

Another lost railway, the Steffisberg-Thun-Interlaken

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passenger train in each direction so there was plenty of time to have a closer look at No. 411.

It was BEMO and their magnificent models, in HOm scale, that first made me interested in the Rhatischebahn. Their model of the Crocodile is really superb, capturing the "feel" and detail so well.

The green lights gave us the road again and were quickly off towards the Landwasser viaduct. To film this viaduct framed by the Croc' and the open balcony of the coach was almost the climax of the holiday, certainly much more than I had hoped for when I was planning the trip. The weather was perfect, the sun was in the right place and I had no crowds of people to contend with.

Alas, the viaduct came and went so quickly and of course, as is always the case when filming, I didn't actually see it in 'the flesh'; into the tunnel at the end of the viaduct and the short sharp climb up into Filisur station where I disembarked and took a few more sequences for what I hoped would be a memorable film.

Later in the afternoon, after filming and recording (particularly those musical station bells and announcements), I boarded a crowded 'Regionalzug' for the quick return to Tiefencastel to pick up my car and continue back to Filisur to film the Landwasser viaduct and the return Bernina Express.

As I sat on a rock in the middle of the Landwasser river, waiting for the train, I couldn't help dreaming of that beautiful old lady lumbering over the viaduct and that probably by the next time I could afford to come back to Switzerland she would be no more.

Thank you Croc' Nos. 411 and 412, your memory will be a source of inspiration and treasured for many years to come.

ANOTHER LOST RAILWAY, THE STEFFISBERG-THUN-INTERLAKEN by D.F. Arthur

At a meeting of my local Philatelic Society, a member asked me to interpret the Postmark on a Swiss Picture Postcard. Shown below, it turned out to be a 'Thun-Beatenbucht-Interlaken Bahnpost'. Now, there is no longer a railway on the north shore of Lake Thun, a trolley-bus runs from Thun to Beatenbucht and the Post bus runs from Beatenbucht to Interlaken. Reference to 'Schienennetz Schweiz' shows a railway, the Steffisberg-Thun-Interlaken, starting in 1913-14 and closed in stages between 1939 and 1958. Soon afterwards, the card came up at the Society auction and I acquired it!

Then, at a meeting of the Helvetia Philatelic Society I bought a book of railway scenes on old Postcards, 'Les Chemins de Fer d'autrefois en Suisse Centrale de 1870 a 1920' by Gaston Maison. This contained two views of the STI railway, one showing a tram type of loco with a trailer car on the sensational cliff road between Beatenbucht and Merligen. The other shows a train in the streets of Thun carrying French internees to hospitals in the area in 1916. A little later again I found a Postcard with three strikes of the 'St. Beatenberg Station' Postmark (shown below) used in 1909, four years before the opening of the STI! Baedeker for 1913 certainly shows that what is now called 'Beatenberg' was then called 'St. Beatenberg', but how can there have been a station there before the railway opened? And why 'station' and not 'bahnhof'? Could it be the Postmark of the upper station of the Beatenbucht-Beatenberg Funicular, opened in 1889?



'St Beatenberg Station' cancel, but 1909 is four years before the opening of the tramway in 1913!