

Visit of the Swiss minister to Queen Charlotte's maternity hospital

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1946)**

Heft 1045

PDF erstellt am: **29.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-686997>

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VISIT OF THE SWISS MINISTER TO QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

On Thursday, January 31st, the Swiss Minister, accompanied by Madame Ruegger, paid a visit to Queen Charlotte's Maternity Hospital, at Goldhawk Road, Hammersmith, W.6, in order to unveil the "Helvetia Bed," which was subscribed for by a number of firms in Switzerland. (The names of the subscribers will be found at the end of this report.)

The Minister and Madame Ruegger were received on their arrival by Mr. Seymour Leslie, Secretary, and Mr. Lonsdale Deighton, Assistant Secretary, and the Chief Matron. The party, which included Mr. Stauffer from the "Swiss Observer," and other Press representatives, was taken to one of the small wards (no ward contains more than six beds) in which the "Helvetia Bed" was situated. As will be seen from the photograph the Swiss Flag was used, on this occasion, as a bedcover. I was informed by the Secretary that they had hoped to find a "Swiss mother" to occupy the bed for this event, but as none was available, the occupier was the wife of a Belgian service man, and as a further qualification, the young mother informed the Minister that she has once travelled through Lucerne.

After the inauguration, both the Minister and Madame Ruegger shook hands with the occupier. Her firstborn boy, who had peacefully slept through the performance, in his little cot at the end of the bed, was also "looked at," and so were the newly-born children of the other five mothers in the ward, or I should say, other four mothers, because one lady smilingly informed them that the cot is still empty, but will be filled at any moment now.

The party was then taken through various parts of the building. It was explained that the new Hospital was opened in October 1940, and that it claims to be the first large scale modern maternity hospital in Southern England. It had been planned after exhaustive study by medical and nursing representatives of the hospital in the course of visits to the U.S.A., Canada and Switzerland.

The hospital is designed to accommodate 200 patients; of the 200 beds, forty-four are to be in single bed private wards and one hundred and fifty-six in six bed public wards.

The general scheme of decoration in the wards is cream paint with distemper on walls. The ward floors are of wood blocks, while corridor floors are of cork tiling and terrazo. Doors are of hard wood, flush type.

Amongst the many rooms visited was the Human Milk Bureau, which is a novel feature of the hospital. It was explained that milk is taken from mothers in various

parts of London, who have a surplus of human milk and is pasteurised and frozen in the hospital in the form of tablets. It is then stored in sealed jars in refrigerators, and ultimately dispatched all over the country in dry-ice containers to feed babies unable to take artificial food, and whose mothers are unable to feed them.

The ward kitchens, nurseries, bath and linen rooms were inspected, and on terminating a visit, which lasted about two hours, the Nurses' quarters were inspected. Each nurse has her own room, comfortably furnished including wireless. Then there are various lounges, with comfortable leather or chintz-covered armchairs and settees, radiogramophone and piano. The Restaurant is a pleasing room with large windows on both sides and seating accommodation, at tables for four, for about eighty or a hundred people. The kitchen is a beautifully light room with white tiled walls and cream floor.

This brief account should give some idea of this newly established hospital at Goldhawk Road, Hammersmith, W.6. (Early in the 19th century it moved from Bayswater to Marylebone where for more than 100 years it carried on its vital work and achieved national fame.)

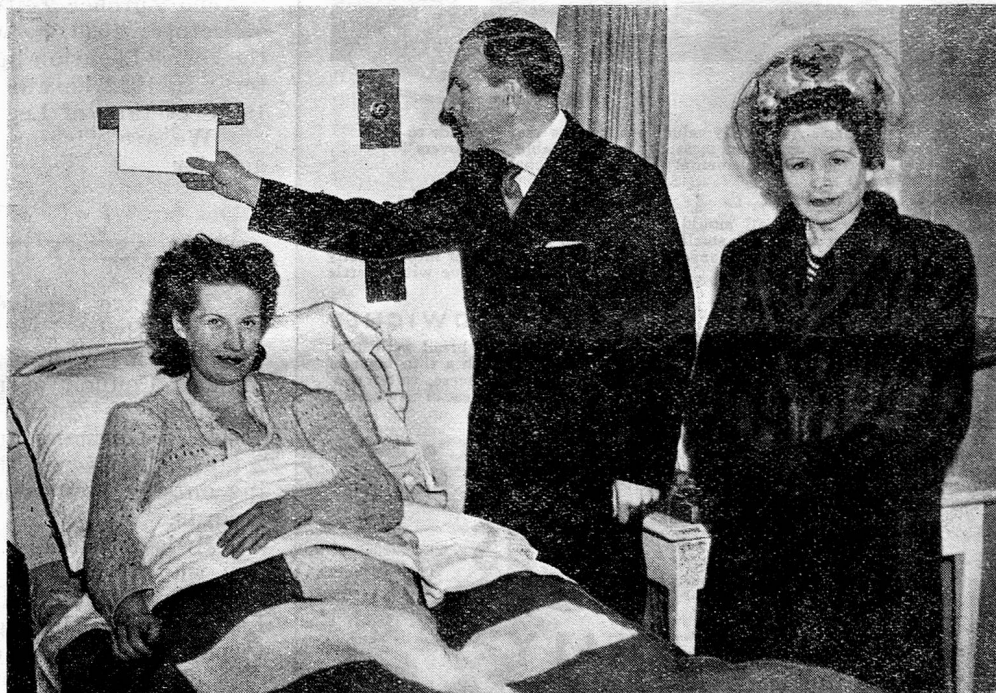
Our readers may be interested to know that it costs £1,000 to have a bed named, and to maintain a bed, the sum of £500 a year is needed. The Secretary said to me perhaps the Swiss community in London could be prevailed upon to help towards maintenance of the "Helvetia Bed."

On departing the Secretary warmly thanked the Swiss Minister and Madame Ruegger, after they signed their names in the visitors' book, which contains many famous names, for their visit.

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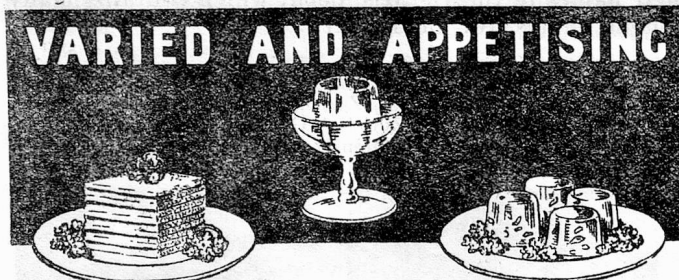
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The Swiss Minister, with Madame Ruegger, unveiling the "Helvetia Bed."

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ASPIC SANDWICHES

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DIPLOMATIC APPOINTMENTS.

Monsieur Ch. de Jenner has recently been appointed Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the Bulgarian Government in Sofia.

Monsieur de Jenner is well-known in the Swiss Colony; he joined the Swiss Legation in London in November 1931, as Counsellor of Legation, in succession to the late Monsieur de Sonnenberg. After a séjour of eleven years, during which he acted on several occasions as Chargé d'Affaires, he left London in January 1943, to take up an appointment at the Federal Political Department in Berne, and later on was appointed General Consul at Vienna.

We are extending our heartiest wishes to Monsieur de Jenner on assuming his new post.

Monsieur W. A. de Bourg, who, at the beginning of this month has been appointed Chargé d'Affaires at Dublin, was equally well-known in the Swiss Colony. He was appointed Secretary of Legation in London in 1924 and was later promoted to Counsellor of Legation. He left London in 1937 to take up an appointment as General Consul in Munich and subsequently in Vienna. Later on he went to Washington as Counsellor of Legation.

Our best wishes accompany him to his new post.

We regret to inform our readers that Monsieur J. de Rham, 1st Secretary of Legation, who has been in London since November 1937, is shortly leaving the Swiss Legation to take up a new appointment in Berne.

Monsieur de Rham has always taken a keen interest in the Swiss Colony and his departure is greatly regretted by the Colony and his large circle of friends.

We extend our best wishes to him in his new sphere of activity.

Monsieur Eric Kessler, 1st Secretary of Legation, has been promoted to Counsellor of Legation and is leaving London shortly for Washington where he will be in charge of Press matters.

Monsieur Kessler was London correspondent of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" from 1928-1939. On the 1st of October 1939, he was appointed Special Attaché at the Swiss Legation in London, dealing with Press matters. In 1942 he was promoted to 2nd, and in 1945 to 1st Secretary of Legation.

We are wishing him success in his new field of activity.

SWISS ASSETS IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA.

We have received the following communication from the Swiss Legation:—

"By a Decree of the 29th January, 1946, the Swiss Federal Council entrusted the Office Suisse de Compensation in Zurich with the registration of Swiss assets in Germany and Austria. According to Section 2 (a) of the Decree, the assets of Swiss nationals residing outside Switzerland will also be included in these records.

Swiss nationals in the consular district of London who wish to be included in the list of the Office Suisse de Compensation should apply to the Swiss Legation, 18, Montagu Place, W.1, for the requisite form. It is pointed out, however, that the registration of a claim should not be interpreted as a recognition thereof, nor does this constitute a confirmation of the existence of the assets referred to."