolution of February 26, 1874, were printed in sheets of 32 cards (4 x 8). The same is true for the cards produced in the normal format (148 x 105 mm) as from 1925, which were, however, sometimes also produced in half sheets (16 cards).

Beginning in 1882, the printing was entrusted to the company Rieder and Simmen, and later Rösch and Schatzmann, its legal successors. Besides this company, the Polygraph Institution in Zurich also printed postcards (UPU 1900). Beginning in 1907, the postcards were printed by the Federal Mint. In 1930 the PTT took over the printing unit from the mint. The postcards in photogravure printing were produced by Büchler and Co. in Bern beginning in 1929.

The designation "Correspondence card" was modified to "Postcard" as per Directive No. 18/1879 concerning stamps.

Date-stamping of the postcard on arrival: Until 1913 it was mandatory to date-stamp the postcards on arrival. This rule was rescinded for non-registered postcards by Directive No. 28, dated April 2, 1913. This decision was based on tests made at larger post offices, which did not show any negative consequences. Date-stamping on arrival was now only required for registered and/or misrouted postcards as well as for incoming reply postcards from abroad (decree No. 41, dated May 28, 1913).



PK 006A

Double postcards: Double postcards for domestic use were made available to the public already in 1874 and those for international use in 1879. When introducing the double postcards for international use, the Swiss postal administration issued a decree on March 14, 1879 which included the following:

“The part designed for the reply, and inscribed accordingly, arriving in Switzerland from the named countries must be treated like a Swiss postcard – without any additional franking with Swiss stamps – and forwarded to the respective address”.

A later decree mentioned: “The first part of a double postcard remains in the hands of the recipient. It is thus not permitted to return the first part still attached to the reply card.” As a result of this, one can also find such double postcards with postage due and punitive fees charged. Non-separated double postcards with both parts used and cancelled slipped through contrary to the regulations, at least until mid 1948 (see below). **The catalog prices are intended for double postcards where the query card was cancelled and the reply card remained unused (not cancelled). For non-separated**

double postcards where both parts were cancelled, a supplement of 100% to the catalog prices applies. The individual and separated parts of a double postcard are marked in the catalogue with F for the query part and A for the reply part.

It should also be noted that the World Postal Agreement and the World Post Convention were modified as follows per PTA 160 on June 26, 1948, effective from July 1, 1948:

"Item 8: On postcards with paid reply, the sender may have printed the back of the reply part with a questionnaire to be filled in by the recipient. The recipient may return the first part to the originator if it is still attached to the reply part. In this case, the address on the query part must be crossed out and turned inside."

In the 1970's, such double postcards were no longer issued, basically because they were creating problems in the mechanical sorting of the mail. The last day of validity for all double postcards was June 30, 1971. The double postcard P 006 had therefore the longest validity period, i.e. 97 years!



"Deckle edge": Postcards with "deckle edge" are very rare. The catalogue mentions them with the suffix B. As per the latest findings, these originated from the bottom sheet in the pile for cutting. In cases where the outermost edge of the working surface was recessed, the lowest sheet was pressed downwards by the cutting knife and was torn rather than cut.

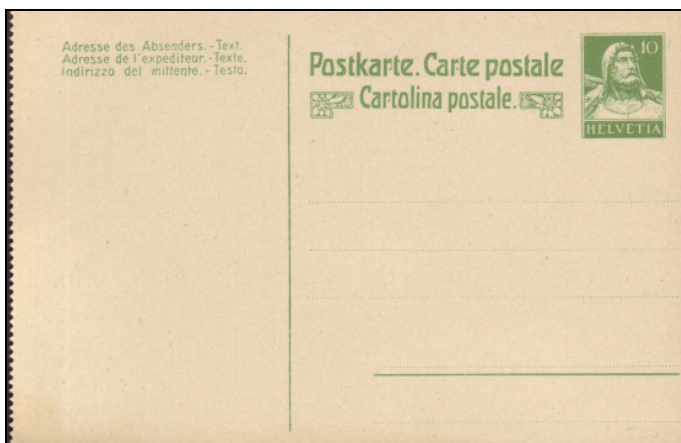


Earliest known 10 cent franking to the border zone in Germany on PK 001.
The period of use was 1.10.1870 – 31.12.1872.



A 10 cent franking to the United States on the second possible day on PK 003.
The period of use was 1.5.1874 – 31.6.1875.

Usage prior to the UPU Postal Agreement: In the catalogue we try to list the various postage rates to foreign countries, marking these with a V. The period covered is that from the first postcard issue on 1.10.1870 up until 30.6.1875 – for France until 31.12.1875. As from July 1, 1875 (France January 1, 1876) the postage for postcards to all member states of the UPU was 10 cents. Some of these items are very rare or even unique. Many of these destinations have so far not even been found. For an accurate cataloguing of these, I naturally depend on the help of all collectors of postal stationery. Should you find such a item in your collection, I would be extremely pleased to receive your notice and a scan or photocopy. I wish you much success in the search for new items going abroad.



PK 073y

Perforated postcards: Beginning in July 1912, the post offices also sold postcards in booklets (**PKH**) with a supplement of 5 cents. These booklets contained 10, 12 or 13 cards, which were perforated on the left-hand side (y). The supplementary charge of 5 cents was eliminated with PAB 133/1935.

As from 1951, the perforation was replaced by **rouletting (x)**. Beginning in 1975, the booklets were glued and the individual cards cannot be distinguished from ordinary postcards (therefore no cataloging).

Note: Privately perforated postcards were already in use in the 1890's. These are e.g. PK 026.2.PrZD 11 till 13 with a private imprint of the company Julius Brann in Zurich.

The indicated catalogue prices for **postcard booklets (PKH)** are for complete booklets. Incomplete booklets command lower prices, but a minimum 25% of the prices indicated provided that both cover pages are present.



PKH 077

The Central Post Office also issued postcards in strips of eight to order beginning in 1912. These are perforated at the **top and bottom (z)** and were intended for use in typewriters. The top and bottom cards in the strip were only perforated **on one edge**. These strips of postcards were sold at face value in minimum quantities of 100 strips = 800 cards (decree No. 77 dated June 25, 1912). Beginning in 1923, the strips contained only 7 cards and from January 1948 only 6 postcards.

The horizontally perforated postcards in complete vertical strips are identified in the catalogue with the suffix **PKS**. However, all of these are not yet fully documented. Should you find in your collection a strip of postcards not yet documented, I would be very pleased to receive a note from you indicating the sequence of the pictures.



PK 111z

Postcards with views at left: Based on recommendations from the tourist associations, postcards were created, as of 1923, with views of landscapes, towns and other subjects from all areas of Switzerland. These postcards with views were intended to publicize the natural beauty of our country and be advertisements for our tourist industry.

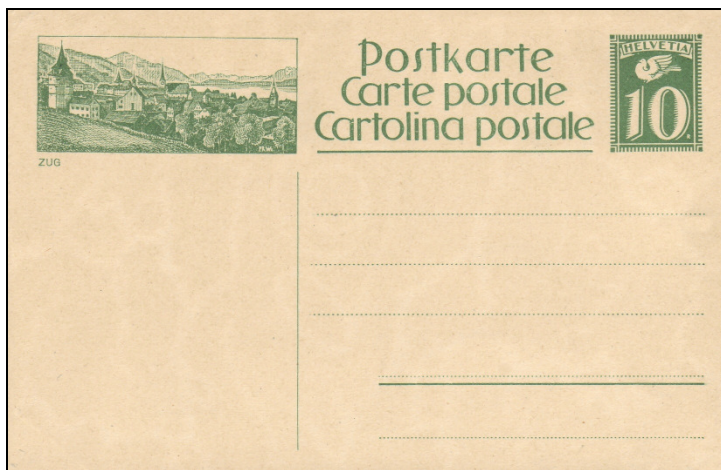
The postcards with views at the left were announced with **PTA No. 21 of May 28, 1923** as follows:

New postcards with a different layout of the title and a different value imprint will shortly be issued.

In implementing a suggestion from the tourist associations, a part of the new (simple) postcards will contain a picture to the left of the title on the address side. The views will show landscapes and city views from all parts of Switzerland. An array of Swiss artists contributed to the creation of these pictures, which were selected by the tourist association of the town of Bern. The miniature format and the type of reproduction, continuing in monochrome green for the 10 cent and red for the 20 cent cards, represented a challenge for the artist. Despite these constraints and also the need for a naturalistic representation, the artistic perception and style of the originators are clearly visible.

The title, view and value imprint are intended to be seen as a whole and as an attractive entity. Accordingly, the design of the value imprint is intended to be unassuming, so that the entire interest of the viewer is focused on the view, which is at an equal height and almost three times as large as the value imprint. In order to make the value imprint less dominant, the previously used portrait of Tell by Kissling was abandoned and a pure number design selected, the style of which was matched to the style of the title. The old dream of tourist association members - to show pictures of Swiss landscapes on the definitive stamps - found in this manner a much more effective implementation.

The current issue is intended for consumption within a few months. These cards will be sold by the post offices as long as the stock permits. During this period, the ordinary postcards (without views) will only be sold on special request. The supply to the post offices from the central office will start as of June 1, next. The postcards with views are also available in complete series, the 10 cent with 20 different cards (sales price Fr. 2.00) and the 25 cent with 28 different cards (sales price Fr. 7.00).



PK 101.36

The cost to the ordering customer – generally a tourist association – amounted to Fr. 150.00 per view for domestic postcards, which were then printed in quantities of 500,000 to 1,000,000. The print quantities for international postcards were only 50,000 to 80,000 per view, at a printing cost of merely Fr. 100.00. (Refer also to PTA No. 10 dated January 23, 1935).

When there were not enough orders on hand, the empty spaces were filled with pictures of postal busses and alpine passes, i.e. the post office was advertising for itself.

Postcards without views were sold at the counter only on the customer's request.

Because one postcard was used to produce as many as 8 different series, these are indicated in the catalogue with capital letters A-H. The last "Postcards with views" were delivered to the post offices in 1964.

Prior to the official issues of postcards with views, tourist associations were printing very attractive pictures on the back of official postcards as from the 1880's. These postcards are identified in the catalogue with the suffix **PrZD** ("additional private imprint").



PK 014.PrZD 6

Valuation of postcards with views: The "Postcards with views" are all valued as unused and used. Individual subjects, which are particularly well suited for local area and thematic collections, have thereby a much higher rating. **Supplements for first day and special cancels need to be added.**

Postcards with additional private value imprint: In September 1907, the public was offered the possibility to deliver documents – also official postcards – to the post office for the addition of value imprints. This was initially planned for the values 2, 5, 10 and 15 cents, but was later extended to values up to 80 cents. The public used this possibility extensively and official postcards were sent for the addition of further value imprints, mainly by customers with philatelic interest. These are included in the catalogue with the suffix PrWZ (additional private value imprint).

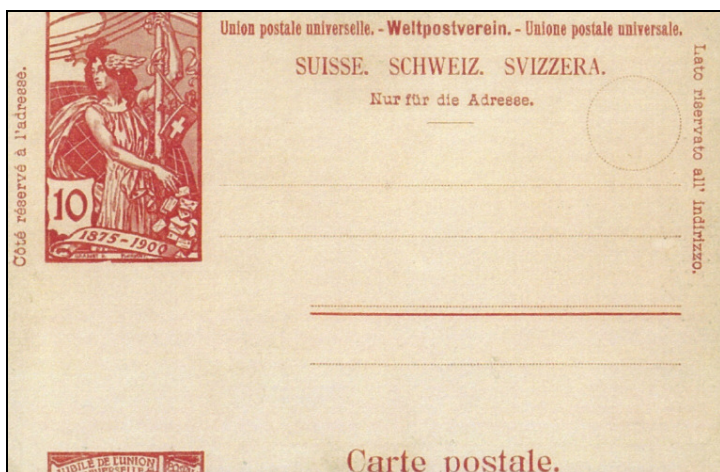


PK 014.PrWZ 2

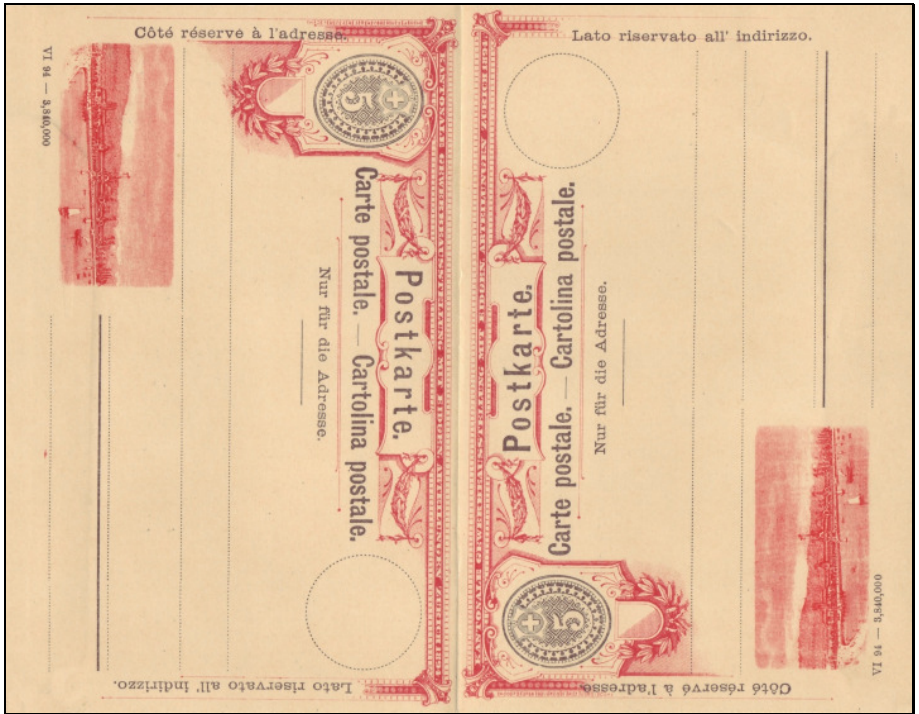
Connected and cut postcards: The central post office issued to special order postcards in full sheets of 32 cards and partial sheets of two to 16 cards, so that private imprints could be rationally added by printing shops. Connected postcards, mostly in pairs and strips, result from such deliveries. Likewise, postcards with perforated borders were delivered for the manufacture of private booklets containing postcards.

Postcards cut incorrectly over two or even four different cards appear occasionally on the market. With few exceptions, these originate from such sheets delivered to private printing shops, also the ones perforated on the left-hand side.

Such items certainly belong in a specialized collection. However, the price should be reasonable.



PK 031a



PK 026.2.PrZD 2c.KD



PK 048a

Watermarks: Beginning in 1923, watermarked card stock was generally used in the production of postcards. Initially, watermark I was used (country border with Swiss cross and post-horn) for the double postcards PK 088 and PK 089. The carton was supplied by the paper mill Zwingen.

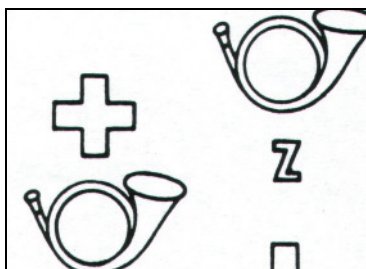
Beginning in 1940, a new watermark (Swiss cross, post-horn and letters) was introduced. The carton was supplied by several paper mills, Biberist (Bi), Zwingen A.G. (Z), Sihl in Zurich (S), the latter was replaced by Landquard (L) in the year 1978.



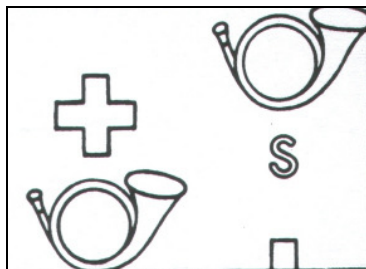
Wz. I



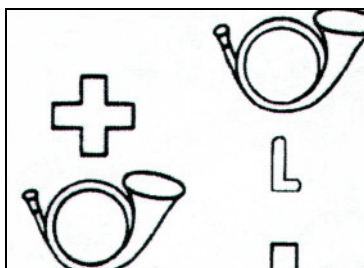
Wz. II



Wz. III

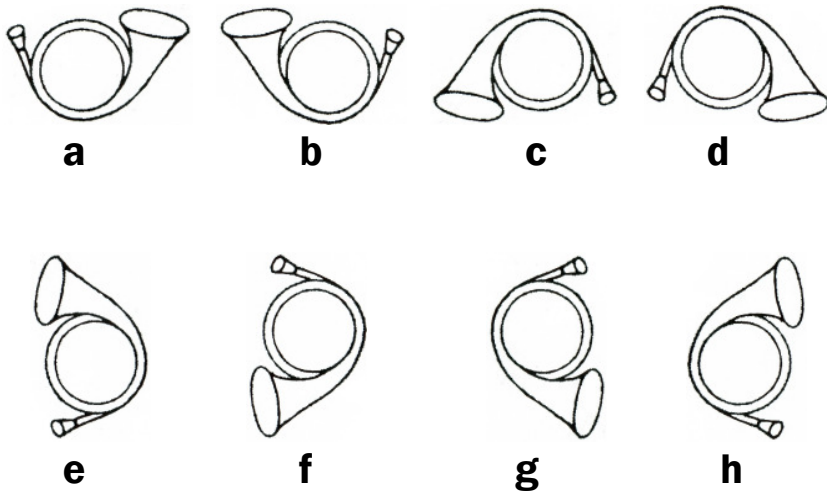


Wz. IV



Wz. V

The eight possible watermark positions: Theoretically the positions a - h are possible for all five watermarks. However, all positions have so far only been recorded for watermarks I to IV. For watermark V, all eight positions have not yet been observed. All known watermark positions are catalogued:



When checking for watermarks please hold the postcard with the address side facing you.

For entire double postcards you need to unfold them, and look through from the address part of the query card. Separated answer postcards will need to be checked from the back of the card.

The notation "BRB 3.10.1939": Amongst the issues 1939 to 1945 one can find on various postcards the remark "(four numbers) BRB 3.10.1939". BRB is the abbreviation for "**Bundes-Rats-Beschluss**" (Federal Council Decision). Postcards containing this notation could be mailed abroad based on an authorization as per Art. 2 of the Federal Council Decree of October 3, 1939. The most salient points are:

Art. 1: The export of maps, plans and other illustrations of territory is forbidden.

Art. 2 The sale, delivery and publication of maps are subject to authorization.

Art. 3: The following are considered as maps in the sense of Art. 1 and 2:

- a) All official maps which are issued, edited and delivered by the confederation, the cantons and communes.
- c) Private maps of any type, any usage and origin (e.g. also aerial views, postcards) which are covering the territory of the official overview map of Switzerland and its border zones.



This BRB was rescinded effective July 1, 1945.