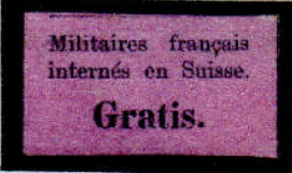


# SWITZERLAND: A SAFE HAVEN FOR CIVILIAN REFUGEES AND MILITARY INTERNEES DURING THE NAZI ERA

Switzerland has a long history of **neutrality** and **helping** those in need be it foreign civilians or members of armed forces who seek safe haven.

Many of these landed in Swiss internment camps until time arrived for repatriation which, in some cases, was very short but in others took years.

In 1871 members of the **French Army** entered Switzerland and were **interned** but soon again repatriated home. A **special label** was issued to help these soldiers with the correspondence & assure "**postage free**" mail



**"Militaires français internés en Suisse. Gratis"**  
(French soldiers interned in Switzerland, free of charge)

WORLD WAR I. 1914 - 1918. Again **many foreign prisoners of war** escaped to Switzerland and were interned in special internment camps. Their mail too was "**postage free**"



Special **Swiss military postcard** with imprint in German and French ", sent by French internee to Lille, France. from **CAMP AESCHI** bei Spiez, canceled Aeschi bei Spiez 25.IX.18. -7, and purple rubber stamp "**Internement des Prisonniers de Guerre, Aeschi p. Spiez - Suisse**

Key items framed

## This **DISPLAY EXHIBIT**

should demonstrate with **philatelic items, historic descriptions, and personal historical documents** the many problems encountered by and in Switzerland during the **Nazi Era** when dealing with **everyday life and correspondence of Emigrants, Refugees & Military Internees** when ultimately Switzerland was completely surrounded by “Axis” Countries

## OUTLINE

- \* Introduction, historical aspects and further explanations 1933 -1945
- \* Mail from/to Emigrants & Refugees who are under Swiss Fed. Police & Justice Dept. Jurisdiction (the different rules; regular every day mail; Emigrant, Refugee & Work camp mail)
- \* September 2, 1939, General Mobilization of the Swiss Army
- \* Swiss (CH) Army Mail Service, Internment Camp Mail and Internee Mail Service
- \* 6-18-1940: 1<sup>st</sup> CH Internment Camp Cancel initiated for W.W. II. Period ( $\emptyset$  31 mm)
- \* Mail Censorship; Military Censorship for Internees, Refugees and some special cases of Civilian Mail. (censorship closing tapes, stamps indicating censorship)
- \* 7-1940 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Group of Internment Camp Cancels *without* Camp Names ( $\emptyset$  28 mm) in French, German & Italian)
- \* Definitive 3<sup>rd</sup> Group of Internment Camp Cancels *with* Camp Name ( $\emptyset$  28 mm) in French, German & Italian.
- \* Interned, Escaped Prisoner of War Mail (*Evadé mail*)
- \* Special Camp under Military Jurisdiction (Italian partisans)
- \* Special Military Security Camp for Internees (Büren)
- \* Special Penal Camp for Internees (Wauwilermoos)
- \* Higher Education Camps for Internees (Wetzikon, Burgdorf, Fribourg, Sirnach, Winterthur)
- \* Search for Military Internees when Camp Location not known
- \* Stamp-like Labels & Postcards to Replenish Welfare Fund for Internees
- \* 1940 Camp for Hospitalized Foreign Soldiers Established in Leysin
- \* The International Bureau of Education (BIE)
  - Office for Intellectual Assistance to Prisoners of War
- \* Special Mail Service for Camp-detached Internees in conjunction with the urgent need for everyone to help feed Switzerland (The Whalen Plan)
- \* Mail from or to Military Internees in Swiss Camps