

# Swiss timetables

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fast run between stations, fully justifying the class's nickname of 'Badewanne', a well known make of sewing machine ! En route to Koblenz we crossed Ae 4/7 no. 10912 on a local freight and Re 4/41 no. 10030 on a six-coach + D local passenger. At Bulach we passed Ae 3/6<sup>l</sup> no. 10653 on passenger stock.

On arriving at Koblenz, I was cheered by the sight of three Ae 4/7's - two multiple control fitted Bern locos on a freight and the third a light engine. Alas, the Stein - Sackingen train I had intended to take had at it's head an infernal Re 4/4<sup>ll</sup>. Curses ! As if to rub it in, a balancing arrival from Stein had an Ae 4/7, no. 10934. I decided to wait until 18.00 hours, to take my chance with the next local to Stein. As it ran Mondays to Fridays only, there seemed a reasonable chance that it might have interesting power. In the meantime, I watched a little red D.B. railbus depart on the connecting service to Waldshut.

My wait for the 18.00 hours train proved worthwhile, as Ae 3/6<sup>l</sup> no. 10656 clattered round the curve, dragging three coaches. There was no 'D' brake van, but the Koblenz station tractor attached a 'Z' postal van. 10656 paused at each intermediate station on the Stein route to collect mail. The line borders the Rhine for much of its length, and the wide river, the forest-covered hillsides provided an almost idyllic setting for the elderly locomotive. At Stein Sackingen, my connecting train for Basel had ..... yes, an Re 4/4<sup>ll</sup>. Still you can't have everything, and 10656 did pursue my train to Basel, as if anxious to remind its modern sister that older motive power still has a part to play on the Swiss Federal Railways.

## SWISS TIMETABLES By Victor Isaacs

A pleasant and interesting feature of Swiss Railways is the excellence of the Swiss Official Timetable published by the SBB. In a conveniently sized book, it provides details of not only their own trains, but of private lines and all of the many buses, lake and river boats, mountain railways and even lists of trams and buses in every town. The publication is very attractively produced. This author judges it to be the best public timetable of any railway administration in the world. Despite the excellence of the Official Timetable, however, many private publishing companies produce their own timetables in Switzerland. On a recent visit, the author noted no less than fifteen of these on sale at prices from SwF 4 to SwF 7.80, compared to SwF 8.50 for the Official Timetable. The private titles are Fribo, Mini-Fribo, Rex, Fretz, Rapide, Blitz, Ostschweiz, Der Gelbe, Neur Ideal-Fahrplan, Korbers Fahrplan, Zenith, Lalette, L'Impartial and Eclair. Many are regional timetables, with their own area in detail (often by reproductions from the Official Timetable) and summary tables for the rest of the country. Perhaps the most useful Timetable for a visiting rail enthusiast (Other than the Official Timetable) would be the Fribo. This consists entirely of the Official Timetable pages reduced to a more convenient size for carrying, and without any of the Official Timetables elaborate colour cover, explanatory pages in English or international train services. It has a simplified map. The price is SwF 7.80 compared to the Official Timetable's 8.50. The Mini-Fribo is similar, but consists only of rail services. It costs SwF 5.50 and easily fits into a pocket or handbag.

It is interesting to be in Switzerland when the new Timetables are published at the beginning of the summer and winter seasons. They are featured not only at ticket offices and station bookstalls, but prominently in bookshops. This, and the very large number of Timetables published are indicative of the interest the Swiss show in their public transport and the substantial use they make of it.