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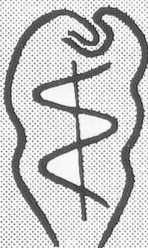
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FALLI-HÖLLI, THE END OF A VILLAGE

During the boom years of the 1970's, Plasselb, a village in the upper region of the Sense in the canton of Fribourg wanted to attract more tourists to its area and, despite some misgivings about the unstable location, allowed entrepreneurs to build a brand new holiday village nearby.

Promptly 40 chalets, a hotel-restaurant and a ski-lift were built and the new holiday resort opened up in 1972. Already during the construction, indications existed that the land was unstable but economical considerations took precedence over any misgivings.

However, following torrential rains,



The "Berghotel" in July 1994, already slightly damaged by the moving mass.

some time ago, the slope on which the village was built started to move. In May 1994 some chalets had already sunk by several centimetres. Over 400,000 SFR were spent to stabilise the slope but to no avail. From then on, it was all downhill. Above the village the slope started to move by 70-80 centimetres a day and in the village itself by 10-15 centimetres. Over 10 million cubic-metres or some 25 million tons of earth were estimated to be in motion. Last June the village had to be evacuated.

Today 36 chalets, the hotel, 2 alpine huts and a holiday home have been destroyed. Since July 1994 the area has been completely sealed off. Despite the dry summer, the land keeps on sliding down and experts fear now that the whole slope will slide down into the valley below where it could block the river and flood the whole area.



Same place 24 hours later.