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NEWS FROM THE COLONY



ALFRED CONRAD BOLLER 70

Congratulations! Mr. Alfred Boller of "Aberdare", Cross Road, Tadworth, Surrey, will be 70 on 8th May. He can look back on a successful career which involved stays of varying lengths in a number of countries. Born at Agasul, Zurich, he visited primary and secondary schools at Illnau in his home Canton, and the *Ecole Supérieure de Commerce* in Neuchâtel.

After a three-years' apprenticeship with Volkart Brothers, Winterthur, he was transferred to Bombay in 1919. He spent 12 years in India, doing all journeys by sea. Mail took 16 to 18 days — what a leisurely and happy state of affairs compared with the rush of today! Incidentally, airmail only started in 1930 and that in an irregular manner.

Mr. Boller returned to Switzerland for good in 1931. After a few years with the well-known building contractors A. G. Hatt-Haller in Zurich, he joined O.S.E.C. — Swiss Office for the Development of Trade—to take charge of their newly formed overseas organisation. The war brought its activities almost to a standstill.

In 1940, the Swiss Federal War Transport Office called in Mr. Boller to help with the organisation of their Sea Transport Section. To manage this was very much in his line, and though a difficult task, it was also a very rewarding one. It took him frequently to Spain, Portugal, Italy and, once, in 1942, to London as member of the Swiss Trade Delegation under the leadership of the late Minister Hans Sulzer.

It was often a dangerous life that Mr. Boller led. But with his exceptional knowledge which he had acquired during his stay in India, he was so well qualified — probably unequalled in his vast knowledge of shipping. He ren-

dered invaluable services to Switzerland in provisioning the country during the war when Switzerland was completely surrounded by Axis powers.

It was towards the end of the war that Alfred Boller was invited by the International Red Cross Committee in Geneva to go to Greece as Vice-President of the *Commission Mixte pour les Secours en Grèce*. Greece was occupied by the Germans at that time, and the organisation was set up by the International Red Cross Committee in conjunction with the Swedish Red Cross for the purpose of supplying the civilian population with food from Canada and U.S.A. Swedish ships were chartered to transport the food with the agreement of both belligerent parties. The most trying period in the activities of the Mixed Commission was when civil war broke out at the beginning of December 1944 soon after the departure of the German occupation troops. But it was not long before distribution of food was resumed on a limited scale "across the lines" in the beleaguered city of Athens. After the restoration of peace, the organisation was handed over to the new Greek Government, Mr. Boller returned to Switzerland in summer 1945. The Swedish and Greek Red Cross awarded him an Order of Distinction for his services.

Geneva was Alfred Boller's next port of call, where he joined the *Société Générale de Surveillance S.A.* Soon he was sent abroad again, this time as Director of their subsidiary in the United Kingdom, Cargo Superintendents (London) Ltd. For the past three years, he has been their Chairman.

Mr. Boller has been a member of a great many Swiss societies, including the Economic Council. He is also a member of the Swiss Church, and at one time he ran the service for Swiss children's annual holidays in Switzerland, the "Pro Juventute" scheme now operated by Mrs. Kaluza.

He married Miss Elisabeth Escher in 1927, and the happy couple had two sons. She will be remembered with affection and respect by many, for she did a great deal of unselfish and devoted work in the Swiss community. Her death in 1957 was a great blow. But Mr. Boller's many friends were delighted when, in 1960, he married Miss Marguerite Frey from Lausanne.

Many happy returns of what we hope will be a very memorable birthday, and may the best of health be yours for a long time to come!

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PERSONAL NEWS

We congratulate Mrs. O. C. Brenni, formerly of Birmingham, on her recent marriage to Mr. Sante Mariutto. We wish the couple who now live at 9/258 Regents Park Road, London N.3, joy and happiness.

* * *

We are happy to announce the birth of a son to Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Grueninger, of 44 Pole Hill Road, E.4. Jean-Marc was born on 19th March, a brother to little Jessica. Heartfelt wishes!

* * *

Several hundred guests attended the wedding on 9th April of Miss Jeanette de Vigier to Mr. Charles du Cane. It was a sunny spring day when the bride, with her father and attended by six bridesmaids, arrived at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster. Prince Michael of Kent was amongst the guests who included a number of distinguished personalities from this country and abroad. The Swiss Ambassador and Madame René Keller attended the wedding and the reception at the Dorchester Hotel Ballroom afterwards. We repeat our good wishes to the young couple who are spending their honeymoon in Barbados.

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We have great pleasure in announcing the marriage of Miss Verena Weist to Mr. Jack Galton. Miss Weist is the daughter of the late Mr. Richard Weist and of Mrs. Weist of 19 Leinster Road, N. 10. The wedding will take place at St. Bartholomews Church, Sydenham, S.E.26, on Saturday, 26th April. Congratulations and best wishes for a happy future!

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