

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Band: - (1931)
Heft: 487

Artikel: The new Sihl Post office in Zurich
Autor: Hugentobler, J.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-687785>

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THE NEW SIHL POST OFFICE IN ZURICH

By Dr. J. HUGENTOBLER.

Zurich (about 250,000 inhabitants) is the largest town in Switzerland; it has also the most traffic. Its rapid growth is due above all to its geographical position and climatic conditions which favour the creation of many economic possibilities, but also in a large measure to the energetic racial characteristics of its people.

During the first quarter of the century, the postal traffic developed to a great extent.

That called for continual new postal installations, in addition to the general Post Office and the twenty branch offices of Zurich.

The construction of a new post office—the present Sihlpost—near the railway station was undertaken to provide more extensive premises in which to deal with the vast amount of postal matter arriving in the railway station either for delivery or in transit.

The buildings occupy 122,460 m³. The principal building material was ferro-concrete; steel framework was used for the wings and the auxiliary buildings.

In order to make the most of the space the mechanical transport installations were placed under the ceilings and the ceilings themselves were built without summers.

Wherever heavy loads had to be borne massive ceilings on the Maillard system were used; otherwise the massive concrete slabs gave place to hollow construction. The mechanical transporters made many openings in the ceilings necessary, which gave thorny technical problems to solve.

The rooms are all light and sunny; the corridors are lighted by means of lights over the doors. The windows are double glazed; the roofs are covered with slates from the canton of Valais.

The buildings are heated by hot water pumped in from the engine house outside the town where all the waste of the town is collected and burnt (system of distant heating).

The air is renewed by automatic ventilation, the pipes of which end in the tower above the staircases.

All the rooms are fitted with semi-direct electric light.

The buildings are on the whole both as to style and materials essentially utilitarian and devoid of ornament. An exception was made for the two principal entrances which are artistically faced with mosaic.

The new Sihlpost which is a wonder of the modern techniques, was built and fitted up for coping with heavy traffic. Its immediate proximity to the railway station makes it especially suitable for accepting parcels posted in bulk, which class of mail is to be concentrated as far as possible in this office. The Sihlpost serves largely as a redespaching office for the mails arriving there for forwarding to other parts of Switzerland or to foreign countries. The large amount of traffic expected, and the premises for handling it being situated on different floors, called for an extensive mechanisation of the service, which could be carried out by the introduction of different kinds of *mechanical conveyors*.

The advantages gained through these installations are:

- suppression of many daily journeys for the staff;
- diminution of the manipulations for the separate articles;
- uninterrupted transmission of mail matter and consequent acceleration of the service;
- avoidance of interruptions and congestion even with heaviest traffic;
- protection of correspondence;
- economy of space, the installations being mostly suspended;
- alleviation of manual labour;
- less noise and dust in the workrooms.

The Sihlpost is used as *office of posting*, as *despatching office* for local traffic, as *forwarding office*, as *delivery office* for parcels and correspondence for the town of Zurich (with the exception of a few offices which have their own delivery service), as *depository* for letters and parcels in private boxes; it likewise houses the *post and transit Customs offices*.

Parcels posted in bulk must as a rule be prepaid in money and be handed in with a list. The barrows containing the parcels are wheeled into the counter hall to the place of handling; the parcels are here placed on inclined rollers whence they slide automatically on to mechanical conveyors and thus reach the despatching office. By means of automatic weighing machines parcels can be checked haphazard as to weight. Separate parcels, cumbersome goods, express and urgent parcels are sent to the despatching office by means of special apparatus.

Correspondence posted in the letter boxes of the Sihlpost is carried by automatic band-conveyors to the stamping and despatching rooms.

The new Sihlpost is one of the most remarkable edifices in the vicinity of the railway station. The principal block with its nearly one thousand windows and its massive tower, is the first large modern building that strikes a traveller arriving in Zurich. It is an interesting and important attempt on the part of the Postal Administration to apply to the postal services the latest technical inventions that come within their scope.

The Fifteenth Swiss Industries Fair

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for information apply to:

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Mr. John Iten, of Belfast, damask designer, who died on August 21st, left personal estate in Great Britain and Northern Ireland valued at £4,285. He left:—

His pictures and works of art to his wife for life, and subject thereto the trustees are to offer them to his native city of Zug, Switzerland, or failing acceptance to the City of Zurich, and failing acceptance to St. Gall, Switzerland, "where I received my first art education." One of the pictures to be dedicated to the memory of Frederick Alexander Chambers Mills, F.R.S.A., of Belfast.

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Dimanche 1. Mars: Cultes de Ste. Cène matin et soir.

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SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschschweizerische Gemeinde)

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C. 2.
(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den 22. Februar 1931.

11 Uhr vorm.: Gottesdienst und Sonntagsschule.

7 Uhr abends: Gottesdienst.

8 Uhr abends: Chorprobe.

Sprechstunden: Dienstag 12-1 Uhr in der Kirche.
Mittwoch 5-6 Uhr im "Foyer Suisse."

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Wednesday, February 25th, at 8 p.m.—SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Annual General Meeting at "Swiss House," 34/35, Fitzroy Square, W. 1.

Monday, March 2nd.—UNION HELVETIA: Fancy Dress Ball from 9 p.m. till 2 a.m. at 1, Gerrard Place, W. 1.

Wednesday, March 4th, at 7.30 p.m.—SOCIÉTÉ DE SECOURS MUTUELS: Monthly Meeting, at 74, Charlotte Street, W. 1.

Friday, March 6th, at 7 o'clock p.m.—INSTITUTION OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS, Storeys Gate, S.W. 1: Lecture by Ingenieur Hug on the Electrification in the Dutch East Indies. No tickets required, as the lecture is free.

Saturday, March 7th—From 7 to 12 p.m.—SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Cinderella Dance, at the Midland Grand Hotel, St. Pancras, London, N.W. 1.

Saturday, March 7th at 2.30 and 4.30 p.m.—"A Travers la Suisse." Swiss film show at St. George's Hall, Caroline Street, Tottenham Court Road, W. 1. Admission free.

Tuesday, March 10th.—UNIONE TICINESE: Annual Banquet, Ball and Cabaret, at the Monico Restaurant, Piccadilly, W.

Wednesday, March 11th, at 7 p.m.—SOCIÉTÉ DE SECOURS MUTUELS: Committee Meeting, at 74, Charlotte Street, W. 1.

Printed for the Proprietors, by THE FREDERICK PRINTING CO., LTD., at 23, Leonard Street, London, E.C. 2.