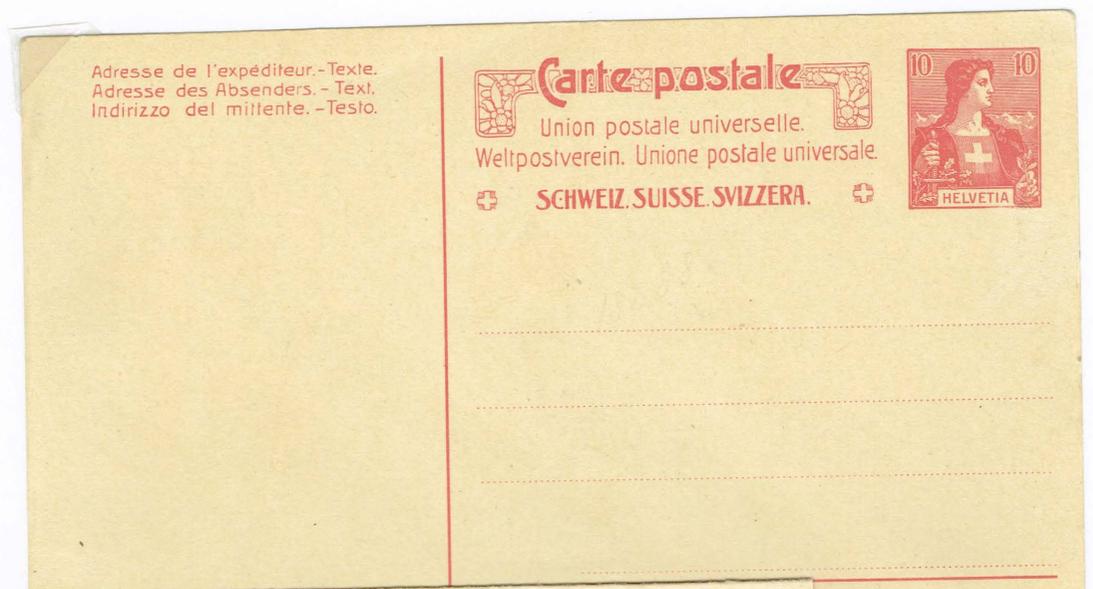The half-length portrait of Helvetia, by the artist Charles L'Eplattenier, was not liked by the public when issued in 1907. The alpine landscape depicted in the background was heavily criticized.

postal card, with imprinted 10c Helvetia, issued in 1907

Adresse de l'expéditeur.-Texte.
Adresse des Absenders. – Text.
Indirizzo del mittente. –Testo.

Carte postale
Union postale universelle.
Weltpostverein. Unione postale universale.
✛ SCHWEIZ. SUISSE. SVIZZERA. ✛

Adresse de l'expéditeur.-Texte.
Adresse des Absenders. - Text.
Indirizzo del mittente. –Testo.

Avec réponse payée.- Mit bezahlter Antwort.-Con risposta pagata.

Carte postale
Union postale universelle.
Weltpostverein. Unione postale universale.
✛ SCHWEIZ. SUISSE. SVIZZERA. ✛

double (reply) card, with imprinted 10c Helvetia, also issued in 1907

In 1909, L'Eplattenier tried to simplify the design with a clearer glacial landscape, but this was also unsuccessful, and, eventually, the redrawn issues were replaced by the Tell stamps of 1914.

double (*reply*) card, with imprinted 10c Helvetia, also issued in 1909

Entire folded letter (*umschlagbriefe*), issued for the 1914 National Exhibition held in Bern

In August 1908, a set of stamps were issued depicting the symbolic Helvetia with sword in hand and holding a laurel leaf. These were Switzerland's first stamps to be produced in two colours since the 'Rayon' issue of 1850. Designed by Charles L'Eplattenier, and printed by the Federal Mint on granite paper (*blue & red fibres*) the initial printing comprised the 9 values shown below:

Type I   Type II

Two distinctly different printings of the 40c exist. Type I shows the designer's full signature and 3 laurel leaves under the hilt of the sword, whereas on Type II, only the initials of the designer and 2 leaves can be seen

Type I   Type II

Subject for the Approved Design

During the early 1900's, many of the stamp designs of the time were criticised as pretentious and fanciful, with the general opinion that a more simple and unaffected design was needed. In response to this criticism, the postal authorities arranged an open competition, the result of which was the acceptance of a design featuring the bust of Wilhelm Tell, adapted by the Federal Mint from an original drawing by the Zurich sculptor Richard Kissling,.

It was Kissling who had designed the Wilhelm Tell Monument at Altdorf. This full-length statue of Tell and his son, Walther, was erected in 1895, in the town where, according to legend, Tell shot the apple from his son's head.

Approving the essays, Kissling made a condition that the stamp, whatever its colour, must be printed on sepia or buff toned paper, so that a relief effect could be created, thereby giving a more accurate impression of the sculptured head of the legendry hero and not just a flat 'photo' on white background.

The first Tell stamp was issued on 8 July 1914. This was the 10c red, now known as **Type II** *

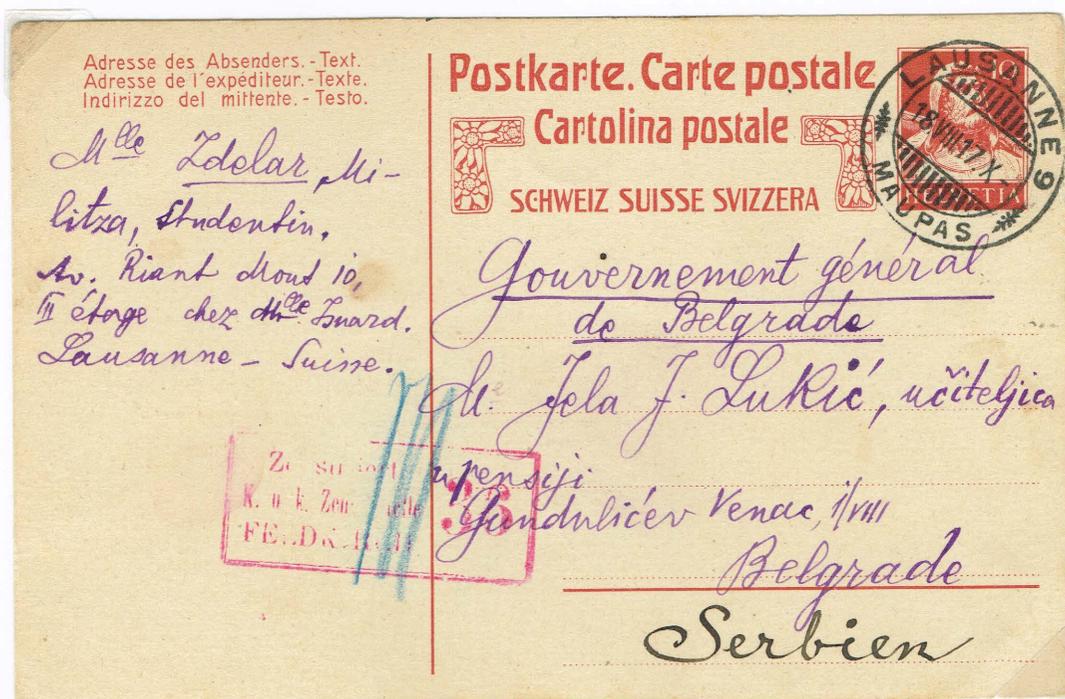Note: crossbars of 'H' and 'E' above centre

HELVETIA

Type II

Type I

HELVETIA

A change to the lettering was requested by the PTT and in September 1914 the inscription was re-drawn with the crossbars of the 'H' and 'E' at centre. This is known as **Type I** *

1917: Lausanne - Belgrade
Example of the 10c postal stationery card, first issued in 1914, imprinted with the Tell (Type II) design, and used for the foreign postcard rate.

Jean Sprenger of Bienne engraved the original die (Type I). Shortly after this die had been used to produce the 10c printing plates, it was damaged – probably cracked.. Sprenger then engraved another die (Type II). When the inscription was re-drawn in September 1914, a new die was cut, and became known as Type I

The first 'Tell Boy' stamps were issued on 11th November 1907. The three values - 2c, 3c and 5c. - were the only 20th century Swiss stamps to retain the inscription 'FRANCO' (*postage paid*), and when the design was changed in 1909 this was removed.

Designed by Albert Welti, a well-known Swiss artist living in Munich, and printed by the Federal Mint, the dies for the 1907 issues were made by the Berlin firm of M. Berthold & Co.

When the first 'Tell Boy' stamps appeared on sale, the design met with much adverse criticism in the public press. Welti was subjected to disparaging remarks, with the design described as "old-fashioned', ugly and unsuitable".

| olive-yellow | dark olive | cinnamon | green | dark green |

In 1908, following the public's less than positive response to the first Tell Boy stamps,
the artist Albert Welti was asked to submit an improved design; at the same time
removing the inscription FRANCO. The design selected from those submitted
differed from the original with its more simple presentation of the same subject.

Unfortunately, Welti made an error in
his improved design, which was soon
noticed and much ridiculed when the
stamps were released for sale on the
30th December 1908: the cord of the
crossbow was placed at the front of the
shaft, which would have prevented the
arrow (*or more correctly, the bolt*) being
released. This design is known as Type I.
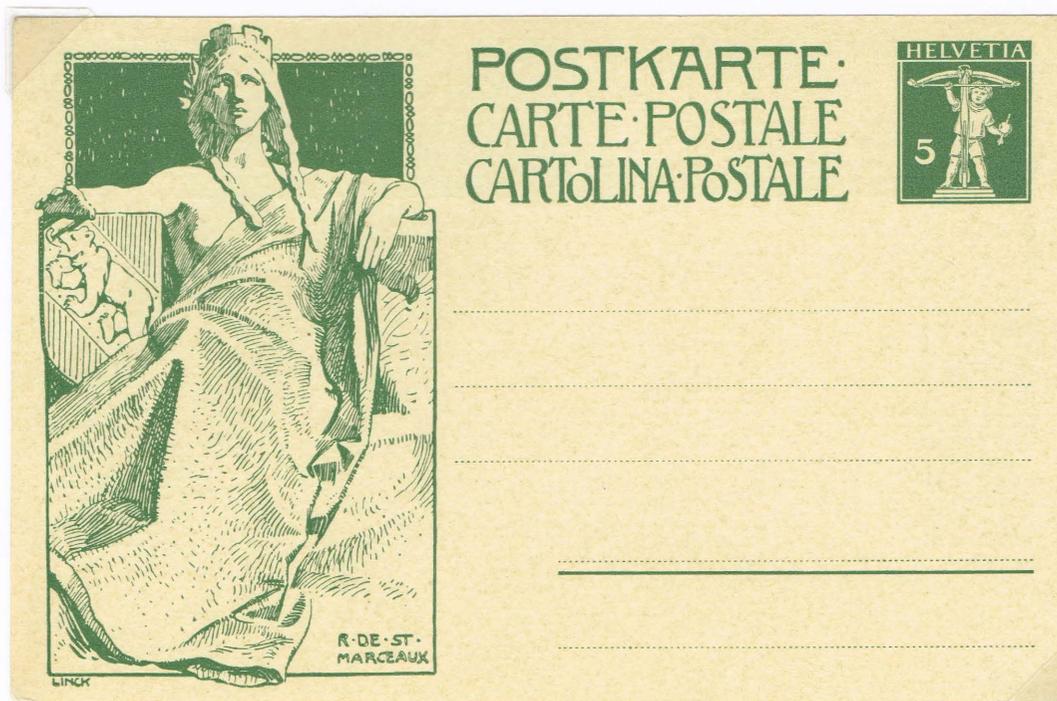
1909: special postal stationery card issued for the inauguration of the
UPU monumment in Bern. Imprinted with 5c Tell Boy stamp, Type I

In 1910 the wrongly drawn cord was
corrected so it appeared behind the
shaft. All three values were redrawn
and are known as Type II.
Sadly, Welti died in 1912, at the age of
50 and was not to know that the Swiss
eventually got used to his creation,
and became very proud of him.
The 'Tell Boy' remained a key design
for over 25 years.

1911: circular from the Leu Bank, Zürich to Bäretswil
Franked 2c (*printed matter rate*)

The first stamps to be printed from the new *Fig.6* layout, were the 5c Tell Boy orange & 10c Tell green. As with all previous booklet-types, sheets were on sale at the Philatelic Bureau, from where the various combinations of *tête-bêche* and *interspace* pairings could be purchased. In addition, new combinations of *se-tenant* pairings could also be obtained, from both booklet pane and sheet.

The booklets also contained two complete panes of the 10c Tell green. These were printed on sheets from the earlier single-value (*Fig.2*) layout, yielding *tête-bêche* and *interspace* pairings.