

ASSOCIATION DES COLLECTIONNEURS D'EMPREINTES DE MACHINES A AFFRANCHIR



BULLETIN DE L'ACEMA

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COTISATION

FRANCE ETRANGER PAPIER 28 € FRANCE ETRANGER INTERNET 20 € Droit d'entrée 3 €

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Early oval meter stamps from Switzerland (B. Lachat) (1 à 16 à suivre)	page 61	à page 76

en couverture : un affranchissement multiple de la machine suisse FRANCO 103 issu de la présentation de Bernard LACHAT

LE MOT DU PRÉSIDENT

Notre ami Joël LEROUX a assumé sans relâche la tâche de secrétaire durant pas moins de 37 années !

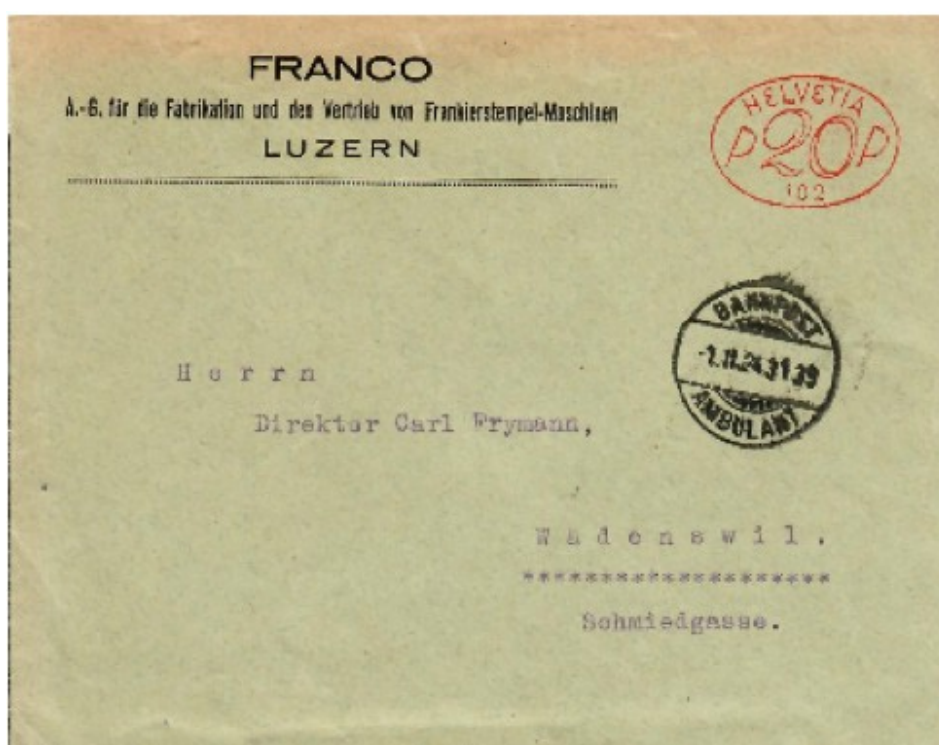
Nous l'en remercions très chaleureusement et sincèrement.

Thierry CONSTANS a spontanément proposé de prendre sa succession, nous l'en remercions tout aussi vivement !

Merci aussi à Thierry d'avoir représenté l'ACEMA à l'assemblée générale du GAPS le 20 avril 2025 à Mérignac.

En fin de bulletin commence la parution de 'EARLY OVAL METER STAMPS FROM SWITZERLAND' de notre ami Bernard LACHAT, collection récompensée par une médaille d'or en compétition internationale. Merci à lui.

Early oval meter stamps from Switzerland



Il faut aussi noter que les listes illustrées **des empreintes de MONACO** dont un exemple a été donné dans le bulletin 169 peuvent être envoyées gratuitement par internet sur simple demande.

Le service des circulations de Jean-Paul FOSSE dispose aussi d'empreintes de nombreux types de MONACO à vendre.



Early oval meter stamps from Switzerland



PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTION

Appeared in Switzerland in February 1924, with an oval shape, the early postage meter stamps (PMS in English, EMA in French) in Switzerland were not kept by the philatelists because they were simply not normal stamps! Many covers and other packaging have gone into the wastebaskets. However, PMS are indeed philatelic objects worthy of being collected and exhibited since they have "travelled", as well as stamps, on postal documents, sometimes very rare and of great beauty. This is the object of the collection:

- retrace the development of the Swiss meter stamps first generation according to the types;
- show the technical possibilities of coupling town mark and advertising;
- examine the frank (value figures) and their use on postal mail in and from Switzerland;
- raise awareness about beauty of certain postal documents.

Exhibition collection plan:

I. DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Introduction | frame 1, p. 1-4 |
| 2. Franco (1A type) | frame 1, p. 5-10 |
| 3. Hasler (1B type) | frame 1, p. 11-16 / values..... frame 2, p. 112
/ town marks... frame 2, p. 13-16 + frame 3 p. 111
/ advertising ... frame 3, p. 12-16 |
| 4. Universal (1C type) | frame 4, p. 1-3 / values..... frame 4, p. 4-5
/ town marks... frame 4, p. 6-7
/ advertising.... frame 4, p. 8-9 |
| 5. Francopost (1D type) | frame 4, p. 10-11 / values..... frame 4, p. 12-13
/ town marks... frame 4, p. 14-16 + frame 5 p. 1-3 |
| 6. Safag (1E type) | frame 5, p. 3-5 / advertising ... frame 5, p. 6 |
| 7. Undefined machines | frame 5, p. 7 |
| 8. Particularities | frame 5, p. 8-16 |
| 9. Wrapper, stationery, labels .. | frame 6 |
| 10. Damaged mail | frame 7, p. 1-2 |

Note:

in the description, after the meter number (in **red**) and the name of the owner (in **black**), the first dates given (in **green**) correspond to the date of dies delivery from the Post General Direction (DGP) to the manufacturer, resp. removal date. The following (in **blue**) give the period of known use. The dates are followed by a list of the value dies delivered, according to the PTT register.

Noteworthy items are indicated by the sign **◇**.

II. USE

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 11. PMS on documents for domestic and international services: surface route | frame 7, p. 3-16 |
| 12. PMS on documents for domestic and international services: air route | frame 8 |

BRIEF HISTORY

According to the General Regulations of the UPU of the time, postage meter was only allowed for domestic mail. But the UPU Congress (Universal Postal Union), in Madrid in 1920, authorized the use of postage meters also for international postal traffic from January 1, 1922.

For all these reasons, the Post General Direction encouraged two companies (Gas- & Wassermesserfabrik AG, Lucerne - later Franco AG - and Hasler AG, Bern) to manufacture machines for postage meter stamps.

The first concession was granted on 18/3/1922 to Franco manufacturer, then on 15/9/1923 to Hasler. The beginning of the Swiss meter postal history was formalized by a decree published in the "Feuille officielle des Postes et des Télégraphes suisses" n° 50 from 28/9/1923, page 255, mentioning the use of meter franking machines from 1.12.1923, with the prior authorization of the DGP.

In Switzerland, the dies for the first 6 machines were supplied by the postal service in December 1923. However, franking mail with meter stamps may have been introduced in January 1924, but is known only from February 1924.

CONSULTED SOURCES AND REFERENCES

PTT Historical Archive and Library :

a) Frankiermaschinen-Systeme "Franco", "Hasler" Mod. D. 106 & Mod. F.2, "Universal 5", "Francopost", "Safag 1+2". / Anfang 7. Dez. 1923. Vol. 1. [N° PAA 02271] / b) Frankiermasch. Aufdrucke - [PAA 021154]. / c) Other PTT archives, various years (1922 - 1991) including international postal rates, documents [A26] and Postal Regulations, documents [A1] // Aerophilatelisten-Verein, Schweizerischer, 2013. Schweizerisches Luftpost-Handbuch. Multiprint // Aitink, H.-E. & E. Hovenkamp 2005. Bridging the continents in wartime - important airmail routes 1939-1945. Stichting Luftpostgeschiedenis Tweede Wereldoorlog. // Allaz, Camille, 2013. Histoire de la Poste dans le monde. Pygmalion. // Bonsor, N.R.P., 1983. South Atlantic Seaway. Thorsons. // Boos, W., 1993. Die Postautomation aus der Sicht des Sammlers - Absenderfreistempel Typ 1. SBZ N° 6/7. p. 199-200. // 1994: SBZ N°1/1994, p. 5-7; SBZ N°2/1994, p. 75-77; SBZ N°6+7/1944, p. 367-370; SBZ N° 12/1994, p. 735-739; 1995: SBZ N°3/1995, p.147-150; 1996: SBZ N°2/1996, p. 67-70; SBZ N°3/1996, p.139-140. // Burden, William A. M., 1943. The struggle for airways in latin America. Council on foreign relations. // Davies, Ronald Edward George; Machat, Mike, 1991. Lufthansa. Crown Publ. // Dürst, H. 1996 et 1998. Die Freistempel der Schweiz. Band 1 et 2. Schriftenreihe der Forschungsgemeinschaft Post- und Absenderfreistempel e. V. // Haberer, Erich, 1992+1998. Katalog über die Katapultpost - 1 + 2 - Nordatlantik + Südatlantik. // Heifetz, Murray, 2000. OAT and AV2 markings. American Air Mail Society. // Hormann, Jörg-M., 2007. Flugbuch Atlantik. Delius Klasing Vlg GmbH. // Kohl, Roland F., 1997. Die Schweizerischen Flugpost-Zuschlagtaxen ab 1919. Postgeschichte Verlag. // Landsmann, Horst, 2008. Die Zensur Von Zivilpost in Deutschland Im 2. Weltkrieg. Brand: BoD. // Nierinck, Henri L., 1984. Courrier récupéré. R Editions. Antwerp. // Proud, Edward Wilfrid Baxby, 2008, 2009 + 2010. Intercontinental Airmails 3 vol. Proud Edward. B. éd. // Seifert Karl-Dieter, 1999. Der deutsche Luftverkehr 1926 - 1945: Auf dem Weg zum Weltverkehr. Bernard U. Graefe Verlag. // Stutz, Reinhard; Sprenger, Markus, 2010. Postverbindungen mit der Ausland - Land-, See- und Luftweg für das Jahr 1942. PTT originals. // UPU terminology database (TERMPOST) // Wills, Simon, 2018. Airlines at War. Air World. // Zack I & II, 1990. Die Posttaxen der Schweiz ab 1862.

PERSONAL RESEARCH AND CONTINUING STUDIES

Lachat, B. 2005 - 2024. Several publications in this field. See: <https://cpde.ch/publications.html>.

Early meter stamps (after 1920) from the world (already 3 collections exhibited with gold medals and three other collections in preparation).

Updating meter stamps of Liechtenstein. Swiss meter labels and other special researches.

Continuous IT management of a database and inventory of Swiss machines for types 1 and 2.

Regular contribution to The International Postage Meter Stamp Catalog.

In the beginning ...

On 18/3/1922, the Directorate General of Swiss Post (DGP) granted Gas- & Wassermesserfabrik AG - Franco AG, Lucerne, a licence to develop a franking machine in Switzerland. At the same time as developing the machine, the DGP began working on a graphic design for the dies that would be used to print the postage value. To this end, it commissioned the Swiss artist Karl Bickel, Walenstadtberg.



Reproduction of the value stamps proposed by Karl Bickel as a variant for machine N° 101, which never went into operation.



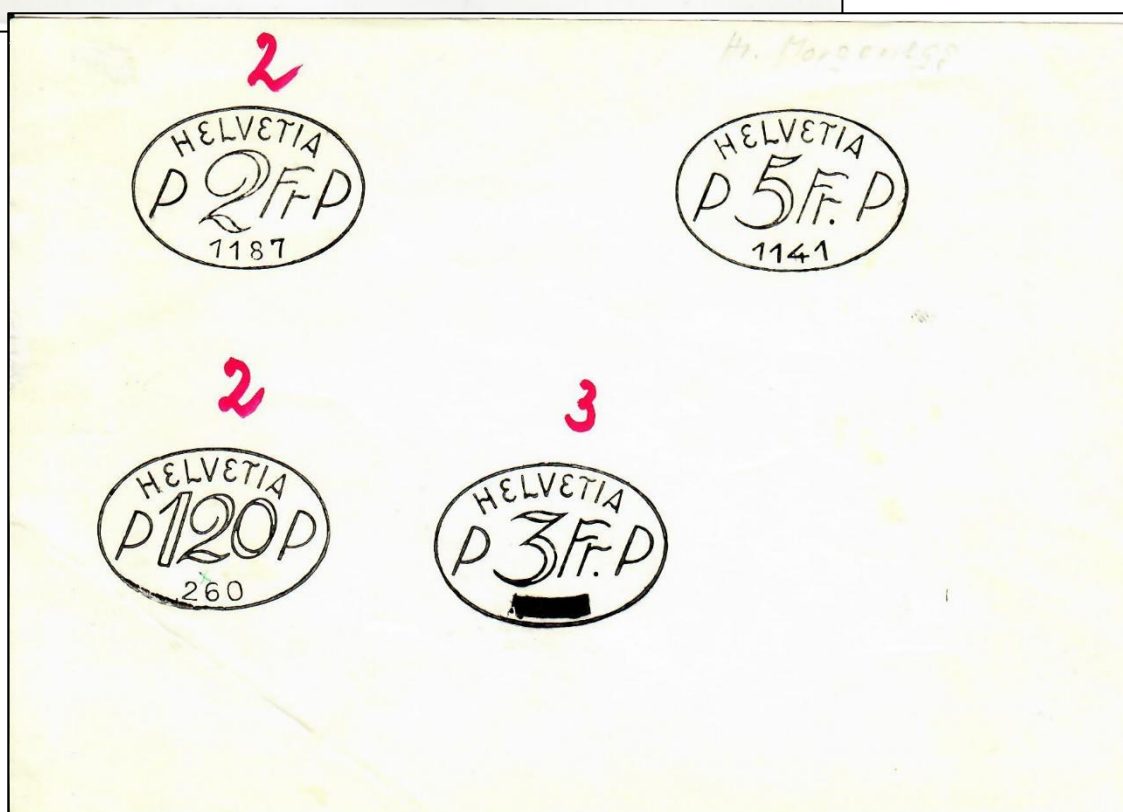
Original drawings on celluloid used for the final design of the figures. Various tests with the number "2".

(Probably from Bickel, ex. Coll. Dürst) ♦

In the beginning ...

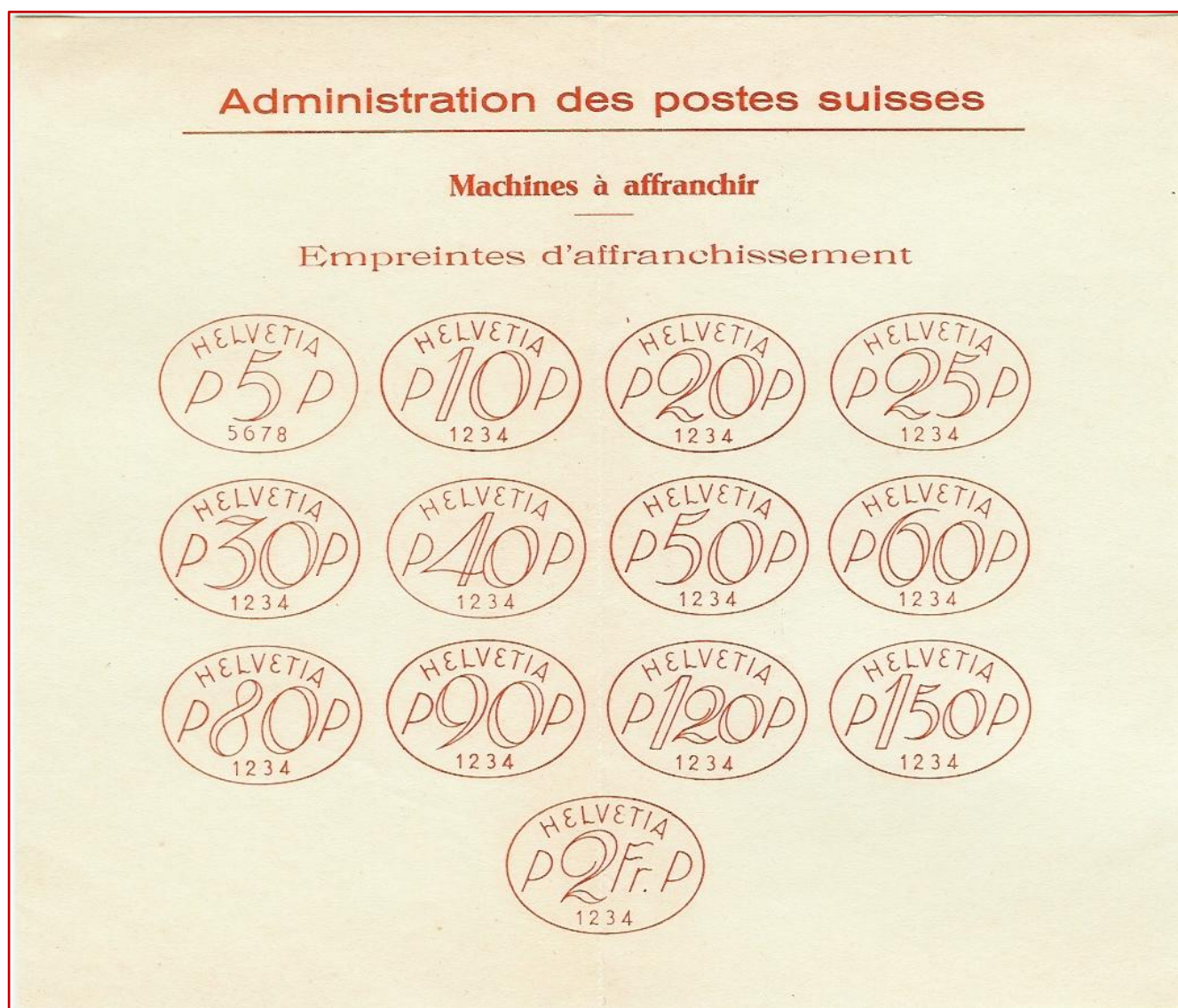
Up: original artist's sketch on celluloid used for the final design of the figures. Various tests with the number "3".

Down: original final trial. (All documents probably from Bickel, [ex. Coll. Dürst]) ♦



In the beginning ...

Karl Bickel, who also designed aviation stamps in 1923, used a similar design for the value figures on the stamps:



Leaflet issued in 1923 by the Swiss Post Authority to the Bureau of the Universal Postal Union to be distributed to its members, in order to make known the future Swiss postage meters.

The first-generation of oval meter stamps show small differences between manufacturers, making it possible to identify them. The Swiss Postal Service (PTT) at the time had assigned license numbers to manufacturers, which was not fully followed, especially when a company changed machine brand.

In Switzerland, the manufacturers were: FRANCO, HASLER, UNIVERSAL, FRANCOPOST and SAFAG.

1A type: Franco / trials

Manufacturer:	Gas- & Wassermesserfabrik AG, Lucerne – Franco AG, Lucerne
Model:	Franco
Number of dies included:	5
Concession granted on:	18/03/1922
Putting into service:	(January ?) February 1924
Number of machines:	22
Numbering of machines:	N° 102 - 123
Characteristics:	Machine number with rather small digits, aligned with the curvature of the oval. Only one machine with town mark. N° advertising.
Values seen:	3, 5, 7½, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 1 Fr and 2 Fr.



Proofs and test impressions of various values from Franco machine n° 107
with letter K (meaning unknown) and block instead of numbers. ♦

1A type: Franco / trials

Proofs and test impressions of various values from Franco machine n° 107 et 112 ♦

Recto



Reverse side (reduced copy)



1A type: Franco

Without any official start date, it was not until February 1924 that postal mail received meter franking in Switzerland.



Letter to Wädenswil (CHE).
 © Bahnpost, 1/2/1924.
 Postage rate for domestic service,
 letter ≤ 250 g (1/1/1921 – 31/10/1967):
 Fr. 0.20.

The earliest known use.

Meter n° 102.

Franco SA, Lucerne /
 a) **Franco** {4/12/1923 / 1/2/1924 – 16/9/1929}

then b) Francopost
 {5/5/1929 – 15/9/1930}
 Then c) Hasler
 {21/11/1984 – 9/1/1996}

Dies delivered for
 a): 3 – 5 – 10 – 20 – 25 – 30 – 40 – 50/
 for b): 3 – 5 – 10 – 20 – 25 – 30 – 40 – 50
 for c): ?
 value seen: 10 – 20 – 40



Letter to Brussels
 (BEL). © Zurich.
 22/2/1924. Postage
 rate for international
 service, letter ≤ 20 g
 (1/2/1921 – 30/9/1924): Fr. 0.40.

One of the earliest known uses.

Meter n° 105

[Schweiz.

Rückversicherungs-
 Gesellschaft,
 Zürich/

a) **Franco**

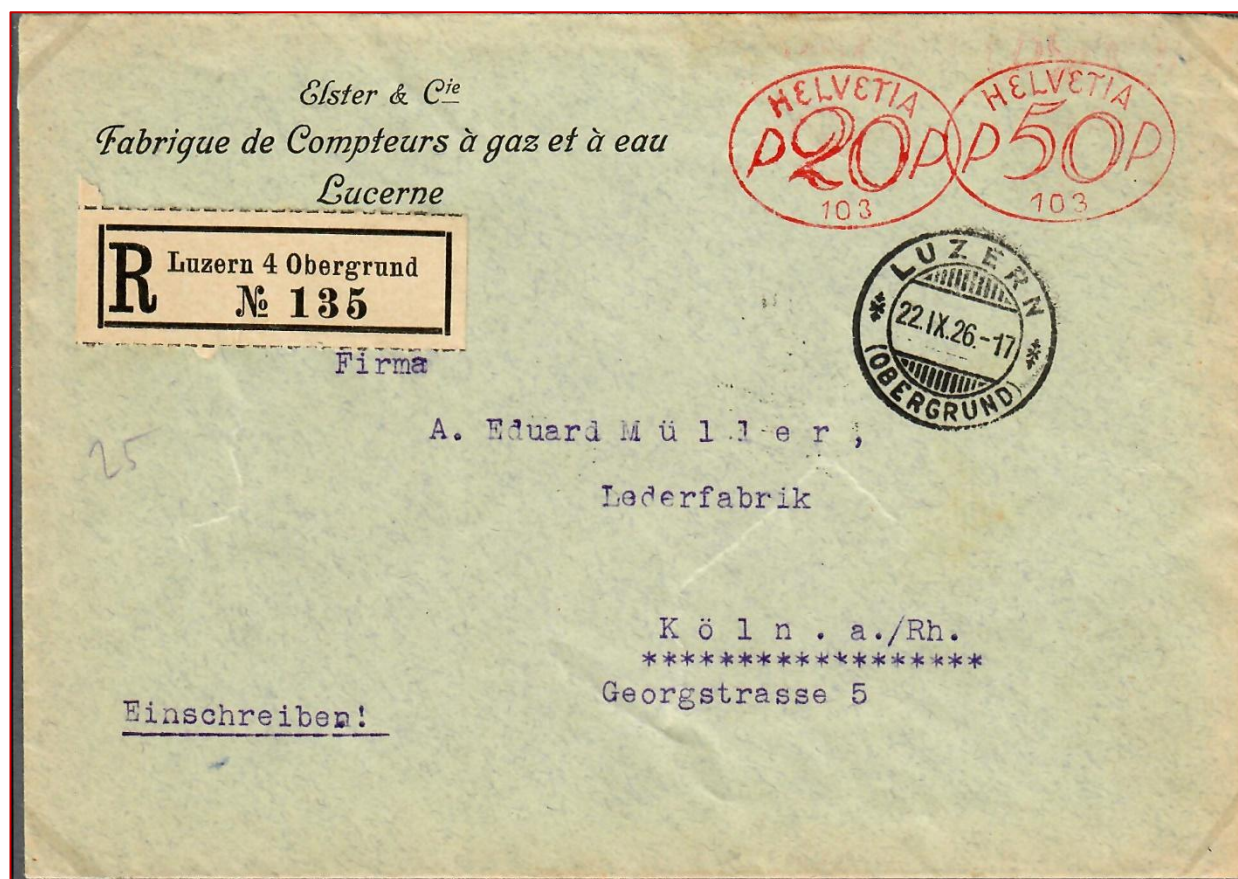
{11/12/1923 / 21/1/1924 – 19/3/1925}

then b) Hasler
 {10/6/1925 – 14/10/1941}.

Dies delivered for
 a): 3 – 5 – 10 – 20 – 30 – 40 – 80 /
 b): 5 – 7½ – 10 – 20 – 30 – 40 – 50 – 60 – 70 – 90 – 1 Fr – 2 Fr.



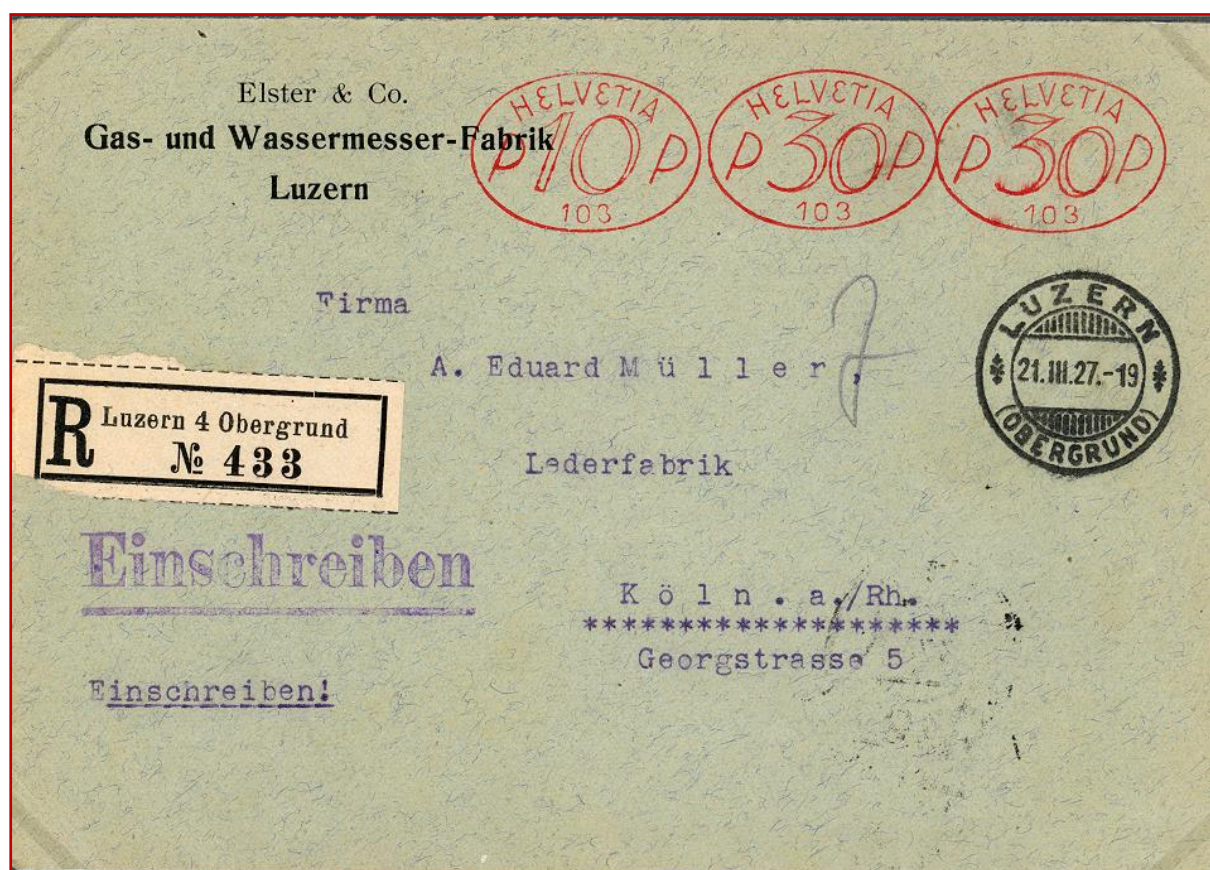
1A type: Franco



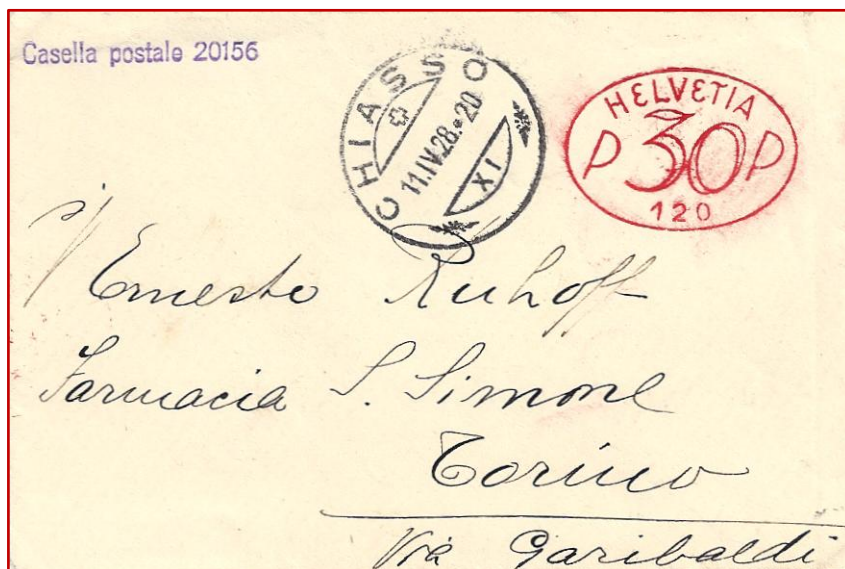
Two registered letters to Köln (DEU). Up: © Lucerne, 22/9/1926 / down: © Lucerne, 21/3/1927
Postage rate for international service, letter ≤ 20 g (1/10/1924 – 29/2/1948): Fr. 0.30 + registered tax (1/1/1921 – 30/6/1930): Fr. 0.40. Total = Fr. 0.70.

Meter n° 103. Elster & Co, then Gas- & Wassermesser-Fabrik AG, Luzern. Franco {4/12/1923 / 1/2/1924 – 1956}

Dies delivered: 5 – 10 – 20 – 25 – 30 – 40 – 50.



1A type: Franco



Letter to Torino (ITA). Postage rate for international service, letter ≤ 20 g (1/10/1924 – 29/2/1948): Fr. 0.30.

Meter n° 120 Giov. Corrado Meiss, Chiasso. Franco {19/3/1928 / 11/4/1928 – 16/5/1936}.

Dies delivered: 5 – 10 – 20 – 35 – 30 – 40 – 70



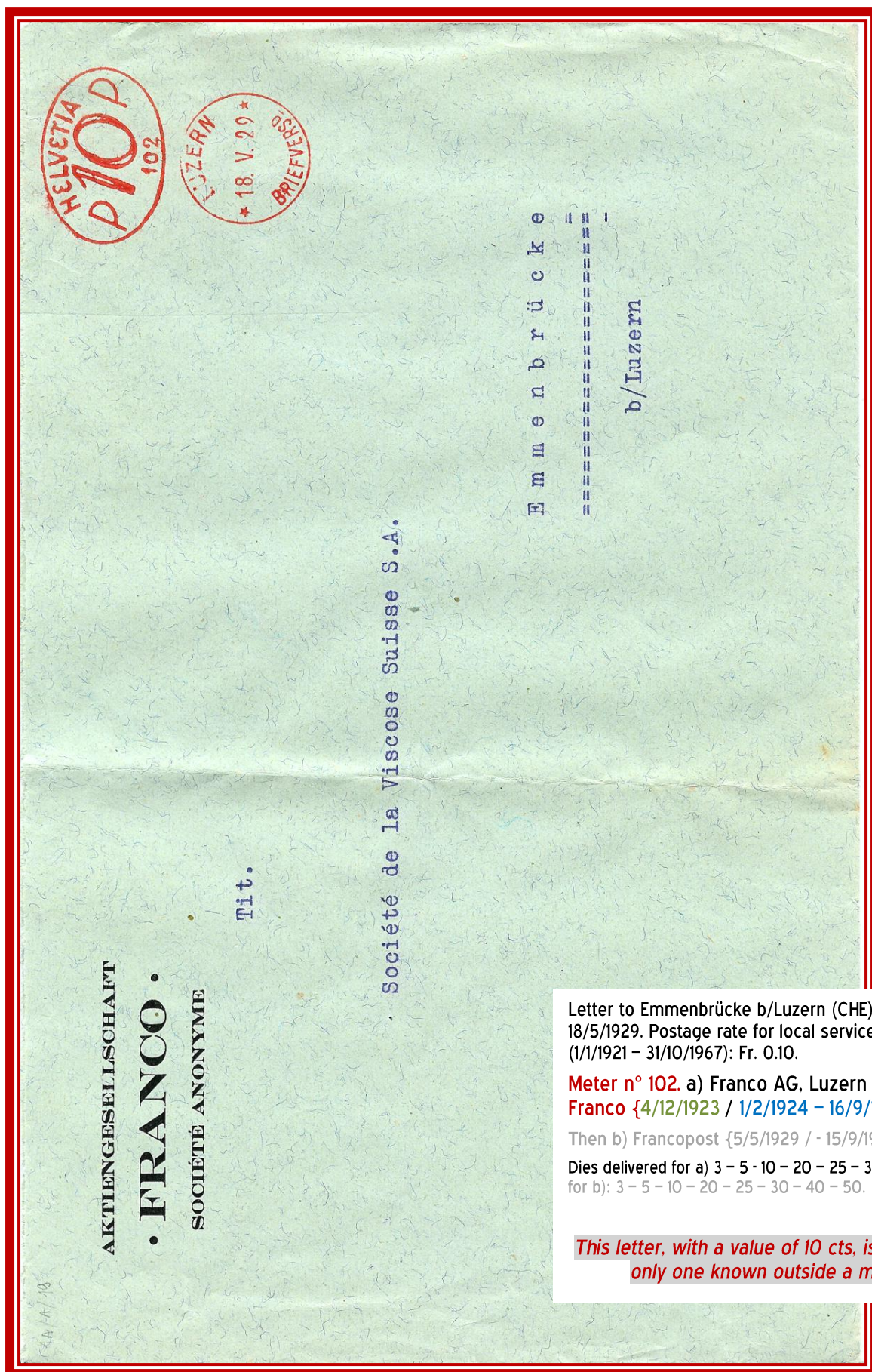
Letter to Engi (CHE). © Neuchâtel, 15/8/1924. Postage rate for domestic service, letter ≤ 250 g (1/1/1921 – 31/10/1967) : Fr. 0.20.

Meter n° 111 Chocolat Suchard SA, Neuchâtel / Franco {9/5/1924 / 15/8/1924 – 1935}

Dies delivered: 5 – 10 – 20 – 30 – 40 – 60

1A type: Franco / town mark

Technically, it was very difficult to add a town mark to the Franco machine. An attempt was made from 1/4/1927, on machine n° 102, owned by Franco AG. A single circle town mark was added, but it could only be located below the oval die. Mails franked with this special feature are known only between January 1928 and September 1929. However, only 3 examples are known and stored in the PTT Museum in Bern (value: 3 cts dated 16/9/29, 20 cts dated 10/1/28 and 20 cts dated 2/2/28).



Letter to Emmenbrücke b/Luzern (CHE). © Luzern, 18/5/1929. Postage rate for local service, letter ≤ 250 g (1/1/1921 – 31/10/1967): Fr. 0.10.

Meter n° 102. a) Franco AG, Luzern /
Franco {4/12/1923 / 1/2/1924 – 16/9/192935}

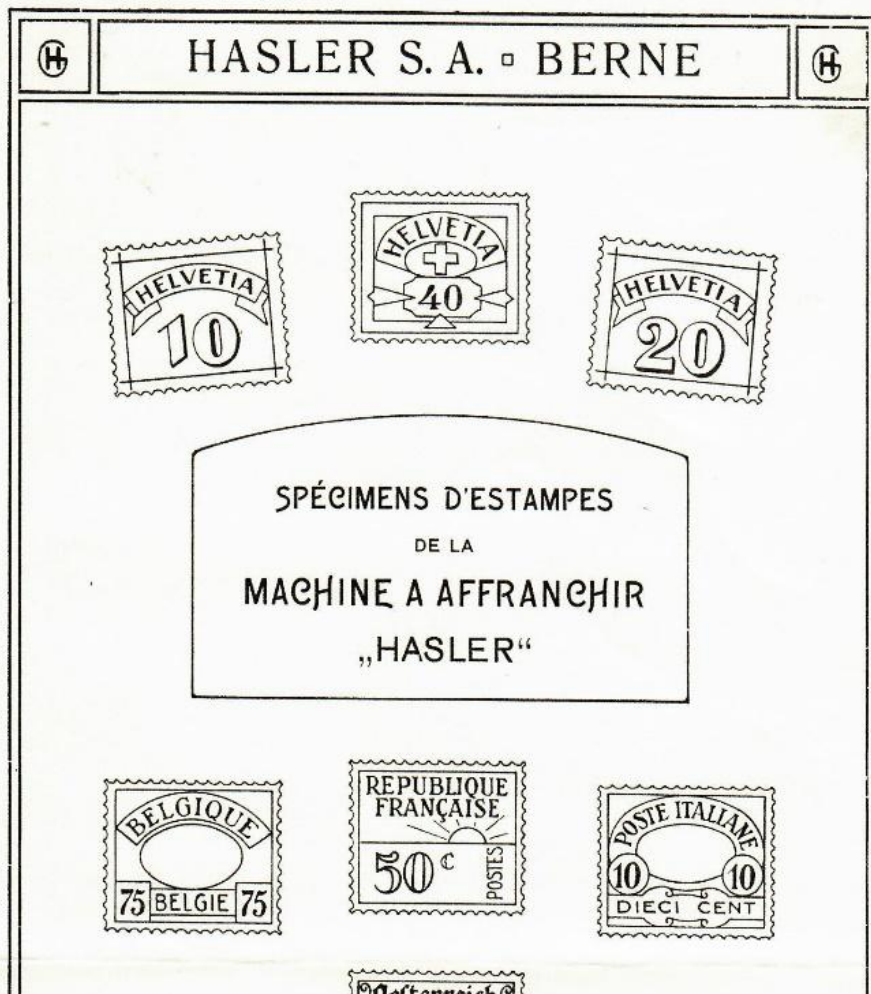
Then b) Francopost {5/5/1929 / - 15/9/1930}

Dies delivered for a) 3 – 5 – 10 – 20 – 25 – 30 – 40 – 50
 for b): 3 – 5 – 10 – 20 – 25 – 30 – 40 – 50.

This letter, with a value of 10 cts, is currently the only one known outside a museum.



1B type: Hasler / the machine



Original documents of the Hasler Company distributed on the occasion of the 1924 Universal Postal Congress in Stockholm.

La Société Anonyme HASLER *Berne (Suisse)*

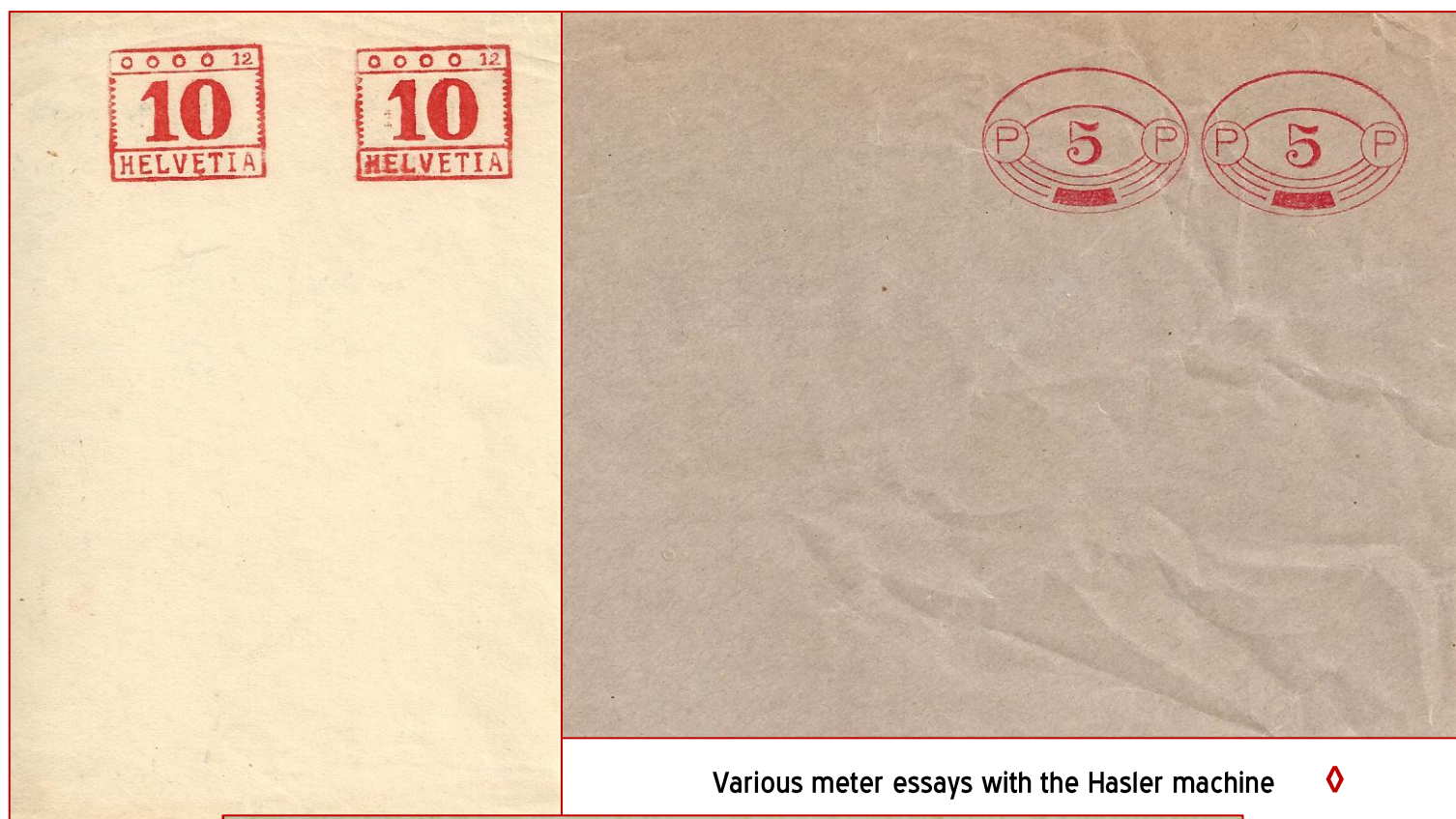
a l'honneur de vous adresser sous ce pli une brochure concernant sa nouvelle machine à affranchir „HASLER“.

Par la même occasion, elle a l'avantage de vous informer, que lors du congrès postal universel à STOCKHOLM, elle exposera une machine et vous communiquera prochainement la date exacte et le lieu où cette machine sera exposée.

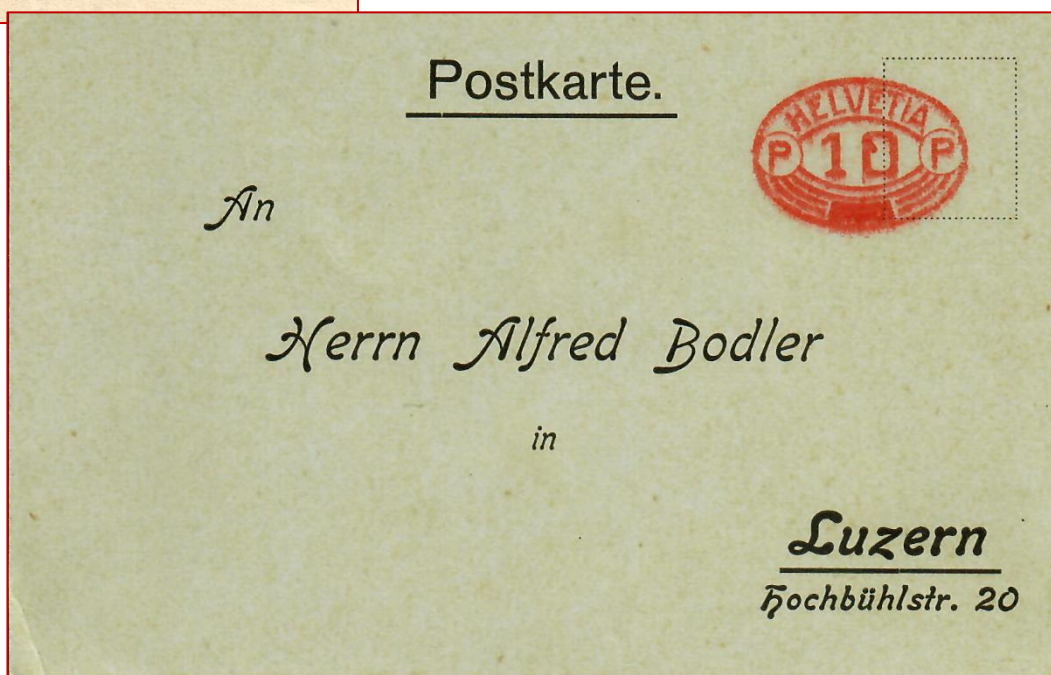
C'est avec plaisir que son représentant vous donnera sur place tous les renseignements désirables sur ce nouveau type d'appareil et dans l'espoir que vous l'honorerez de votre visite, elle vous présente ses sentiments les plus distingués.

1B type: Hasler / essays

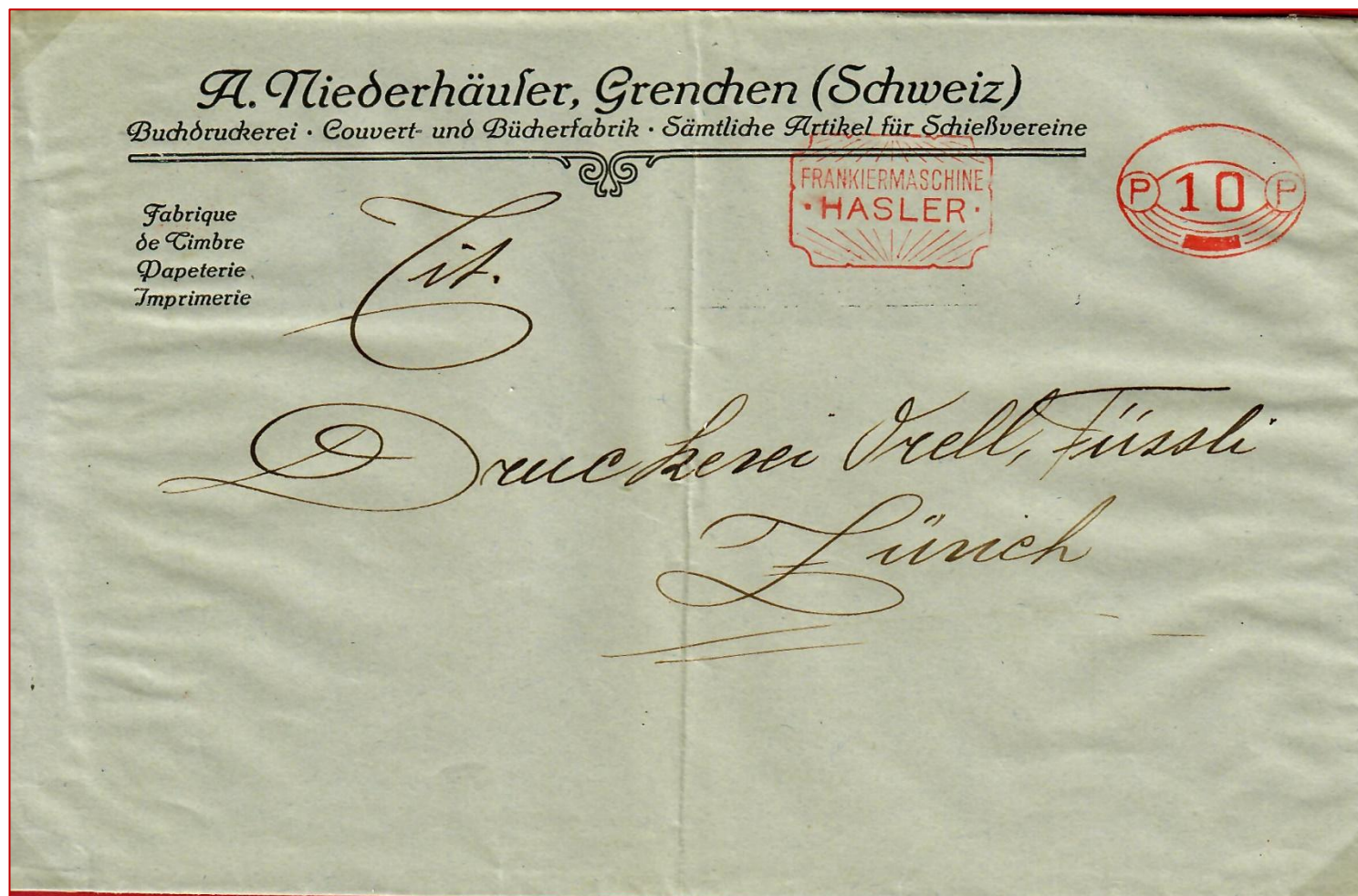
Manufacturer:	Hasler AG, Berne
Model:	Hasler D-106, F-106, F-2
Number of dies included:	8
Concession granted on:	15/9/1923
Putting into service:	February 1924
Number of machines:	about 1'200
Numbering of machines:	N° 201-800, 1001-1531 [except 1357], 2046-2048
Characteristics:	Machine no. with rather large digits, aligned with the curvature of the oval. 7 different town marks. Advertising possible.
Values seen:	3, 5, 7½, 10, 15, 18, 20, 22½, 23, 25, 30, 35, 37½, 40, 50, 60, 65, 70, 80, 90, 1 Fr, 120, 130, 150, 170, 2 Fr, 220, 250, 280, 3 Fr, 350 and 5 Fr.



Various meter essays with the Hasler machine



1B type: Hasler / essay and specimens



A rare essay with advertising. ♦♦



Specimens of various values from a Hasler machine with inscription 'SPECIMEN'

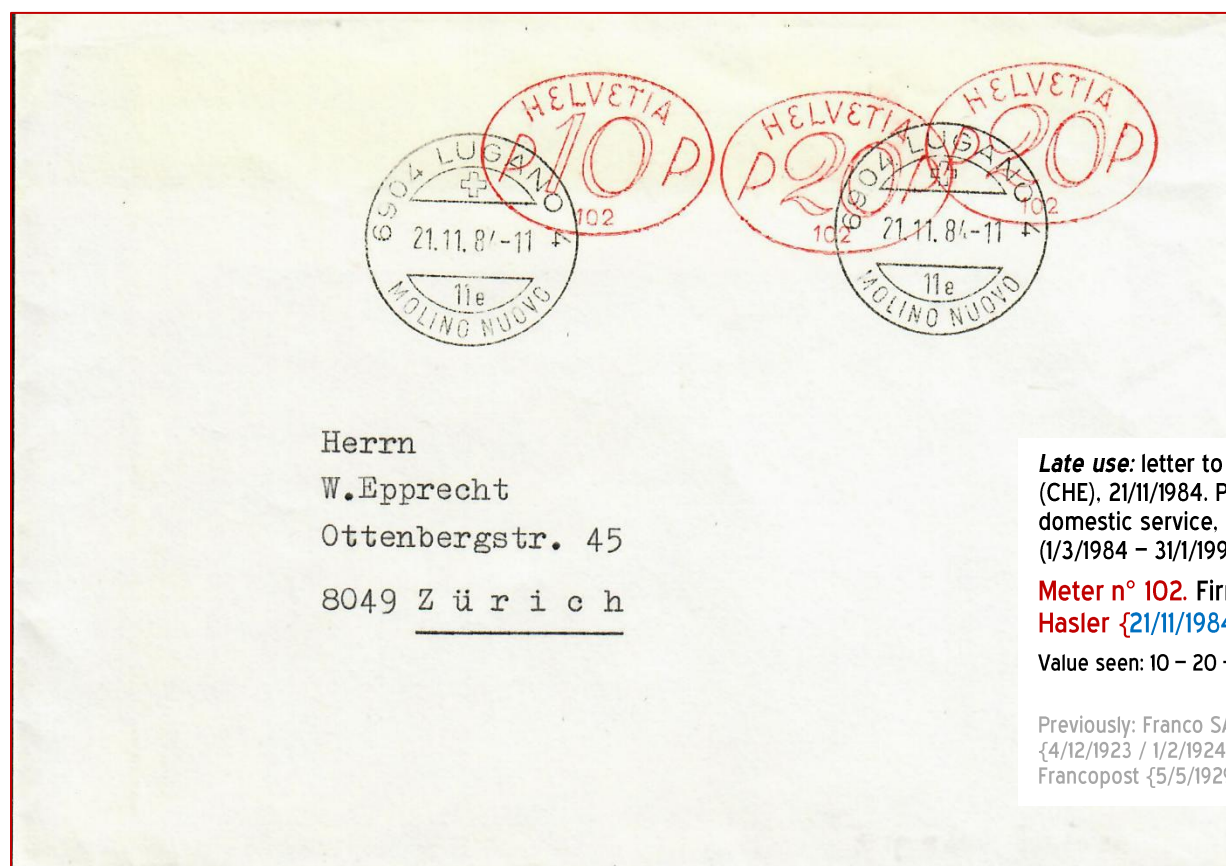
1B type: Hasler / early and late use



Early use: letter to Luzern (CHE). © Bern, 29/3/1924. Postage rate for domestic service, letter ≤ 250 g (1/1/1921 – 31/10/1967): Fr. 0.20.

First Hasler franking machine with n° 201. Gebrüder Loeb AG, Bern / **Hasler** {29/1/1924 / 7/4/1924 – 7/5/1929}.

Dies delivered: 3 - 5 - 10 - 20 - 25 - 35 - 40 - 60 - 80.



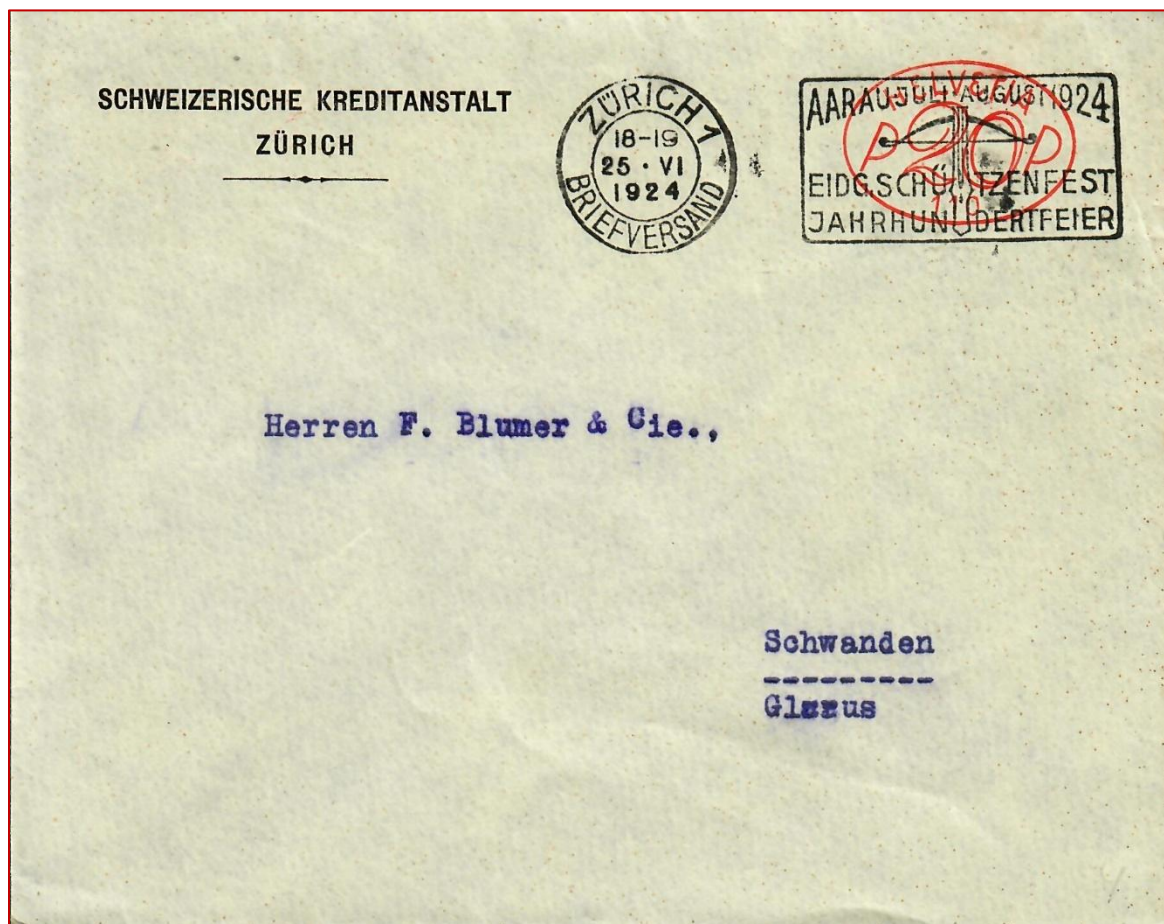
Late use: letter to Zurich. © Lugano (CHE), 21/11/1984. Postage rate for domestic service, letter ≤ 250 g (1/3/1984 – 31/1/1991): Fr. 0.50.

Meter n° 102. Firma Juchli, Lugano **Hasler** {21/11/1984 – 9/1/1996}.

Value seen: 10 - 20 - 40.

Previously: Franco SA, Lucerne. Franco {4/12/1923 / 1/2/1924 – 16/9/1929} then Francopost {5/5/1929 – 15/9/1930}.

1B type: Hasler



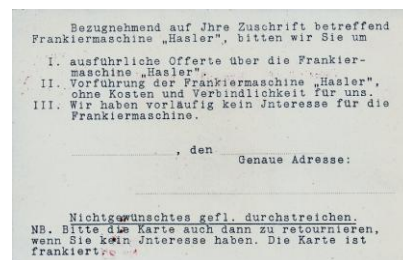
Two letters from the same sender. Up: meter No. 110 (Franco machine) dated 25/6/1924. Down: meter n° 202 (Hasler machine) dated 8/5/1924. This shows that in the same company, two machines from different manufacturers were able to operate simultaneously. The 2 machines must have been in very different departments, as we never find a combination of the 2 meters on a document!



1B type: Hasler



Back of an item (reduced copy)



Pre-stamped business reply card from Muggli, who sell Hasler machines.

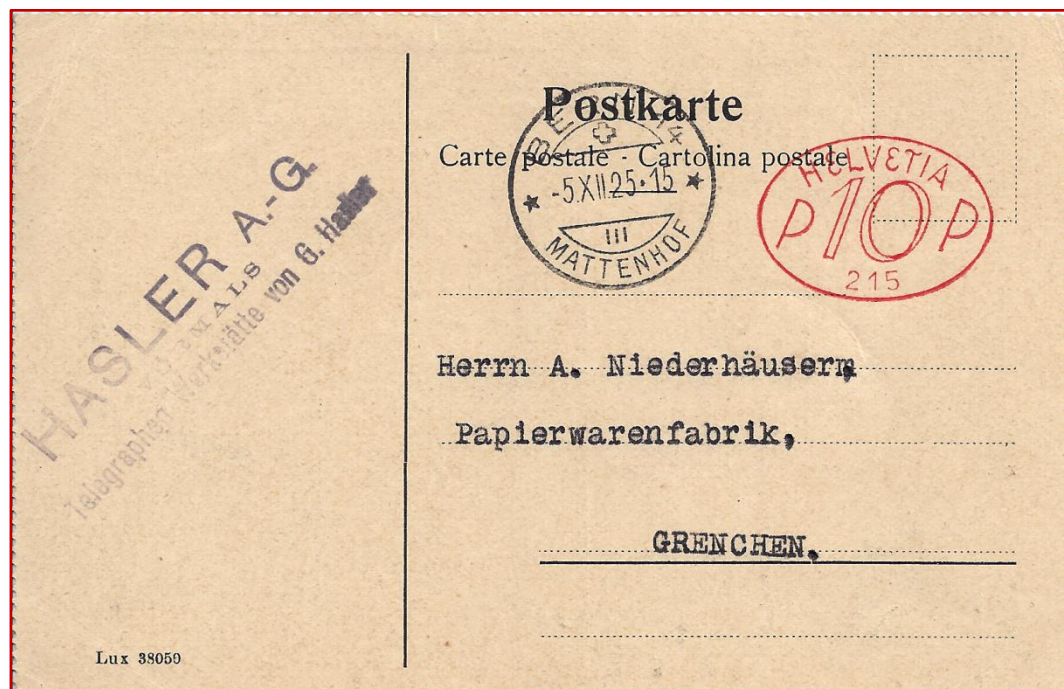
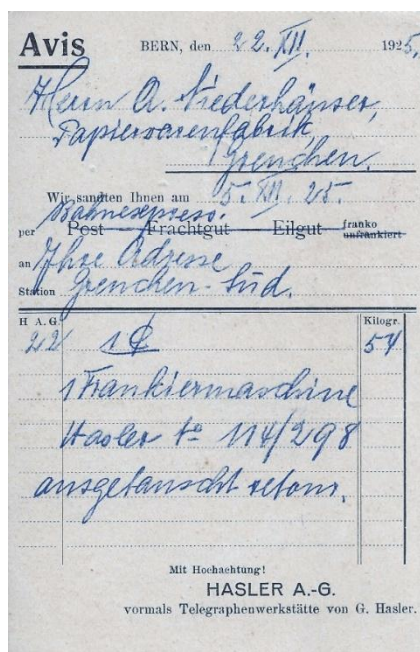
This card has not been returned and therefore bears no cancellation.

The indication **Nr. 204** at bottom proves the origin of the franking. The item can therefore be delivered to any post office or letterbox.

Meter n° 204 Arnold Muggli, Bureaumaschinen, Bern / Hasler {29/1/1924 / 1/2/1924 – 2/6/1956}

Dies delivered: 3 - 5 - 10 - 20 - 30 - 40 - 50 - 1 Fr.

Back of an item (reduced copy)



Commercial postcard from Hasler, Bern. Notice of return of machine n° 298 to Papeterie A. Niederhäuser Buchdruckerei, Grenchen (CHE).

© Bern, 5/2/1925. Postage rate for domestic service, postcard (1/1/1921 – 31/10/1967): Fr. 0.10.

Meter n° 215. Hasler AG, Bern / Hasler {29/1/1924 / 1/2/1924 – 16/10/1933}.

Dies delivered: 5 - 7½ - 10 - 20 - 30 - 40 - 50 - 60 - 80 - 1 Fr