

# News at random

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# The Swiss Observer

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## The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

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### NEWS AT RANDOM

#### Federal

Funeral services for King George VI were held in all major Swiss cities; that in Berne, at the Minster, was attended by Dr. Kobelt, President of the Swiss Confederation, Federal Councillors Etter and Petitpierre, Federal Chancellor Oser, all the members of the Bernese Government, the British Minister and members of the Diplomatic Corps.

\* \* \*

On the occasion of the death of King George the VI, the President of the National Council, has addressed the following telegram to the Speaker of the House of Commons:

"Deeply moved by the news of the death of His Majesty King George VI, I beg you to accept and extend to the members of the House of Commons, the sincere condolences of the National Council of Switzerland. Sig. Karl Renold, President of the National Council."

\* \* \*

Monsieur Henry de Torrenté, Swiss Minister in London represented the Federal Council at the funeral of King George VI, and Colonel Hans Ryser, Military and Air Attaché at the Swiss Legation in London, represented the Swiss army. Captain E. Specker, Assistant Military and Air Attaché in London was also a member of the Swiss Delegation.

\* \* \*

Monsieur Jean Chauvel, has presented his credentials as French Ambassador, to Dr. Kobelt, President of the Swiss Confederation, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne.

The newly appointed ambassador was general secretary at the French Foreign Office for four years, and since 1949, has been permanent French delegate at UNO.

\* \* \*

Fieldmarshall Montgomery has paid a courtesy visit to the President of the Swiss Confederation.

Switzerland's delegation at the forthcoming German Foreign Debt Conference in London will consist of seven members.

Minister, Dr. W. Stucki, delegate to the Swiss Federal Council for special missions, will be the head of the delegation. It will lie in his discretion to increase the number of delegates by calling on experts if and when needed.

In view of the status of Switzerland as a neutral country it may be anticipated that reservations will be made on the part of the Swiss delegation in case decisions are taken which are not deemed to be compatible with Switzerland's neutrality.

\* \* \*

During December 1951, the Swiss Federal Railways carried 16.94 million passengers or 1.65 million more than in December 1950. Receipts from passenger service amounted to 21.09 million francs, which exceeds by 2.05 million francs the receipts during December of the previous year.

Goods traffic has increased by 77,000 tons, and reached 1.74 million tons. Receipts thereof amounted to 33.79 million francs of 5.10 million francs more than in December, 1950.

\* \* \*

Customs receipts during the month of January, 1952, amounted to 43.4 million francs, 4.5 million less than in January, 1951.

#### Cantonal

Dr. Siegfried Frey, Director of the "Schweizerischen Depeschagentur", has been appointed "Privatdozent" for "Wissenschaftliche Zeitungskunde und praktische Journalistik" at the University of Berne. [A.T.S.]

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National-Councillor, Paul Kunz, is shortly retiring from his post as Mayor of the town of Thun, which post he held from 1919-1927, and again from 1939-1952.

[A.T.S.]

On the 1st of February, 1952, the town of Bienne numbered 50,000 inhabitants (1870 : 8,113 inhabitants, 1900 : 21,858 inhabitants). [A.T.S.]

Rudolf Gnägi has been elected a member of the Government of the canton of Berne, in succession to Dr. Feldman, who has recently joined the Federal Government. He is a member of the BGB. party.

[A.T.S.]

Bruno-Morenzoni, sculptor of Lugano, has been awarded the "La Fonico, S.A." prize for his group of three children, erected in the grounds of the school building Lugano-Loreto. The prize amounts to 5,000.—frs. (A.T.S.)

M. Louis Favrat, engineer, has been appointed Manager of the "Grande Dixence, S.A." Lausanne, in succession to the late M. Marc Lorétan. M. Favrat, has been in the service of the company since 1929.

[A.T.S.]

Léon Nicole, veteran President of the Swiss Communist Worker's Party, has resigned as Editor of the "Voix Ouvrière"; this has happened because he refused to print an article stating the party line in relation to Switzerland's traditional policy of neutrality. Nicole has started a new paper under the name "La Voix du Travail" of which he is Editor-in-Chief. [A.T.S.]

:o:

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland :—

Ernst Zahn, eminent author, in Zurich, at the age of 85. The deceased was born in Zurich on the 24th of January, 1867, and spent his youth at Göschenen where his father rented the Station Buffet. In 1897, Ernst Zahn, took over the tenacy from his father, he acted for many years as President of the commune of Göschenen. In 1902, he became a criminal judge of the canton of Uri, and two years later (1904) he entered the "Landrat" of the same canton of which he became its President in 1908.

Since 1917, he had devoted himself exclusively to writing, and he became one of the most read Swiss authors both at home and abroad, many of his books reached editions numbering over 100,000. Perhaps the best-known of his fifty novels are "Lukas Hochstrassers Haus" (1901) and "Welt im Spiegel" (1951). He also wrote a great number of poems and plays. In 1909, the University of Geneva honoured him with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*.

Ernst Zahn, who later on lived at Meggen, was for many years President of the "Zürcher Theaterverein" and sat on the Board of the "Zürcher Stadttheater", he was also President of the "Schweizerischen Schriftstellerverein" and "Schweizer Bühnenverband."

Dr. Max Hartmann, who long directed pharmaceutical research at the Ciba Ltd., Basle, in Riehen, at the age of 68.

He was born at St. Gall in 1884 and he studied chemistry and obtained his doctorate at Munich, where he early developed his love and knowledge of art. The

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Swiss Chemical Society made him an honorary member in recognition of his work. He was a member of the Board and a moving spirit in the establishment of the Swiss Academy, and he devoted much time to the foundation for scholarships in biology, medicine and in chemistry. The University of Basle conferred on him the honorary degree of doctor of medicine, and the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) an honorary doctorate in technical science. Of his many outstanding contributions to pharmaceutical research, "Coramine" is perhaps the best known. Dr. Hartmann is also an honorary citizen of his native town of Rorschach.

Jean Chaubert, a former Secretary of the Swiss Legation in Paris and from 1941-1948, Vice-President of the District Court of Lausanne, in Lausanne, aged 63.

Jakob Huber, from 1937-1948, "Stadtammann" of the town of Lichtensteig (Toggenburg) in Lichtensteig, at the age of 75.

Professor, Dr. T. O. Rubeli, formerly Professor at the University of Berne and Director of the "Veterinär-anatomische Institut" in Berne, aged 91. In the years 1914/15, he was rector of the University of Berne.

Arthur Miserez, watch manufacturer, in Saignelégier, aged 63.

Aurèle Sandoz, Director and President of the Board of the Sandoz, A.G., Basle, and a member of the Board of the "Schweizerischen Bankgesellschaft" in Valmont s/Montreux, aged 68. The deceased was an honorary citizen of Château d'Oex. [A.T.S.]



The undermentioned anniversaries are announced from Switzerland:—

Rudolf Minger (70), a former Federal-Councillor and founder of the B.G.B. party (Bürger, Gewerbe & Bauern). In 1919, he entered the National Council over which he presided in 1928. In 1929, he was elected a member of the Federal Government in succession to Federal-Councillor Karl Scheurer. He was President of the Swiss Confederation in 1935. He retired from the government in 1940.

Josef Ineichen (85) from 1914-1940 in charge of the "Primarschulwesen" of the town of Lucerne and from 1915-1919 a member of the "Grossen Stadtrat" of Lucerne and from 1919-1931 he sat in the Grand Council of the canton of Lucerne.

Dr. h.c. Konrad Ilg (75), well-known Trade Unionist and from 1918-1947 a member of Parliament (National Council). In 1942, the University of Berne honoured him with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*.

August Deppeler (70), Director of the "Aargauer Tagblatt, A.G."

Professor, Dr. Fritzsche (70), since 1924 Professor of "Zivilprozess-Schuldbetreibungs & Konkursrecht" and "Internationales Privatrecht" at the University of Zurich. In 1935, he was appointed President of the Court of Appeal, Zurich.

Professor A. Hartmann (70), principal teacher for chemistry and geology at the "Kantonsschule" Aargau until his retirement in 1943.

Professor, Dr. Jakob Jud (70), for many years Professor of Philology at the University of Zurich, and *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Geneva.

Mme. Maria Anna Müller-Gloggner (100), she was

born on the 28th of January, 1852, in Zofingen, in her honour all the church bells rang in the town.

Colonel of Division Gustave Bridel (80). He was from 1902-1919, a member of the Instructors Corps (Artillery) and from 1919-1934 "Waffenchef" of the Artillery. In 1924, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel of Division.

Professor B. Frischkopf (70), Dean of St. Leodegar, Lucerne, and Professor of Theology at the University of Lucerne. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The following couples have celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary (60), in Switzerland:—Dr. med. and Mrs. J. Meyenberger of Wil (St. Gall), and Mr. and Mrs. J. Widmer-Vouga, of Cortaillod. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

During the year 1951, 3,430 persons have emigrated overseas (1950: 2,672). [A.T.S.]

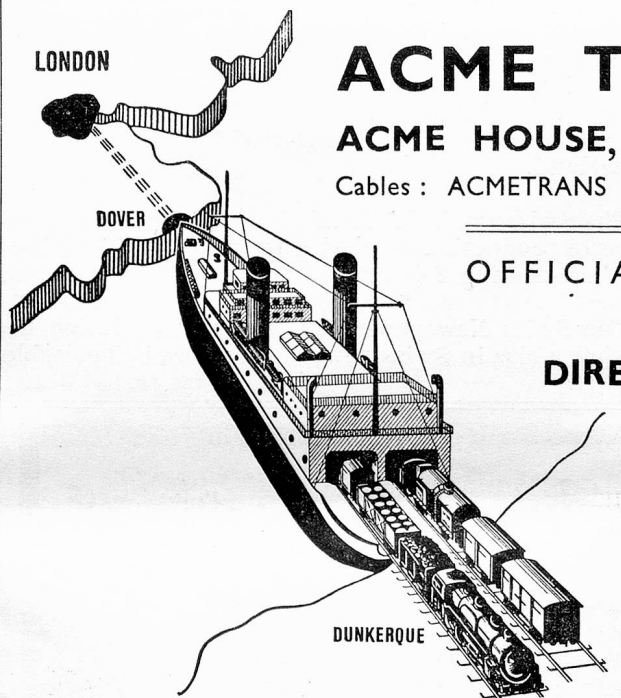
The following Swiss Banks have declared their dividends for the year 1951:—Swiss National Bank: 6 per cent (1950: 6%); Schweizerische Kreditanstalt, Zurich: 7 per cent (1950: 6%); St. Gallische Credit-Anstalt, St. Gall: 7 per cent (1950: 7%). [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The Executive Committee of the Swiss Football Association decided that the soccer international between Switzerland and England will take place in Zurich on May, 28th, 1952.

\* \* \*

Here are some balances of the accounts for 1950, of the following cantons:—



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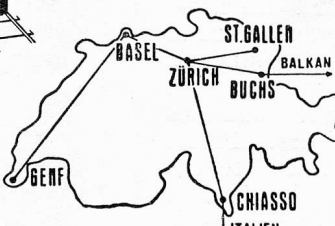
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Geneva .....	Credit Balance ...	2,053,366.—frs.
Uri .....	Credit Balance ...	109,722.—frs.
Aargau .....	Credit Balance ...	79,307.—frs.
[A.T.S.]		

\* \* \*

Switzerland has asked the Chinese Communists to release five St. Bernard monks who were taken to Yunnan Province from Tibet, where they had been training Tibetan dogs in snow rescue work.

The monks, sent to Tibet from the St. Bernard Monastery in the Swiss Alps 20 years ago, were organising the building of a similar hospice in the Lhasa mountains.

\* \* \*

A former German colonel, Eugene Dolmann, has been expelled from Switzerland after living at Lugano for two years under an assumed name.

\* \* \*

Dr. Karel Stern, a member of the commercial staff of the Czechoslovak Legation in Berne, has resolved not to return to his country and has asked the Swiss Government to grant him the right of asylum.

\* \* \*

In Switzerland, butter supplies had to be checked as they threatened to become excessive.

\* \* \*

Six British officers are attending a Swiss army mountain training course at Andermatt.

\* \* \*

The annual "June Festival" held in Zurich takes pride of place among the artistic attractions planned in Switzerland for the early summer. Prominent in the programme is an exhibition of paintings by Claude Monet, which follows an exhibition of paintings, water colours and graphic art by two other French painters, Bonnard and Vuillard. Also on show will be an exhibition of modern German graphic art and an exhibition called "Genius and Handwriting", with manuscripts of great artists, scholars and philosophers from the 15th to 20th century.

Opera-lovers will be interested in the first-night performance of a new version of "Cardillac", an opera by the composer Paul Hindemith, who lives in Zurich, as well as performances of the "Walküre" conducted by Furtwängler and guest appearances by the Rome Opera Company.

\* \* \*

The Canton of Zurich, which joined the Swiss Confederation in 1351, last year celebrated its 600th anniversary on a giant scale. Now two more cantons — those of Glarus and Zug — which joined the young Confederation a year later are making preparations for similar festivities.

Zug has already decided to strike a special commemorative five-franc piece and public celebrations have been planned for June 27th-29th.

\* \* \*

Following the great success of last year's International Music Festival in Geneva, in which 218 candidates from 29 countries took part, the organising committee is already making plans for the 1952 Festival — the eighth — which will be held from September 22nd to October 5th. There will be sections for singers, pianists, harpsichord players, violinists, oboists and saxophonists, and young people from all countries between the ages of 15 and 30 can take part. Prizes totalling 11,000 Swiss francs will be awarded to the winners. As usual the Festival is being organised in collaboration with Radio Geneva and the Orchestre de la Suisse romande.

The prospectus containing rules and the Festival programme has been issued and will be sent free of charge on application to the Festival Secretariat, Conservatoire de Musique, Geneva. The list of adjudicators, which will consist of eminent musicians from Switzerland and other countries, will be published at the end of February. Closing date for entries is July 15th, 1952.

\* \* \*

A rare honour has been bestowed by the Ski Club of Great Britain upon Mr. Adolf Odermatt, Proprietor of the Hotel Bellvue, Engelberg. The Editor of the British Ski Year Book and Honorary Member of the Ski Club of Great Britain, Mr. Arnold Lunn, has personally presented him with a medallion in recognition of his great merits in strengthening the Anglo-Swiss ski friendship.

One of the best-known — and best-loved — composers in French-speaking Switzerland, Carlo Boller, has died suddenly. He was in charge of many choral societies, and his passing has been a loss to singers throughout the whole of Switzerland. He founded and directed, among many others, the celebrated "Chanson de Montreux", with which he has made many successful tours of Europe. Carlo Boller studied composition and conducting in Paris, under Vincent d'Indy, and won first prize for conducting at the "Schola Cantorum". Last winter he was invited to conduct the Nice-Côte d'Azur Orchestra.

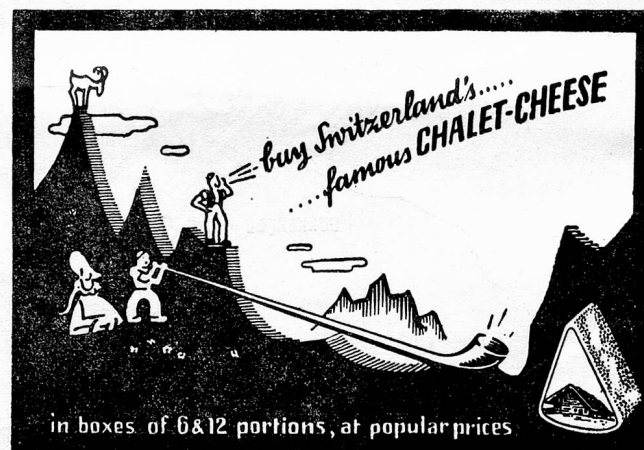
Carlo Boller has an important place in the history of Swiss music: he wrote and adapted numerous songs and ballads for young and old, and for mixed choirs, he composed many festivals (the music of the last Narcissus Festival at Montreux, "Hadès et Coré", on a poem by R. L. Piachaud, with Clotilde Sakharoff, was his), and oratorios. His melodious and harmonious style fitted in perfectly with the need for musical expression so typically Swiss, and after the deaths of Jaques-Dalcroze and Gustave Doret — and, more recently the Abbé Bovet — Carlo Boller had become the most famed interpreter of folklore in French Switzerland.

\* \* \*

The Swiss smoked 5,00 million cigarettes last year. Cigarette production reached a record of 6,772 million. But cigar-making fell off.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Newspaper Publishers' Association has said that a rise in Swiss newspaper prices is inevitable.





This follows a rise in newsprint and magazine paper prices which became effective on November 1st.

A resolution passed at an extraordinary meeting of the Association emphasised that additional burdens of this nature could not be borne by the newspaper organisations without an increase in newspaper and magazine prices.

The Swiss tourist and hotel organisations have arranged that tickets for funiculars, ski lifts and other transport in Switzerland can be bought at travel agencies in Britain and paid for in sterling. This would save the average British skier at least £1 a day of his basic £25 allowance.

The remains of a Roman colony and fortress have been discovered during excavations in Basle. This is the first proof that the city was built over a Roman fortress which stood on the site of the cathedral.

A new service which has just been started makes Geneva the airport for the Mont Blanc region. Since last year it has been possible to travel by air from London to Geneva and thence to reach by train the same day such winter resorts as Zermatt and Kleine Scheidegg. There is now a coach service in connexion with airliners arriving from London, Paris, Brussels, Barcelona, Amsterdam and Rome, which ensures arrival two hours later at Chamonix and other Haute Savoie resorts of the Mont Blanc region. A similar return service makes it possible for Roman, Parisian, or London skiers to spend the week-end in Mont Blanc snows as well as in Valais and the Bernese Alps.

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Plans are now well ahead for the 22nd "Salon international de l'automobile, de la moto et du cycle" (the famous International Motor Show) which will be held at Geneva from March 20th to 30th, 1952. The opening ceremony is to be performed by Mr. Karl Kobelt, the Swiss President.

According to provisional figures the greatest space at the show will be taken over by cars, followed closely by commercial vehicles. Other sections have been booked for cycles and motor-cycles, car and coach bodies, nautical equipment, caravans and tyres, also tools and other accessories.

The 196 members of the newly elected National Council are represented in the following occupations: 27 lawyers; 26 agriculturists; 22 representatives of employee organisations; 7 representatives of employers organisations; 14 journalists; 25 members of cantonal governments; 15 members of cantonal and urban councils; 12 bank and business managers; 8 engineers and architects; 6 merchants, 5 industrialists, 5 medical practitioners; 10 professors, teachers and judges, and 14 various occupations. [A.T.S.]

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