

# Reflecting the Rise of Tourism During the Belle Epoque

## Hotel Schweizerhof, Luzern : 1870-1914

### Background

The period between the end of the Franco-Prussian War and the beginning of World War I is known for its unusual political stability. Europe was not at war for 45 years! This became known as the Belle Epoque.

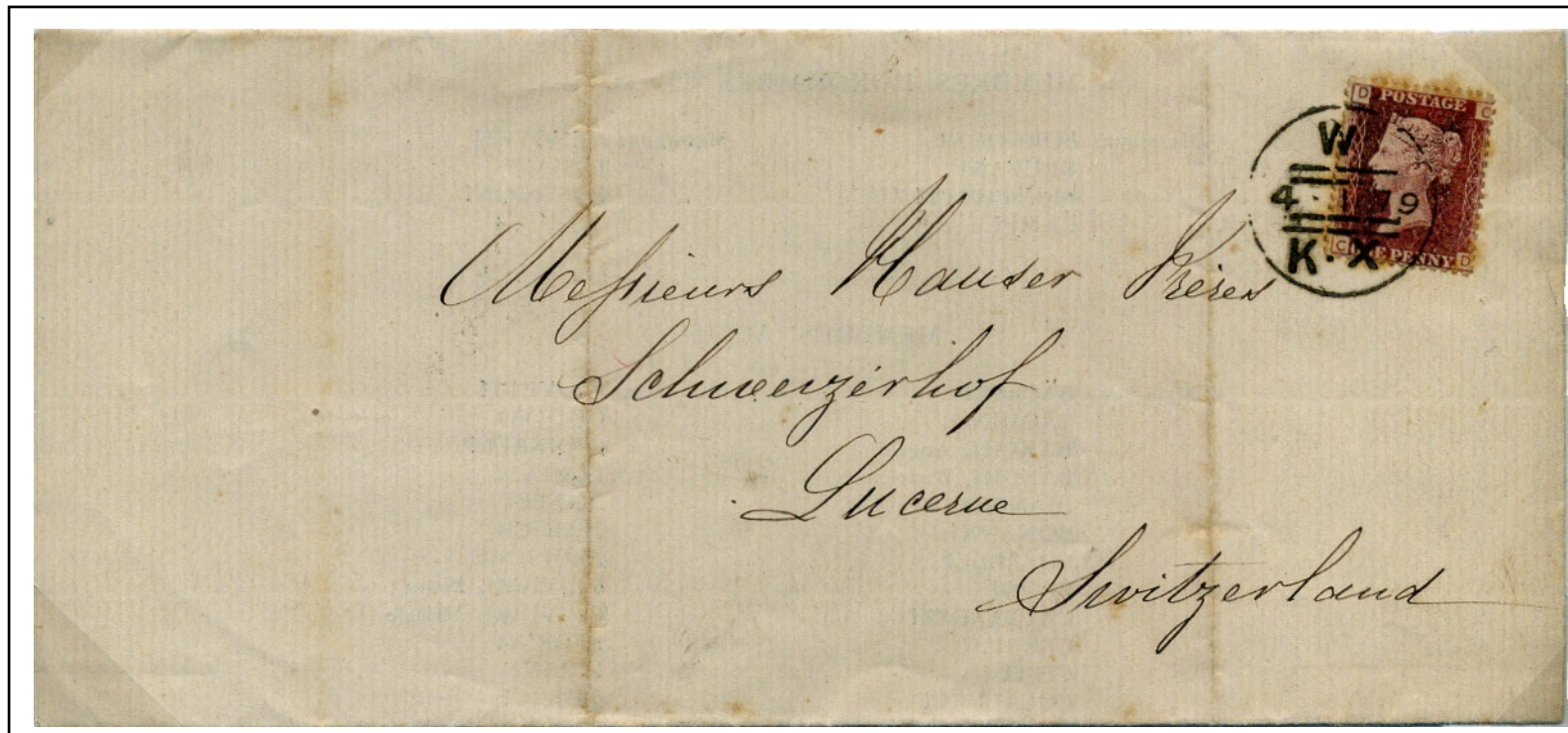
Industrialization of the late 19th Century created wealth and the *nouveau riche* chose to tour Europe with their families and servants. Construction of railways during this period made it easier and quicker to travel throughout Europe. Of ten European countries track mileage increased from 47,980 miles in 1860 to 257,743 miles in 1900. Tourists took advantage of this transportation system for their Grand Tour in Grand Style.

Switzerland was renowned for its mountains and sublime vistas. Swiss hoteliers took advantage of this phenomenon by developing an industry advocating tourism. The mountains were also known to have a positive effect for those needing "a cure" by breathing the healthy air.

The Hauser Brothers, owners of the Schweizerhof and many other hotels, catered to the high-end traveller by providing luxury services for their guests. They emphasized the hotel's central location in Luzern with its spectacular view of both lake and mountains. The most important service the hotel provided was processing incoming and outgoing correspondence for both guests and hotel business. The mail room was the nerve center of the hotel just as the internet is to travelers today.

### The Hotel Schweizerhof

The hotel was built in 1844 by Xaver and Josef Plazidus, with a major expansion in 1855 prior to the purchase by three Hauser Brothers in 1861. In 1865 the Luzernerhof Hotel was built adjacent to the Schweizerhof, combined they totaled 600 rooms under Hauser management in Luzern. During the following decades the Hausers upgraded guest and public rooms, and the outdoor gardens. The last major renovations were completed in 2013-14 under the direction of the present owners Michael and Patrick Hauser, who continue the family business.



↑  
4 January 1879 from London. International printed matter.

Membership list of the Société Des Courriers Italiens, London

### Diversity

This exhibit shows examples of personal and business communications during the Belle Epoque which either departed or arrived at this luxury Swiss hotel. Postal items originating or addressed to the following countries are exhibited: Argentina, Austria, Baden, Bavaria, Belgium, Canada, Canary Islands, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Japan, Serbia, Sweden, and the United States.

Types of international and domestic communication includes 1st class letters, registered letters, postal cards, picture postcards, printed matter, postage due, forwarded and returned mail.



20 August 1907 to Paris. International postcard.

← foreground, Hotel Schweizerhof; background, Hotel Luzernerhof .

### Exhibit Plan

- Frame 1 - Early Promotion of Swiss Hotels
- Frame 2 -
- Frame 3 -
- Frame 4 -
- Frame 5 -

Initial Version of Title Page

### Hauser Owned Hotels

- Luzern - Schweizerhof 400 Beds
- Luzernerhof 200
- Mount Righi - Rigi Scheideck 280
- Bern - Schweizerhof 120
- Gurnigel Bad 560
- Weissenburg Bad 460
- Oberland - Hotel Giessbach 400
- Grand Hotel - Müren 360
- Chur - Hotel Steinbock 150
- Ospedaletti, Italy - Hotel de la Reine 200
- Spezia - Grand Hotel Spezia 100
- Naples - Grand Hotel 200