



Stoffcoupon, Handkerchief – Strawberry Ground,
1910–1920
Herstellung: Fröhlich Brunnschweiler & Cie., Ennenda,
CH
Material/Technik: Baumwolle, Leinwandbindung
93 × 89 cm
Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

Fröhlich Brunnschweiler & Cie. produced striped and plaid cotton fabric for export from 1872 until the 1940s and is exemplary of Swiss economic history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and especially of textile production in the Canton of Glarus. The company produced scarves and kerchiefs in various plaid and striped patterns, adapted to the respective markets.

The Madras handkerchiefs, square cotton cloths with sides measuring one yard, which were produced in southern India since the seventeenth century primarily for export to Africa and Europe, proved to be especially popular in Nigeria. The fabrics from which they were made were distinguished by an axisymmetric mirrored pattern repeat, which usually continued across the entire width. After the company owners initially traded in “reals,” which they purchased directly from weavers in India, they quickly began to produce so-called “imitations” in their own factory in order to be able to adapt the coloring and patterns to the tastes of customers in African countries. Founded in 1872, Fröhlich Brunnschweiler & Cie., like many other companies in Ennenda, aspired to gain a foothold in the

markets of English colonies in West Africa with their handkerchiefs. Young family members were thus sent to Africa to establish trade relations on-site. In Nigeria, the company found a reliable target market for their “imitations,” which were popularly used in particular among the Igbo people as a headscarf or hip scarf for both women and men. Among the exclusively plaid fabrics in two to five colors, the red and white Strawberry Ground was a best seller. (Julia Klinner)

<https://www.eguide.ch/en/objekt/handkerchief-strawberry-ground/>