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Hans Badrutt (1876-1953): a strong leader in difficult times



*Portrait and signature
of Hans Badrutt.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "H. Badrutt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent underline.

By building the Palace, Caspar Badrutt had created a stage for his distinguished clientele, and the glittering opening party had been the prelude to the history of the Palace. Caspar left the hotel to his son Hans to manage. It was up to him to design the elegant, spacious rooms, to fill the Palace with life and thus to meet the high international standards of the luxury hotel.

Grammar school degree in Zurich
Johann Eduard Leon Badrutt, known as Hans, was Caspar Badrutt's younger son, born on 13th November 1876 at the Hotel Engadiner Kulm. As a boy, he first went to school in St. Moritz, and from 1892

he attended the Technical Department of Zurich School of Industry, part of Zurich Cantonal School, where he also obtained his certificate of secondary education («matura» diploma). During this period he lived in the house of the reformed parson and pioneer of the holiday colonies, Hermann Walther Bion.

Like his father, Hans then gained experience of hotel management in Paris and London, but in 1898, at the early age of 22, he was summoned back to St. Moritz by his father and appointed managing director of the Palace. After Caspar's early death in 1904, responsibility for the hotel now lay solely with Hans, who was only 28 years old. Only one year after taking over, he was confronted with a serious challenge: In 1905, the oversized «Grand Hotel» opened directly next to the Palace. Hans Badrutt reacted by adding two floors to the Palace in 1907.

The golden age of tourism

The decade before the First World War is considered the golden age of tourism. Europe was at peace and enjoying an economic boom. Both aristocrats and the «nouveaux riches» flocked to St. Moritz, especially as the Albula railway line had shortened the journey time significantly. The summer and winter seasons surpassed each other with record numbers of visitors. The hotel rooms were fully booked, and demand continued to rise. The young director Hans Badrutt



*Palace Hotel
pâtissiers, summer
season 1907.*

also benefited from these favourable conditions.

Despite the boom, however, the era of the hotel pioneers was drawing to a close. In St. Moritz-Dorf, where the Badrutts had written hotel history with the Palace and built what could be described as an empire, the imitators now came onto the scene. While the attractiveness of St. Moritz-Bad continued to decline, three new hotels were built in the village within a few years of each other: the Grand Hotel, mentioned earlier, in 1905, the Suretetta House in 1912, and finally the Carlton in 1913.

Cousin refined the spa concept

In 1912, the Chantarella high-altitude convalescent and dietary institute provided a counterpoint to these luxury hotels. It was situated on a sunny plateau above the village and a funicular was specially constructed to reach it. Although the dietary clinic was similar to the other hotels in terms of its size and architecture, it explicitly took into account the idea of a health resort, although no sufferers of lung disease were accepted and no guest lists were published. Chantarella and its mountain railway

were the work of Emil Thoma, who was married to Hans Badrutt's cousin, Emilia. The Thoma-Badrutts thus refined the spa concept that Johannes, founder of the Kulm, had anticipated, but had not been developed by his sons.

The best address in the village

The Palace had already become the best address in St. Moritz-Dorf in the early years of Hans Badrutt. The guests of other hotels spared no efforts to have themselves invited by guests of the Palace. In order to take part in the splendid weekly balls and receptions, they would pay the high entry fee of 20 Swiss francs, only then to be cut by the habitués, as the Italian writer Matilde Serao described in her 1908 novel set in a hotel, «Evviva la vita». Serao dedicated an entire chapter to the Palace. Among other aspects, she admired the magnificent clothes, extravagant style and above all the opulent jewellery of the female guests: It seemed as if the assets of an entire people were piled up in the rooms of the Palace. One example of these illustrious guests was Princess Irene of Prussia, sister-in-law of the German

Kaiser Wilhelm II. In 1905 she stayed at the Palace for a longer period with her son Prince Sigismund and a large retinue.

Glittering fancy-dress ball

An article in the *Engadin Express & Alpine Post* of 9th February 1909 reported in detail on one of the splendid parties at the Palace, a fancy-dress ball. The guests included such illustrious names as the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand, whose murder five years later was to provoke the First World War, Prince von Metternich, Princess Stephanie of Belgium, the famous hotel founder Waldorf Astor, various Rothschilds, and Baron and Baroness Auffm'Ordt. According to the article, the magnificent ball surpassed any similar event that had ever taken place in St. Moritz. The vast majority of the guests wore lavish costumes. Baroness Henri de Rothschild was particularly praised for her beautiful ice-skating costume based on a Polish hussar's uniform. Other ladies dressed as Catherine the Great, as a Mexican, as the American flag, as a squaw or as a nun. Among the gentlemen, a knight and a Greek

stood out, as did a tall man who had dressed as a baby. After an excellent dinner, the guests amused themselves with dancing, and the aviation pioneer Baron Auffm'Ordt distinguished himself as one of the leading dancers in the cotillon.

One of the first successful test flights in the Alps

In the winter of 1908/09 Hans Badrutt received a letter from the German Baron Auffm'Ordt, who wished to come to St. Moritz with his aircraft to conduct test flights in the Alps. Hans Badrutt agreed to build a small wooden hangar on the frozen Lake St. Moritz. Soon afterwards the Baron arrived with a team of mechanics and many boxes of parts. For several weeks, keenly observed by the press and the public, they assembled the aircraft. And when nobody really wanted to believe in it any longer, it was pushed out of the hangar and, much to everyone's astonishment, achieved a long «hop» at two metres above the ice on 20th March 1909. Hans Badrutt had thus contributed to one of the first successful test flights in the Alps.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria out walking with his family in St. Moritz, 1909.



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Visitors to St. Moritz – before the First World War the majority came from Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States and France – were rich, extremely elegant and also very demanding. So from an early age, Hans Badrutt had the difficult task of satisfying guests at the Palace at the highest level. This required not only perfect logistics, but also great sensitivity and competence in dealing with the hotel guests. Hans Badrutt fulfilled this task with huge success. In the commemorative publication written for the 50th anniversary of the Palace Hotel, Jules Robbi wrote of his friend Hans in 1946: «His father's and grandfather's progressive attitude, his energy, his involvement in the complex clockwork of a large hotel were inborn.»

At the same time, Hans Badrutt was a outgoing and optimistic man who was popular throughout the village. He frequently spoke his native language, Romansh, with his staff, many of whom came from the region.

He campaigned for the recognition of Romansh as Switzerland's fourth national language. According to the St. Moritz author, Marcella

Maier, the resolution to recognise it as a national language was taken in the presence of Hans Badrutt in the Chesa Veglia.

Hans Badrutt was a fair-minded and responsible boss who took care of his employees and thus won their loyalty over many years. While his father and grandfather had long been considered outsiders and had pressed ahead with their building projects like lone wolves, Hans Badrutt was the one who really made himself at home in St. Moritz and was also a citizen of the municipality.

He considered himself part of the village community and as a hotelier was aware that the Palace, however cosmopolitan and glamorous, was also dependent on the infrastructure and the social atmosphere of the municipality. Therefore he was involved in the Spa Association, the Municipal Council, the Engadine Golf Club – Switzerland's oldest – and in the male choir. Among his fellow singers, Hans was able to relax and at the same time cultivate business relationships. He regularly made rooms at the Palace available for the choir's performances, and supported local events.



Photograph of the waiters' brigade at the Palace Hotel, winter season 1921.

*Hans Badrutt and
Amalia Catharina
Badrutt-Ganzoni.*



Short-lived domestic bliss

On 4th April 1907 Hans Badrutt married Amalia Catharina Ganzoni of Celerina, born in 1881. Their eldest son, Hans, was born a year later, Anna Ursula in 1909, and the second son Andrea in 1910. However, destiny then dealt a terrible blow: first, little Hans died at the age of two, and in 1912 the young wife also died. Hans Badrutt recovered only slowly from these calamities. Now 36 years old, the hotelier was left alone with two small children while in the midst of extensive and capital-intensive reconstruction work at the Palace.

Work as an escape route

Hans Badrutt handled the family tragedy through restless activity, and with characteristic discipline threw himself into extending the hotel. He had already signed a contract with the Bank für Graubünden for a loan of 80,000 Swiss francs in 1910. As security he pledged a plot of land on

the upper part of Bahnhofstrasse as well as his hotel. He had probably used some of this money to build new rooms on the south façade and to enlarge the ice rink that same year.

Presumably also due to the pressure exerted by the big new hotels in the village, Hans Badrutt constructed a new wing on the west side of the Palace containing shops and more rooms. The new wing also housed the large, south-facing dining room, while the old one was redecorated as a ballroom and inaugurated with great ceremony on 1st August 1913. In the dining room, Hans Badrutt introduced the innovation of serving guests at small, individual tables – an indication that there was a growing desire for individualism and privacy. A few days later, Hans Badrutt presented a further innovation: he opened the hotel's indoor tennis court, which was equipped with fine spectator galleries and a grill room

as well as changing and relaxation rooms.

Setback resulting from the First World War

Hans Badrutt had only just finished the works at the Palace when the First World War broke out. This was to prove a major challenge for the hotel, for most of the remodelling and modernisation work on the Palace was financed by third parties. The war caused drastic financial losses because many foreign guests stayed away. As large numbers of the hotel's employees had to do military service, the Palace was even closed for a short time. There was no longer a real summer or winter season, although at the Palace every effort was made to keep guests happy with piano recitals, lecture cycles, film shows and the occasional masked ball.

During this period, the Palace and the Kulm Hotel sometimes worked together. For example, they advertised in the *Engadin Express* under the name «Badrutt Hotels» together with the Hotel Caspar Badrutt and the Privat-Hotel. Furthermore, for certain seasons, Hans Badrutt drew on the support of the former Director of the Kulm, Mr Janssen, and of his cousin Anton R. Badrutt, who would later become a Director of the Kulm for many years.

Refugees and impostors

In 1918 Europe was in the grip of social crisis, unemployment and pandemics. In Switzerland, almost 25,000 people died of the so-called Spanish flu. As a result of this, the St. Moritz Spa Association placed particular emphasis on the healthy aspects of sun, pure air and mineral springs in its marketing: Large-format advertisements sought to woo guests with various play areas for children and men-



tioned illnesses that could be alleviated by a stay in St. Moritz, including cardiac insufficiency, anaemia or neuroses caused by the war, although sufferers of lung disease continued to be explicitly excluded.

However, war profiteers and impostors also strayed to St. Moritz, where some of them enjoyed all possible luxuries. Only at the end of the season did it transpire that many of them were unable to pay their hotel bills. The well-known author Curt Riess records that Hans Badrutt sheltered the impoverished Grand Duke Alexander of Russia at this time, offering him his usual suite, with the words, «The Palace is proud to have you here as a guest, Imperial Highness.» It is also recorded that the last Habsburg ruler, the Emperor Charles I of Austria, stayed for one night at the Palace after having been driven out of Vienna.

Bankruptcy averted

In 1919, Hans Badrutt's financial situation had deteriorated dramatically – his debts had grown to two million Swiss francs during the war years and almost his entire property was mort-

Orchestra in the Embassy Room of the Palace Hotel, circa 1920.

gaged. This deterioration was also due to the fact that the Hotel Kulm, in which Hans Badrutt held a large stake, had come into financial difficulties.

Besides various banks, Hans Badrutt's relatives also placed demands. In a letter of 24th February 1919 to the Director of the Bank für Graubünden, J.R. Capadrutt, Hans offered his relatives a settlement, at the same time making clear his dramatic circumstances. «I am really not going to conceal from you the fact that all those close to me sincerely advise me not to make such extensive offers and devote myself for years to a business that at best will only yield the interest for my creditors, but to declare myself bankrupt and start afresh. I have been offered a post in a large business with tempting propositions, and thus I would not have any worries for my

future for the time being. [...] Until now I have been reluctant to follow this path and to disgrace the name of Badrutt in this way.»

After several months of negotiations, an acceptable solution was found: the individual enterprise «Hans Badrutt» was converted into the «Joint-stock company Hans Badrutt Palace Hotel, St. Moritz». On the one hand, this was thanks to the syndicate of banks led by Director Capadrutt, which went to great lengths to preserve the hotel, and on the other, to the other creditors, who waived some of their demands. But the most important factor was probably Hans Badrutt himself, who fought for his hotel, primarily out of respect for and a sense of duty towards his family and ancestors. The constituent general meeting for the joint-stock company took place at

Sleighs ready to tow skiers on a skijöring tour in front of the Palace Hotel, January 1924.





*Palace Hotel menu,
Christmas 1926,
with a picture by
Mili Weber of
St. Moritz.*

the Palace at 2 pm on 23rd October 1919. After the conversion, the hotel was officially named «Badrutt's Palace», although it was still known simply as the «Palace» in advertisements and in common parlance.

The Roaring Twenties

As if to make up for lost time, there were more glittering parties and life was sweeter than ever in the St. Moritz of the 1920s – until the Wall Street Crash of October 1929. The celebrated and aristocratic guests from all over the world now returned to the Palace, including the famous Austrian composer Franz Lehár and his wife Helenka, Alfred Hitchcock and his wife Alma, the American silent movie star Douglas Fairbanks and the film director Erich von Stroheim. The cosmetics entrepreneurs and later arch rivals Elizabeth Arden and Helena Ru-

binstein were also guests at the Palace.

The famous Polish composer and virtuoso pianist Ignace Jan Paderewski, who had campaigned for a free Poland in the United States during the war, now also returned to the Palace. As he had already done before the war, he brought his own grand piano with him, which he had placed in a niche in the foyer. As Curt Riess reports, guests could thus hear the pianist play nocturnes by Frédéric Chopin.

After the crisis years of 1918/19, Hans Badrutt succeeded in extending and recreating the guest list. Crowned heads and the nobility mixed with automobile and aircraft pioneers as well as creative minds from the worlds of fashion and the arts. Increasing numbers of younger, sporting guests also arrived.

Second marriage to Helen Kolb

After the early death of his wife, Hans Badrutt lived as a widower for ten years. During this period he was supported by his younger, unmarried sister Martina, who assumed the role of the hotelier's wife, as it were, and was very popular with the guests and the people of St. Moritz as an exemplary «mother-figure» of the Palace. Her unexpected death of a stroke in 1925 caused great consternation in St. Moritz.

Hans Badrutt knew he had an able woman by his side in his second wife, Helen Kolb (1890–1960). The pair married in St. Moritz in 1922.

Hans and Helen Badrutt-Kolb in front of the Palace Christmas tree, circa 1950.



From St. Gallen, Helen, 32 at the time, had run a ladies' fashion boutique in St. Moritz and had struck Hans Badrutt with her diligence and reliability. With her strong personality, she was a great support for the hotelier.

Their only child, Hansjürg, who was born in 1930, remembers how Helen Badrutt-Kolb took care of the guests and many details of the decoration. A letter dated 27th March 1949 to Federal Councillor Enrico Celio concerning the construction of a new post office building shows how courageously and energetically she represented the interests of the Palace. Marcella Maier remembers that Helen Badrutt identified herself entirely with the hotel and was committed to the Palace right up until her death in 1960.

Helen Badrutt was related to the famous Knie circus family – her great-aunt was a chambermaid in Appenzell, where a tightrope walker from the Knie family balanced on a rope stretched from the church tower to the highest house in the village. «That impressed Helen's great aunt so much that she married him on the spot,» recalls Hansjürg Badrutt. As a young man he would often meet the circus legends Rolf and Fredy Knie together with his mother.

First automobiles in St. Moritz

It had been forbidden throughout the Canton of Graubünden to drive a car since 1900. After the First World War the hoteliers of St. Moritz campaigned to have cars allowed in the village. They hoped that this would help to bring about the desired economic upturn. However, the horse and carriage operators in particular, who had already suffered from the opening of the railway line, feared further loss of business. Opponents

therefore warned vehemently of the dangers of the automobile. So to begin with, guests' cars had to be drawn by horses – a very odd sight. Years of heated debate followed, until the Graubünden electorate finally voted to allow the introduction of the automobile in a referendum of 1925. Among guests of the Palace, some arrived with chauffeurs, who were able to park their cars in special parking spaces at the entrance of the hotel as of 1928.

Visits from the Renault, Citroën and Bugatti families

In the 1920s, the car builders Louis Renault with his wife and André Citroën with his family also stayed at the Palace. The latter met Ettore Bugatti in one of the hotel's private salons, where, according to Curt Riess, they could play *Écarté* for high stakes without being disturbed. Citroën's main reason for visiting St. Moritz was to present his caterpillar vehicles designed for the snow-covered pass roads of the Engadine.

The Winter Olympics of 1928

In 1928/29, St. Moritz experienced the highpoint of the Golden Twenties. By acting as the venue for the Winter Olympics in February 1928, St. Moritz confirmed its claim as one of the world's leading winter resorts, thus also fulfilling the vision of Johannes Badrutt, who had once had the idea of the winter season. In reference to this pioneer of the hotel and tourist industry, the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics was held in the ice rink of the Kulm Park, which was promptly renamed «Badrutt's Park».

This event presented a great challenge in terms of infrastructure. The Municipal Committee, chaired by Emil Thoma-Badrutt, was responsi-



ble for the organisation, while Hans Badrutt was Chairman of the Reception and Entertainment Committee.

Equipped for the stampede

St. Moritz prepared itself on all levels for the stampede of athletes, officials, journalists and spectators. St. Moritz-Bad, where the hotel industry had suffered hard times, enjoyed a revival as the spa hotels spared no efforts to adjust to winter operations. The hotels in the village also girded themselves.

Hans Badrutt again carried out building works at the Palace: the entrance was enlarged, and the guests were able to reach the changing

Cover of the programme for the Winter Olympics of 11th to 19th February 1928.

rooms without crossing the outer hall. A special room was also created for winter sports equipment such as skis.

The Winter Olympics in St. Moritz lasted from Saturday 11th until Sunday 19th February 1928. The Swiss Federal President at that time, Edmund Schulthess, opened the games in a decorated six-span carriage and greeted the 492 athletes from 25 countries. There were also the competitors' attendants, officials and press representatives from all over the world. The athletes competed in cross-country skiing, the Nordic combined, ski jumping, military ski patrol, ice-skating, speed skating, ice hockey, bobsleigh and skeleton.

Problems with spectators and weather

In comparison to today, the Winter Olympics of 1928 were held on a modest scale. Furthermore, far fewer spectators came than had been expected – the relatively high ticket prices had deterred many sports enthusiasts. The organisational team also struggled with adverse weather conditions: due to a thaw it was feared that the ice-skating competitions would have to be cancelled. So it was fortunate when the cold

weather returned over night. Dozens of helpers worked on the sports facilities to ensure that everything could run smoothly.

Record years for the Palace

The years 1928/29 were record years for Badrutt's Palace Hotel. Guests included the King of Sweden, the Italian Crown Prince Umberto and the German opera singer Frieda Hempel. Most visitors in these years came from the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Italy. The Swiss accounted for only a very small number of guests.

The excellent occupancy of the hotel encouraged Hans to undertake further costly extension and renovation work in the restaurant, the bar and the suites. In the large foyer, the heavy electric chandeliers were replaced by exquisite gilded wall lamps. These originated from a Venetian palazzo and had apparently already served as candleholders for three centuries. The painting of the «Sistine Madonna» was moved to the bridge room, where it was displayed to even better advantage.

The Great Depression

Despite all this entrepreneurial optimism, the next difficult phase was

The Swiss Federal President Edmund Schulthess is collected from the Palace Hotel for the opening of the Winter Olympics, 1928.



heralded by the stock exchange crash in the United States on 22nd October 1929, which led to great upheavals and a serious world economic crisis. Unemployment, inflation and excessive nationalism were poison for the tourist industry. However, the first shock waves only reached the Upper Engadine gradually. At the beginning of the 1930s, all still seemed to be right with the world at the Palace.

**Coco Chanel:
co-founder of the Corviglia Club**

The fashion designers Elsa Schiaparelli and Coco Chanel travelled to St. Moritz from Paris. The latter was also a founding member of the Corviglia Club. The famous private skiing club was established on 11th February



1930 by prominent guests of the Palace, including the Fiat heir and Italian industrialist Eduardo Agnelli. According to Hansjürg Badrutt, even today the Corviglia Club is considered one of the world's most exclusive winter sports clubs. The secretary still has his office in the Palace, although the selection of members is made according to strict procedures «in which we have no say.»

Charlie Chaplin: enthusiastic skier

The fact that the Palace retained its charm in spite of the crisis is proven by a special guest: as the *Engadin Express & Alpine Post* of 8th March 1932 reported, the world-famous film star Charles Chaplin arrived at the Palace on 14th December 1931, intending to stay for only a few days. However, he then stayed for two-and-a-half months and was a particularly enthusiastic skier. To the astonishment of many, he made great progress – thanks to his stamina and because he remained undeterred by numerous falls. Chaplin was a guest again in 1933. In these years, the winter season had already become firmly established in St. Moritz and attracted more guests than the summer season. However, during the 1930s several other St. Moritz hotels had difficulties remaining open. The «Swiss Hotel Trust», established in 1921 to support the hotel industry in crisis, had to deal with quite a few bankrupt companies and assumed the management of several of them.

Palace Bar – a meeting place

During the 1930s, the Palace Bar was legendary, serving as a meeting place for all the big names, including singer Enrico Caruso, actress Marlene Dietrich, and the Dolly Sisters.

The barkeeper Gustav Döbeli was a kind of celebrity himself, serving

The famous singer Frieda Hempel at the tennis courts, August 1928.



Arrival of the Italian Crown Prince Umberto (middle) at the Palace Hotel, with Hans Badrutt, February 1929.

and entertaining his illustrious guests exquisitely. In the early evening before the first onslaught, he would open 100 bottles of champagne and put another 120 into the cooler so as to be prepared. Most guests visited the hotel bar for pre-dinner drinks at about six in the evening, then went back to their rooms to change for dinner, and returned to the bar at eleven in the evening for a nightcap, which could

easily last until the early hours of the morning.

Purchase of the «Chesa Veglia»

The oldest Engadine farmhouse in St. Moritz was built in 1658. It is located just above the Palace, which is why Hans Badrutt speculated on buying it for a long time. In 1928 he at last had the opportunity to acquire this venerable old house. After a complete renovation, the «Chesa



Charlie Chaplin (front) and Douglas Fairbanks skikjöring, December 1931.



*Festive dinner at
the Palace Hotel,
circa 1930.*



*Palace Hotel, ball
in the Embassy
Ballroom, 1936/37.*

Veglia» (old house) opened as a restaurant in December 1935. From then on it served as an annex of the Palace. Due to its popularity as an après ski location, kitchen, storage rooms, cellars and rooms for the staff were added on the eastern side of the building. Later the cow barn was converted into a bowling alley, equipped with a bar and furnished in contemporary style. The Chesa Veglia has remained a successful rustic restaurant to this day.

The Second World War

Hardly anyone in St. Moritz was surprised by the outbreak of the Second World War; nonetheless, the village suffered from its consequences. The Palace was the only luxury hotel to open every season during the war years. As had already been the case during the First World War, the hotel kept operating by organising sporting and cultural events on a small scale, mostly with local participants. Due to the absence of guests, the 1939/40 season was already scarcely able to live up to its reputation; St. Moritz soon resembled a ghost town. During the Second World War there was great misery in the Engadine; there were suicides almost every

week, as Sylvia Flury-Badrutt, a second cousin of Hansjürg Badrutt, reports. Most hotels were closed, including the Kulm Hotel, but this opened again in the last year of the war. As the guests no longer came, this period was very quiet.

For this reason, many employees packed their bags. Gustav Döbeli, the famous barman at the Palace, was in charge of only two employees instead of 25, and sometimes performed as a singing poet for charitable organisations.

New beginning in St. Moritz

After the end of the war, refugees came to the Engadine from all directions. Hans Badrutt collected clothes left behind by guests and took them to the reception camp in Samedan, to the benefit of the starving and sick former inmates of the Mauthausen concentration camp who were housed there.

The first holidaymakers to return to St. Moritz included American soldiers. Up to the summer of 1946, the armed services' rest and recuperation leave brought 500 to 600 people to St. Moritz every five days. The visitors would stay for ten days and recover from the horrors of the war



A former farmhouse, Chesa Veglia, St. Moritz Dorf, ca. 1920; a Palace Hotel restaurant since 1935.

before returning to their home countries. The majority of the spa guests were now Swiss; only gradually did the British return, and as of 1947 also the Italians. For the time being, the Germans and Austrians were not permitted to travel, and so it was only in the 1949/50 winter season that German guests returned to St. Moritz. Familiar faces also gradually came back to the village, including Marlene Dietrich, the Duke of Windsor and Baron Thyssen.

The 1948 Winter Olympics

In the post-war years, St. Moritz began to rise like a phoenix from the ashes. An important contributing factor was the Winter Olympics, held again in 1948 after a wartime interruption of twelve years. St. Moritz once again succeeded in reminding the world of its position as a leading winter sports resort. The opening ceremony was again held in the Kulm Park, on 30th January 1948. Representatives of 28 nations took part. However, Germany and Japan, having lost the war, were not permitted to participate, and Austria was involved only as an observer. As a victorious power, the Soviet Union took part, but also only as an observer – the Cold War was already casting its shadows.

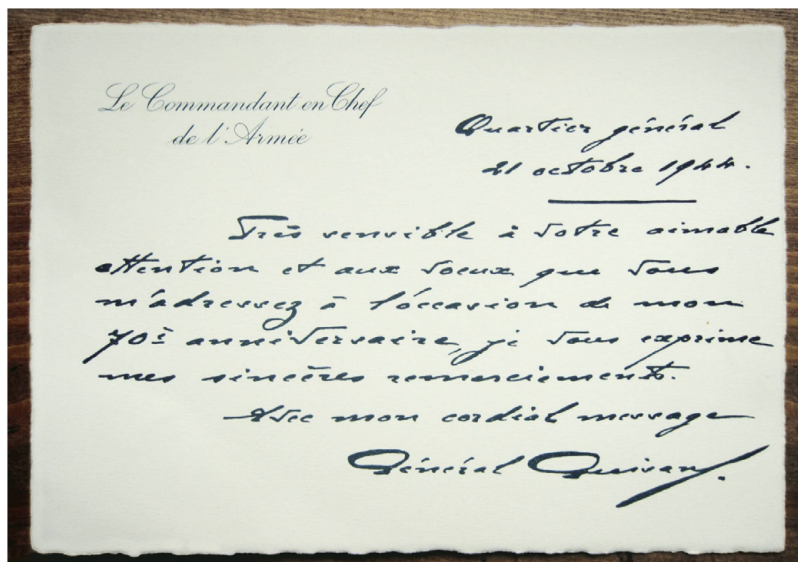
Hans Badrutt's last years

Hans Badrutt was to experience the beginnings of a new economic upturn in St. Moritz. As it had been for his father and grandfather, for Hans it was also self-evident that a luxury hotel could survive only if it was run by a family with a sense of tradition. For this reason, it was his will that, in the next generation, the Palace should be managed jointly by his sons Andrea and Hansjürg. While Hans Badrutt had held only a few



Hans Badrutt and General Guisan, 1944.

Thank you letter from General Guisan to Hans Badrutt, 21 October 1944.



shares after the conversion of the Palace into a joint-stock company in 1919, over the course of time he had succeeded in buying back a considerable stake, meaning that the majority was again held by the family.

On 6th February 1953 Hans Badrutt died in his flat in the Palace at the age of 77. He had run the Palace Hotel season by season for more than 50 years and successfully guided it through world wars and economic crises. Under his leadership, the Palace had developed into one of the most famous luxury hotels in the world – and he himself had become one of the world's most capable hoteliers, as the Chairman of the Swiss Association of Hoteliers, Franz Seiler, expressed it. He remained closely connected with the Kulm Hotel, founded by his grandfather, all his life, and in 1926 was even elected on the Board of Directors.

A great loss for St. Moritz

After Hans Badrutt's death, all of St. Moritz went into mourning, for much of what had happened in St. Moritz over the previous decades had been initiated or managed by him. Almost the entire village attended the funeral service in the wreath-filled church. The funeral oration given by the Revd. R. Bezzola was followed by addresses from the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Palace, and the Chairman of the Town Council. Head concierge

Chasper Ans Grass, who had held the post for many years, gave a short speech in Romansh on behalf of the hotel staff. At the end, the «Frohsinn» and «Engiadina» male choirs dedicated a farewell song to their fellow singer, also in Romansh.

And perhaps the finest obituary of all was written by the aviation pioneer and Minister of Transport under Winston Churchill, Lord John Moore-Brabazon of Tara. In *The Times* of 11th February 1953, as Chairman of the St. Moritz Tobogganing Club, he wrote of his friend Hans Badrutt: «He built up a hotel for sparkling, gay internationalism which has never before or will ever again be approached or rivalled. Long will his memory endure.»

Hans Badrutt: a born hotelier

While Caspar Badrutt had laid the foundations for the success of the Palace, Hans Badrutt's great achievement was to establish and successfully guide the hotel through turbulent times. He refined to perfection his father's vision of an exclusive meeting place for the nobility and upper classes, and thus took the legend of St. Moritz out into the world. Thanks to his cosmopolitanism, diplomatic skills and confident manners he was able to attract and satisfy an exclusive international clientele. With his regular improvements and renovation work he developed the Palace to reflect the spirit of the times.



Chalandamarz ca. 1940 – A children's festival on March 1st. Whilst a small group enters the hotel dining room at lunchtime, the remainder ring their cowbells loudly in front of the entrance.