Swiss in Great Britain in the eighteenth century [Continued]

Autor(en): **Fischer, Béat de**

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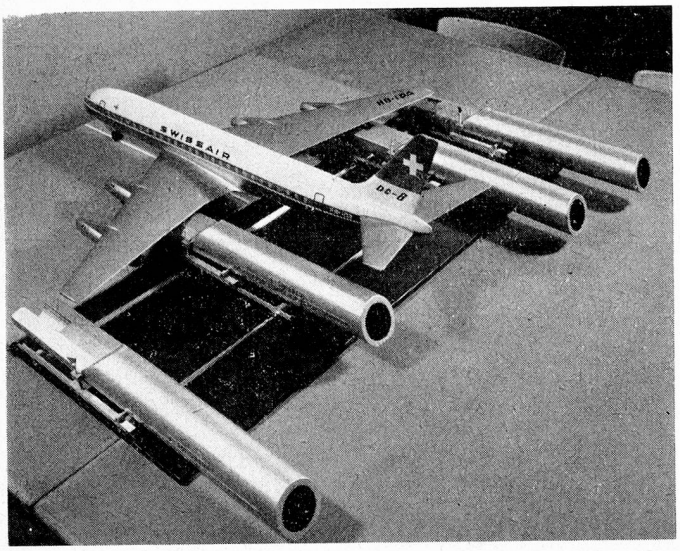
manufacturers may be to reduce noise at source. It is interesting to note, however, that modern aircraft makes less noise than the first generation jets. So, for instance, none of the DC-9s Swissair have in use, has been " caught " by the sound measuring installation. This leaves hope, even with the era of air buses fast approaching.



Model of silencer installation which Swissair is to put into operation later this year for test running jets of four engined aircraft. The silencer tubes are mounted on rails, making them easily adjustable for different aircraft types.

Dawn of the Jumbo Era

The by-pass power units of the Jumbo jet, the Boeing 747, have been developed for civil use, the first U.S. built jet engines not evolved from a military model. The ratio between the cold secondary air stream and the hot primary gas stream, which has hitherto been about 1.5:1, has been increased to 5:1, resulting in an appreciable reduction in noise. Furthermore, Swissair have received a guarantee that the noise level will be slightly *under* today's average. This means, the fear that the arrival of the Jumbo jets brings extra noise, is largely unfounded.

At the end of 1967, Swissair had 27 jet aircraft, 6 piston aircraft, one BAC-111 chartered from British Eagle and two F-27 operated by Balair. In 1968, the turbine powered fleet is being increased to 32 long, medium and short-haul jets, and three F-27, the piston-engined CV-440 being phased out. For the following years, nine long- and short-haul jets have been put on order. At the end of last year, a purchasing agreement was signed for two giant Boeing 747. In the B-747 version which Swissair has chosen, the line will carry a crew of 19, 32 first class and 321 economy class passengers, plus up to 10 tons of cargo, non-stop from Switzerland to New York — at 920 km per hour.

It is hoped that town and country planning authorities will refrain from encircling airports even further, a tendency which has added unnecessary difficulties. A town like Kloten had a popultaion of 3,700 when the Airport was begun — today there are 15,000 inhabitants. The building boom has made similar " progress " in other Communes nearby.

In order to cope with the problem, there must be goodwill on all sides to agree on a level of tolerance. Swissair will continue without remission to help reduce the noise nuisance as far as permissible without impairing the safety of operations. Furthermore, although they are a commercial undertaking, big profits are not their aim as they consider themselves a public service. They are nevertheless dependent on economic self-sufficiency, for, although they are Switzerland's national airline, they are not government subsidised. Switzerland benefits greatly from aviation, especially the Cantons which run the airports, and a certain amount of noise, however regrettably, must be accepted. With technical progress and the right attitude it should be possible to prevent SOUND from turning into NAUSEA.

(Photos by courtesy of Swissair.)

SWISS IN GREAT BRITAIN IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by

Béat de Fischer

(Former Ambassador to the Court of St. James's.)

(Continued.)

III

Numerous also were the Swiss, Genevans and Neuchâtelois who, in the eighteenth century, discharged special functions at Court, whether at Whitehall, St. Theobald and St. James's, or at Hampton Court and Kew. They were almost always French-speaking, and often pastors or pastors' sons, whose appeal lay mainly in the fact that they were both Protestants and heirs to the French civilisation.

William III had as his preceptor Samuel Chappuzeau. When he became King of England in 1688, he took with him his bodyguard of 50 Bernese who, as tradition says, entered London to the strains of the 'Bernermarsch'.[23] As his physician, he took over from his predecessor Sir Theodore Colladon (d. 1707), of Geneva, the chief medical officer at Chelsea Hospital, whose last descendant, Anne Colladon, left a considerable part of her fortune to the French Hospital, to which Swiss were also admitted. Sir Theodore's successor was Etienne Rougeat, another Genevan, On scientific matters, King William liked to refer to Nicolas Fatio, Newton's friend. It was he who tried, though without success, to persuade Firmin Abauzit to leave Geneva for Cambridge.

Queen Anne had in her Palace Guard three Swiss captains: Pachoud, Bonnard and Delachaux; she had no doubt inherited them from her brother-in-law.

From the time the Protestant Hanoverians arrived in England, the Swiss and Genevan colony, with its large Reformed majority, had excellent relations with them. In 1745, when the second Jacobite rebellion broke out, it offered to levy in support of George II a 500-strong battalion which could be mobilised within 24 hours. This volunteer corps, organised by Sir Luke Schaub, however, never saw action, but the sovereign reviewed it and handed to it on that occasion a flag which is still in existence, and which is similar to those of the Swiss regiments in France.[24] The inscription on the cross of the Colour seems to have been: 'Ubi libertas ibi bene'.

George II, who had a marked aversion to all he called 'bainting, blays and boetry', was nevertheless fond of masquerades. It was the peculiar 'Swiss Count', the J.-J. Heidegger, of Zurich,[25] already mentioned, who became his rather licentious Master of the Revels, The severe Andreas de Planta, on the other hand, was appointed Italian Reader to Queen Caroline. F.-O. Petitpierre and Joshua Amez-Droz (d. 1793) were teachers of French and tutors to the future King George III, and he had George Michael Moser as his drawing-master. Gaspar Wettstein acted as chaplain, English teacher and librarian to the Prince of Wales, who even sent him to Gotha on a delicate mission to his future fiancée.

But it was George III who assembled the greatest number of Swiss around himself, the Queen and the Royal Princes. He employed successively as French Reader the Reverend Charles de la Guiffardière, of Geneva, nicknamed 'Mr. Turbulent'; Antoine Jacques Roustan; Bugnon and Sterky; while the physicist Jean-André de Luc, a Fellow of the Royal Society, held the same appointment to the Queen. His influence was quite important as he gathered round him a group of well-known Genevese emigrants. Joseph de Planta was the King's adviser on books and libraries, and Colonel Polier ensured the liaison between him and the Court at Hanover. De Salgas educated the Princes William and Edward, and Lieutenant-General Jacques de Budé (1737-1818), of Geneva, gave them military instruction. The King commissioned Paul Mallet to write a History of the House of Brunswick, to which the Queen belonged. Mademoiselle de Montmollin, Mesdemoiselles P. and B. de Planta, and Mademoiselle Mula were governesses to the Princesses, and also dealt with the Queen's correspondence. The English teacher, Mademoiselle Bab de Planta, was, in particular, a companion in grief of the famous Fanny Burney[26] under the formidable Miss Schwellenberg, Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Charlotte.

It was not only the King who surrounded himself with Swiss. The nobility shared his habits and we see the Dukes of Portland and Newcastle, the families of Lords Dysart, Mountstuart, Limerick, Bentinck, Chesterfield, Walpole, Lansdowne, Waldgrave, Cecil and many others entrusting the education of their sons to Swiss tutors and sending them together on the 'Grand Tour', on which several of our towns and cities constituted traditional stops. The Duke of Chandos even had his own Swiss Guard.

IV

The most surprising form of the Swiss presence in England in the eighteenth century was perhaps that constituted by our bankers.[27]

Since before the Reformation, but mostly after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), bankers from Geneva — which was the cradle of one of the forms of modern capitalism — and Huguenot refugees in that town had been emigrating to London, where they soon established trading counters, while jealously maintaining close ties with their families and the parent enterprises in their hometown,which had become too small for them. This emigration continued during the whole of the eighteenth century, so that, by the end of it, an impressive number of Genevan and Helvetic merchant bankers were to be found in London. Among them might be mentioned Pierre Chauvet, Louis Guiguer (one of whose relatives owned Prangins Castle where Voltaire lived in 1754 before he bought Les Délices), Charles-Henri Rigaud, Jacques Achard; and above all Pierre Isaac Thélusson and Anthony Francis Haldimand, who played such a prominent part in the English business world.

Always in close contact with compatriot bankers and co-religionists in Amsterdam, Lyons and Paris, these businessmen constituted what one would call today a Huguenot Internationale. They mostly dealt in the money market. But they also acted occasionally as intermediaries between London's flourishing financial market and certain Swiss cantons, primarily Berne and Zurich, which sometimes borrowed from and sometimes lent capital to the British Government and financiers. Several Swiss agents were on the spot to help them. Berne, for instance, had recourse to representatives such as Captain Hans Jakob Otth (=Ott) and to such firms as Muller & Co., while at the same time also keeping a special financial commissioner in the kingdom. Towards the end of the century, Berne had deposited in London some £440,000, and Zurich about £50,500, which sums they were thus able to save from Napoleon's grasp and which they withdrew intact when the wars were over, the accrued interest for the years 1798 to 1814 being used to pay off the so-called 'Helvetian public debt'. Less would have sufficed to create a firm tradition of financial collaboration and mutual trust between the two countries.

The Genevan and Swiss bankers were, at certain times, almost the only financial links between the continent and isolationist England, which was almost continuously at war with some adversary there. This fact enabled them, when the Revolution of 1789 was impending, to render services to the French aristocrats who, foreseeing trouble, were eager to transfer their fortunes to England. It was in this context that Pierre Isaac Thélusson, whose family's office in Paris had had Monsieur Necker[28] as a partner, played a particularly active rôle. His enigmatic will became a test case well-known to British lawyers.[29]

Extremely well informed, cultivating valuable international and local relationships and controlling very large assets, the Genevan and Swiss bankers in London[30] were naturally more and more in demand for their services. A number of them became British, married well in the Kingdom, were raised to the peerage or were elected Members of Parliament. Their brilliant position made it possible for several of them to accede to the highest offices in the City, some becoming directors and even governors of the Bank of England. Thus it was that Peter Gaussen, of Geneva (1723-88), held this high appointment between 1777 and 1779, that is to say, during the American War of Independence. Peter Isaac Thélusson and William Haldimand, the son of Anthony Francis, were among the directors at the turn of the century.

It is also interesting to mention here the bankers who were directors of the very important East India Company: Peter Gaussen, already referred to, and Pierre Henri Cazenove, of Geneva, the founder of the Cazenove firm in London, which is still flourishing.

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23 Richard Feller, *Geschichte Berns* (Bern 1955), iii. 97.

24 Felix Staehelin, *Der jüngere Stuart-prätendent und sein Aufenthalt in Basel 1754-1756* (Basel 1949). The Young Pretender lived in Basle, accompanied by Mrs. Walkinshaw, as Chevalier William Thompson and said he was a doctor. When in Rome, Charles-Victor de Bonstetten was very much impressed by his young wife, the Countess of Albany, the 'Reine des Cœurs'. (Herking, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-111). It is of interest to note that some Catholic Swiss fought in the ranks of the Jacobites.

25 E. S. Turner, *The Court of St. James* (London 1906), p. 206.

26 *The Diary of Fanny Burney* (London 1966), pp. 130-135, 137-143, etc.

27 Swiss Bank Corporation, *Swiss Merchant Bankers in London* (London 1954) Herbert Lüthy, *La Banque protestante en France* (Paris 1961).

28 When Paris was suffering from famine in 1789, Necker offered his whole fortune in England as a guarantee of payment for English wheat to be imported by France (Edouard Chapuisat, *Necker*, Paris 1938, p. 181).

29 John J. Moss, *A Study in the private use of eighteenth century legal formalism. Historical evidence for an understanding of Peter Thellusson's Will* (London 1958.

30 These bankers were mainly Boissier & Sellon, Cazenove, Ami Gampert, A. Haldimand, Barthelemy Huber, Mark Liotard & Aubertin, Nicolas Marcet, Marcet & Cie, Samuel Müller, Peter Thélusson, Naville & Aubert, Ami Rilliet, Tourton & Guiguer, etc., etc.

(To be concluded.)