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CH91 — LONDON: Battersea Fair

The much heralded Battersea Fair finally took place on Saturday, 29 June. Preparations had been underway for well over a year and some 4,500 tickets had been sold in advance of the big day itself. In the event, thanks perhaps to the excellent weather, some 8,000 people, including Federal Councillor Adolf Ogi, attended what was billed as the focal point of the Anglo-Swiss community's celebrations to mark the 700th anniversary of the Helvetic Confederation.

A variety of attractions had been organised to entertain the crowds. As well as stalls selling official Swiss Fest souvenirs, there were displays of crafts, paintings and sculpture.

Musical events figured prominently in the day's proceedings. The Zurich Police Band, Alpstenblick (an Appenzell folk group) and the Musikkapelle Urswil Ligschwil performed throughout the day at the bandstand. At the same venue the Swiss Youth Club, with a rendition of Adolf Staheli's *S'Veieli*, won first prize in the song competition — despite entering with a motto of 'we won't win with talent but with charm!' Perhaps confidently expecting that it would easily have won the song competition, the Unione Ticinese did not enter. Instead a group of its singers performed a folksong which was recorded by Televisione della Svizzera Italiana and transmitted later that evening on TSI's news bulletin.

Arguably, however, the most prestigious of the day's musical events was hosted by the Swiss church. Markus Dolder, the Bern chansonnier, who had travelled from Switzerland especially for the Battersea Fair, gave a concert in the Swiss church's tent.

Dolder had already performed at the

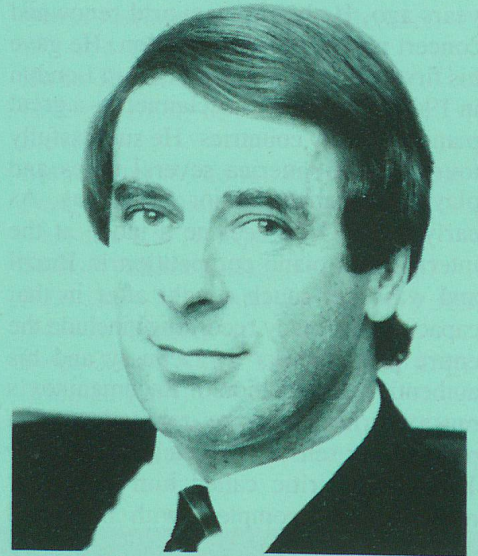
Swiss Church in Endell Street, London, the previous evening, but many who had heard his highly original, self-composed songs in Barndeutsch, High German and French on the Friday evening came back for more at Battersea on Saturday.

In addition to the musical entertainment, there were also two light-hearted dramatic productions and various exhibitions to sample. In the Big Top the staff and students of the Swiss Mercantile Society College presented *700 Years in 20 Minutes* while *Les Vaches Dansantes*, first performed at the City Swiss Club ball in March (see *Swiss Review* 91/2) was revived for two repeat performances at Battersea. Meanwhile, as well as the displays organised by the Swiss National Tourist Office and the Swiss Railway Society, the Swiss Youth Club presented *Yesterday and Today* — an exhibition to commemorate the changing lifestyles of Swiss au pairs and language students in London over the last six decades.

The Swiss Youth Club's tent, where the exhibition was displayed, acted as a meeting point for many present and former au pairs. Other groups also had their special meeting places. Disappointingly few French-speaking Swiss assembled in the Swiss church's tent, but — as ever — the Unione Ticinese was more successful. The club for the Italian Swiss ran a sixty-seat ethnic self-service restaurant, labeled Locanda Ticinese. This was spectacularly decorated with red and blue flags from Ticino and Grigioni. The indefatigable catering committee of the Unione excelled itself serving up torta di pane, panettone and (real, we are assured) Merlot del Ticino.

There was, of course, much food and drink available elsewhere too — from the Youth Club's coffee and patisserie stall to the Parson's Punch concocted by the ladies of the Causerie.

Particular attention was taken to cater for the interests of the several hundred children who attended the fair. An anonymous donor enabled most of them to receive a free sausage. There was also a special children's corner staffed by the Mothers' Group of the Swiss Church, where the toddlers could mould playdough, paint their faces or take part in one of the many organised games and races.



Adolf Ogi



Swiss Youth Club members in traditional costume

According to the organisers, it was all a great success. 'Simply brilliant,' was the comment of Marlies Davies (Swiss Mothers' Group), while Monika Faes (Swiss Youth Club) thought that it was 'just a great day'. It was certainly a marvellous feat of organisation, the bulk of it masterminded by Jeffrey Long, President of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK, and by Rose-Marie Breitenstein. For a different view, however, turn to Readers' Letters on page five.

□ *Battersea Prize Winners* — see page four

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Albert Ferber was born in Luzern eighty years ago. He became a world renowned concert pianist based in London. He gave his first recital at Wigmore Hall in London in 1945. Soon he was acclaimed as a great pianist in many countries. He successfully toured Latin America several times and played with many major orchestras. As early as 1965 he became a judge at the international piano competition in Brazil and was later much sought after in that capacity. His many recordings include the entire piano works by Debussy and his authentic interpretation of Rachmaninov's music earned him the reputation of a particularly sensitive musician. The *New York Times* critic called him a 'master musician . . . complete with head and heart as well as hands'.

It was his heart that endeared him to his many friends. Many of our compatriots in London remember him from recitals he gave in the Swiss community, especially at City Swiss Club events. Many of them remember him as a staunch and loyal friend.

He died in January 1987. A year later, four of his former students gave a concert in his memory at the Wigmore Hall. Works by Schubert, for whom he had a special affection, Fauré and Rachmaninov — how could it be otherwise — were performed. But the most moving work was the first performance of six songs by Verlaine, which Ferber had composed during the last four years of his life, full of passion and pain, the final notes written just before he died, sounding a sad farewell. It was a fitting and moving tribute to a great artist and a generous friend. [MM]

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Impressions of Switzerland



A photographic exhibition, entitled *Impressions of Switzerland*, was held at London's Studio Workshop in April. The exhibition, part of the 700th anniversary celebrations, was jointly organised by the Swiss National Tourist Office in London and students and staff from Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education. The highly original and imaginative photographs on display illustrated the students' impressions of three different parts of Switzerland — the Romandie, central Switzerland and the Ticino. If you missed the exhibition, several of the photographs on display have been published in the latest edition of *Revue* — not this publication, but the magazine published by the Swiss National Tourist Office. All the students whose work was exhibited are studying for an HND course in editorial and advertising photography.

Photographer: She Kee Lee

Tell Tales

William Tell did not exist. That was the opening salvo of Professor Madeleine Therrien during some *Reflections on William Tell* at a meeting of London's New Helvetic Society held in the Swiss embassy. Professor Therrien, of the University of Maryland, pointed out that the legendary Swiss hero is not referred to in any of the chronicles written in the thirteenth century — that is when Tell was allegedly championing the cause of freedom against the Habsburg official, Gessler. It was not until the 1470s that the story is first known to have been given a Swiss setting.

Long before the later fifteenth century, however, the ingredients of the Tell story were recited in other parts of Europe. In England a Cumbrian version of the story was in circulation by 1432, if not earlier. In the ballad of *Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough and William of Cloudele*, the Cumbrian William, like the Swiss Tell, used an arrow to pierce an apple which had been placed on his son's head. Indeed, the outlines of the story which is associated with William Tell can be traced back to even earlier Scandinavian legends.

According to Professor Therrien it was in the eighteenth century that the linkage between the Tell story and the Swiss identity hardened. The Swiss version of the

legend was published in 1734 — and those who pointed out its Nordic origins were vehemently attacked. With few other factors around which to unite their nation, the Swiss imagined and created their own national hero. Since then diverse groups have used the immense appeal of the Tell legend and its identification with Switzerland for propaganda purposes. The image of Tell was used by both those for and against the French Revolution. More recently, it was also used by both those in favour of and against Switzerland's membership of the United Nations. The admen have also frequently employed Tell in an attempt to peddle chocolates, Levi jeans, Swissair and much more besides. William Tell sells. Not bad, as Professor Therrien noted, for a murderer!

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Mothers Group Tel: 081-340 9740 (Johanna von Orelli)

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Swiss Youth Club Tel: 081-340 9740 (Monika Faes)

Union Ticinese Tel: 081-741 4224 (Giuseppe Broggin)

Around and About

West of Scotland

Gilbert Schlaeffli, Consul-General, addressed a meeting of the West of Scotland Swiss Club in Glasgow on 18 May. Before an audience drawn from all four Scottish Swiss clubs, Mr Schlaeffli spoke on the subject of Switzerland in Europe and the world today. A lively and wide-ranging question session followed, during which matters as diverse as Switzerland's relations with the European Community and its treatment of Kurdish refugees were raised.

North Devon

Trudy Braund is a Swiss citizen who lives in Ilfracombe, North Devon. She would very much like to hear from any Schwyzerduetsch speakers in the Ilfracombe and Barnstaple areas, with a view to holding monthly meetings and perhaps starting a North Devon Swiss Club. Any readers who live in the area and who are interested in such a venture are asked to contact Mrs Trudy Braund, 1 Pretoria Terrace, Slade, Ilfracombe EX34 8LD.

Swindon

Susanne Mulchrone, originally from Birmensdorf near Zurich, would like to organise informal meetings on a regular basis for Swiss citizens (especially Swiss women married to Englishmen) in the Swindon area. Susanne has lived in England for four years and is, herself, married to an Englishman. She can be contacted by telephone on 0793-537591.

SMS, London

The Swiss Mercantile Society College, London, held a reunion dinner on 28 June. Some fifty former students travelled from Switzerland for the event, including some who have studied in London as long ago as the 1930s. Also present were Federal Councillor Adolf Ogi, a student at the college in the early 1960s; Dr Rudolf Wyder, Director of the Secretariat of Swiss Abroad; and Dr Rolf Bodenmuller, head of the Federal Service for Swiss Abroad in the Swiss Foreign Ministry.

Youth Exchange

Further details about the 1992 youth exchange programme will be published in the next issue. Information can also be obtained from Margrit Lyster, Swiss Welfare Office, 31 Conway Street, London W1P 5HL.

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CH91 — YORKSHIRE : 29th Landsgemeinde

On 1 June, for the first time in thirteen years, about one hundred Swiss citizens and their friends gathered at Hardcastle Crags, near Hebden Bridge, in Yorkshire to participate in the 29th Landsgemeinde. The Yorkshire Landsgemeinde was inaugurated in 1948 by Jean Inebnit, from Chateau d'Oex, a lecturer in history at Leeds University. Since the 1950s the venue of the event has been known locally as Little Switzerland because of its striking scenic similarity to the Ruetli, where the forest cantons allegedly sealed their first alliance in 1291.

The two principal roles in the 1991 Landsgemeinde were taken by Jeffrey Long, President of the Yorkshire Swiss Club, and Mariann Meier, from London, who attended the first Landsgemeinde in 1948. Mrs Meier, dressed in a traditional Basel-Land costume, recited a brief history of Switzerland, noting when each canton formally joined the Confederation. As she reached the appropriate chronological point, Mr Long invited the citizens of that canton to step forward, shake hands with each other and join a circle. Franz

Muchheim, the Swiss ambassador, was one of the first to come forward as a citizen of Uri. Others followed, with a single representative from Jura, Switzerland's newest canton, pulling up the rear.

The 29th Landsgemeinde attracted a considerable amount of interest both within the Swiss community at large in Britain and locally among the inhabitants of West Yorkshire. Swiss citizens journey to Yorkshire from Scotland, Lancashire, the Midlands, Devon and London. Among the local Yorkshire observers was Sir Bernard Ingham, formerly Press Secretary to the Prime Minister. When still a young journalist on the *Hebden Bridge Times*, Sir Bernard had reported on one of the first Landsgemeinde.

Before the enactment of the Landsgemeinde, the Swiss ambassador was given a civic welcome at Hebden Bridge Marina by the mayor of Hebden Royd, Councillor Peter Horn. Local Red Cross members presented the ambassador with roses and a scroll setting out the principles of the Red Cross — in recognition of Henri Dunant, the organisation's Swiss founding father. A blast on the alphorn by Anton Hubermacher heralded the arrival of a horse-drawn barge, laden with a three-foot long outsize Swiss roll, which had been donated by the organisation Penine Yorkshire Bygone Days.

According to Jeffrey Long the day was an enormous success. He was particularly grateful for the generous support given to the event by Cheeses of Switzerland and by Huerlimanns, the brewing company. Mr Long hopes that the 30th Landsgemeinde can be organized for next year.

Locals too greeted the event with enthusiasm. In the 1970s the citizens of Hebden Bridge used to organise an annual Swiss week, during which they decorated their shops with colourful bunting. This was abandoned because of lack

of interest, but now Councillor Horn has suggested reviving the Swiss week. Indeed, he has come up with a new idea. He would like to propose to the local council that it investigate the possibility of twinning with a Swiss town, in order to strengthen the ties between Switzerland and its diminutive namesake in Yorkshire.

Mariann Meier will publish *The History of the Landsgemeinde at Hardcastle Crags (Yorks.)*, incorporating the history of Switzerland. It will be made available later in the year from Swiss societies.

Battersea Winners

The winners of the various prizes awarded at the Battersea Fair are as follows:

Raffle (1st Prize — two air tickets from England to Switzerland, donated by Swissair): Charlotte Baranyovits-Frei, Wokingham.

Advance Applications Prize Draw (1st Prize — golf umbrella, donated by Cheeses of Switzerland): Yvonne Barnett, Wembley.

Children's Painting Competition (sponsored by Swissair and Caran d'Ache): Quintin Chou-Lambert.

Balloon Competition (1st Prize — an air ticket to Switzerland and Schilthornbahn cable car ticket, sponsored by R.V.I. Travel Services Ltd.): Elsa Brooks, Finchley.

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OSA in Luzern

The 69th congress of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) was held in Luzern in July. The theme of the congress was *The Fifth Switzerland: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*. Several members of Britain's Swiss community attended the event and two of them played a particularly important role in the proceedings. Margrit Lyster, of the Swiss Welfare Office in London, acted as the official reporter during a session devoted to the Swiss abroad and their new home. Later Mrs Lyster joined a panel of other eminent members of the Swiss community abroad for a round table discussion on *Whither the Fifth Switzerland?*

Meanwhile, Mariann Meier, also from London, delivered the keynote speech at a session on the relationship of the Swiss abroad to their country of origin. Mrs Meier was later presented with a floral bouquet by Professor Walther Hofer, President of the OSA, in recognition of her thirty years service to the cause of the Swiss abroad. For many years Mrs Meier was the south of Britain's delegate on the Commission of the Swiss Abroad.

The present British representatives on the Commission — Giuseppe Broggin and Regula Sharp (South) and Berni Simon and Ursula Ditchburn (North) — are currently compiling a report on the congress which will be circulated to all Swiss clubs and societies. An abbreviated version of this report will be published in the next issue of *The Green Pages*.

It was also confirmed in Luzern, at a meeting of the *Swiss Review* editorial team, that the *Review* will appear eight times a year as from 1992. *The Green Pages* will continue to be published quarterly within the *Review*.

Letters

Battersea

Sir,

We were very pleased, being a Swiss woman married to an Englishman and living in London, to have the opportunity of joining in the celebrations of SwissFest 700 and on 29 June we set off for Battersea Park in eager anticipation.

We paid our entrance fee of £2.50 each, expecting that this £5.00 would be good value for money. After wandering around for a full ten minutes, however, we had seen everything and really wondered what the entrance fee was in aid of — the main attraction seemed to be advertising tents for Swiss Air, Swiss Church etc. Apart from these there was very little except food and drink for sale.

Putting on a brave face, we decided that at least we could have some wholesome Swiss food. We chose Bratwurst, as being the most typical, and paid out another £2.50 each for what turned out to be a most disappointing sausage which tasted of nothing and a roll without butter. There was no potato salad and if it had not been for the mustard, the sausage would have been indistinguishable from the paper serviette that went with it. Incidentally, the service was also very slapdash!

We left soon after, wondering whether the event had really been a celebration laid on by Switzerland for its residents abroad, or was it in fact some sort of charity of fundraising exercise for the Swiss government? We would be pleased if someone could elucidate.

Yours sincerely,

Gerald and Ursula Whitbread,
Richmond

Zur 700 Jahre Feier

Hab't Dank, Ur-Vater der kantone
von Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden
erkampfend — mutig Ihr erworben
'nie mehr Tyrannen untertan'.

Ein machtig Fundament gegründet
Hab't Dank — Ihr Helden jener Tage
mit heil'gem Schwur — tief in den
Bergen

damit daraus die Freiheit rage

Erhalten mit des Hochsten Schutze
Freiheit seit 700-Jahren
weil unterdrückt noch Nachbarlander
Leibeigene gar viele waren

Gebeutigen Hauptes ehren wir
die tapferen Manner alter Zeiten
die Heldenhaft ihr Leben liessen
ein freies Land uns zu bereiten

Darum betrachte jeder Schweizer
mit Ehrfurcht seinen Schweizerpass
das rote Feld — Blut der Ahnen
Freiheit fur uns — dadurch erschloss.

Hedwig Gehrig,
London

Gorging

Sir,

With reference to the article concerning the inaugural concert (Green Pages, 2/91), many of us experienced a marked lack of appetite in respect of our apprehension at the 'serious situation' [in the Gulf]. Had guests chosen not to gorge, rather than to refrain from applauding, their feelings might have been more sympathetically and appositely expressed. They, of course, chose to gorge. As for the 'whole act (being) like a prayer . . . !

Yours sincerely
Martin Doherty,
London.

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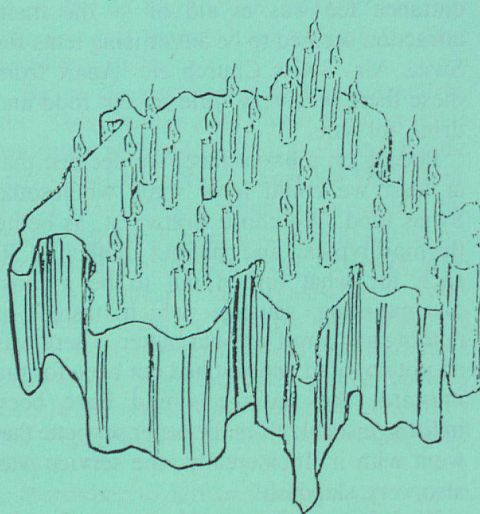
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The Final Problem: Sherlock Holmes at Reichenbach

Wearing Victorian dress and carrying canes, parasols, fans, hat boxes or Gladstone bags, over one hundred members of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London followed in the footsteps of the master sleuth and his companion, Dr Watson, on a centenary pilgrimage to Switzerland. The group included enthusiasts from the UK, Europe, North America and Japan.

Led by Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson, and dogged by the evil Professor Moriarty, each member brought to life a character from the famous stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Inspector Lestrade was there; so too was the Australian rascal Holy Peters and the fiery Miss Kitty Winter.

A full and fascinating schedule had been organised by the Swiss as part of the celebrations of the 700th anniversary of the Swiss Confederation. Conan Doyle knew Switzerland well and chose the Reichenbach Falls as the place for the demise of his most popular character, Sherlock Holmes.

The programme included visits to Bern, Emmental, Thun, Interlaken, Meiringen and also to Luzern, where Sir Arthur stayed whilst on a lecture tour in August

1893, just prior to writing *The Final Problem* — the novel which contains the Reichenbach incident. Then, exactly one hundred years after their first encounter, 'Sherlock Holmes' and 'Professor Moriarty' met again in order to reenact the death struggle on the ledge above "that awful abyss" at the Reichenbach Falls.

One of the other highlights of the tour was the official opening, by Air Commandant Dame Jean Conan Doyle, daughter of Sir Arthur, of the Sherlock Holmes Museum in Meiringen. This latest attraction, in the former English church, contains the first truly accurate reconstruction of Mr Holmes' living-room at 221B, Baker Street in London. The room was recreated by Tony Howlett, Holmesian expert and past chairman of the Sherlock Holmes Society and by the London architects and designers John and Sylvia Reid.

A bronze statue of Sherlock Holmes, by the British sculptor John Doubleday, has been sited in a prominent position, close to the museum. This statue is a unique attraction, as it contains clues to each of the sixty Sherlock Holmes stories and is therefore a continual challenge to the inquisitive visitor.

Heini Waser Exhibition

As part of the 700th anniversary celebrations, The Little Gallery in Pittenweem, Fife, is staging an exhibition of works by Swiss artist Heini Waser. Waser was born in Zurich in 1913, the son of famous Swiss novelist Maria Waser. He studied art and music in Zurich and was trained by Max Bucherer and Cuno Amiet. He undertook further studies in painting in Paris, Rome and Florence. In 1944 he became a member of the Swiss Society of Painters, Sculptors and Architects (GSMBA). He was elected chairman of the Zurich branch of that organisation in 1962. In 1970 he was also elected to the committee of the Zurich Kunstgesellschaft.

Waser specializes in landscapes. Many of these reflect his travels in Spain, Italy and Greece. But Waser often returns for inspiration to his favourite Swiss resort of Lenzerheide. In addition to his landscapes, Waser is also an accomplished portrait painter. His drawings of children have been used by Pro Juventute.

Heini Waser has exhibited his works in various galleries throughout Switzerland and also in the Canadian cities of Toronto and Montreal. His Scottish exhibition will include a selection of drawings of children, lithographs and water colours. The exhibition runs from 25 September until early October.

Winterthur Economist

Since July one of Britain's leading current affairs journals, *The Economist*, has been published in Switzerland. Druckerei Winterthur will share *The Economist's* European print run with an existing Dutch supplier. The agreement is intended to facilitate a speedier circulation of *The Economist* in southern Europe in particular. Bill Simmons, the magazine's Director of Production, commented that Switzerland had been chosen as the second continental printing base because of its geographic location and because of the high quality of its commercial printing base. Moreover, Druckerei Winterthur has experience in printing time-sensitive weekly publications. Sales of *The Economist* in continental Europe have increased dramatically since it began to be printed there in 1988. According to the most recent audit figures almost 8% of these sales were in Switzerland.



The Sherlock Holmes Society at Reichenbach



Book Review

John Wraight, *The Swiss and the British* (Salisbury: Michael Russell (Publishing) Ltd, 1987. xiv + 474 pp. Illustrated. ISBN 0 85955 143 1. £17.95.)

Britain and Switzerland share a unique relationship. Starting from this premise, Sir John Wraight's *The Swiss and the British* sets out to explore the nature of the affinity between the two countries. Nowadays, the author argues, economic relations are the most important bond. Bilateral trade is normally heavily to Britain's advantage, while, the United States apart, no country has committed greater financial investments to Britain than Switzerland. Nevertheless, there are also (and have been for centuries) many other types of contact between the two countries. Political, military, cultural, educational and scientific as well as economic relations are all briskly discussed in the introduction to the book.

This thematic survey is followed by a chronology of British-Swiss relations from the fifth century to 1984. The author admits that this is selective and, as with anything selective, one might question the grounds for selectivity. Thus, Wraight includes Adam of Usk's evocative but somewhat laconic comments regarding his passage across the Alps in 1402; but the more detailed evidence concerning Eleanor Stewart's journey through Geneva, Fribourg, Bern, Luzern and Zurich in 1449 is not mentioned. The omission of any reference to Eleanor in the book is, indeed, curious. Her husband, Archduke Sigismund of Tyrol, was embroiled in Swiss affairs and, in 1457, he made over several Habsburg possessions, including Rapperswil, Walenstadt and

Sargans, to his Scottish wife.

It is, of course, nearly always possible to find omissions in chronologies. Although this one is no exception, in fairness it must be stated that the chronology is remarkably extensive and full of interesting vignettes. All too frequently, however, the succinct style demanded by the genre leaves the reader posing questions which are not answered. Why, for example, in c.1549 were letters from London to Zurich dispatched via Frankfurt, while those in the opposite direction were sent via Basel, Strasbourg and Antwerp? What was the purpose and effect of the Anglo-Swiss agreement, signed in 1952, on air transport? It would even have been interesting to know who won the cricket-on-skates match between British sportsmen and Davos, played at St Moritz in 1896. Greater elaboration on these and other matters would only have been possible had Wraight opted to examine a more restricted canvas.

Yet, the broad canvas is also one of the strengths of the book. The Swiss and the British has — justifiably — been described by one reviewer as a 'goldmine' of information. On the level of a readable, factual work of reference the book is an indispensable starting point. Those whose interest is aroused by a particular incident may then turn to the extremely impressive bibliography for guidance on where to pursue their enquiries. On another level, however, the book is perhaps less successful. Resplendent in anecdote, it is slightly jejune on analysis. Consequently, the author's opening premise remains unproven. British-Swiss relations are perhaps unique only in the sense that relations between any two

countries are unique. As for the broader significance of British-Swiss relations, readers are largely left to draw their own conclusions. [DD]

Sir John Wraight's most recent publication, The Swiss in London. A History of the City Swiss Club, 1856-1996 (Bodmin, 1991) will be reviewed in issue 1/92 of The Green Pages.

Old Review

Mrs M Joder has a large number of back issues of the *Swiss Review* for which she is seeking a new home. Any reader who is interested in acquiring these copies of the magazine should contact Mrs Joder at Bell-Moor Flat 9, 1 Portarlington Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH4 8BT. (Telephone 0202-765710.)

The Green Pages

The editor of *The Green Pages* welcomes letters and comments from readers. Correspondence should be addressed to: Dr David Ditchburn, Department of History, University of Aberdeen, King's College, Old Aberdeen AB9 2UB. (Telephone 0224 272999; Fax 0224 487048). Contributions for issue 4/91 should be sent to the Editor immediately. The deadline for issue 1/92 is 15 December.

In the next issue of *The Green Pages* Siobhan Donovan gives a personal assessment of the 700th anniversary of Switzerland and Alastair Macdonald reviews the books *Festival of Switzerland in Britain 1991* and *Switzerland 700*.

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