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INTRODUCING A NOBLE FRIEND

ARMS-azure, a cross couped and pointed between, in relief two lions combatant and as base as many swans, wings elevated and addorsed resplendent, all or.

CREST. In front of a portcullis or a dexter arm embowed in armour fessewise, the hand clenched proper. Supporters – on either side a pikeman of Honourable Artillery Company armed and accoutred, supporting with the exterior hand a pike erect proper, the dexter charged with a portcullis chained or, and the sinister with an oak tree eradicated and fructed, also proper, the trunk pierced by three arrows or flighted azure.

The Reverend John Cyril Edmondson was born in 1920, the son of a member of Parliament. He was educated at Eton and served with distinction in the Royal Navy during and after the Second World War. He won the Distinguished Service Cross. He is also an acknowledged and self-confessed friend of Switzerland.

Who is he? To many of his friends in the Swiss community and indeed in Britain he is probably better known as the Reverend Lord Sandford, Second Baron of Banbury.

For the past two years Lord Sandford has been President of the Anglo-Swiss Society, a post he fulfils with vigour and pleasure. He has a long and well-established rapport with Switzerland. Along with the Society's past President, Lord Selkirk, he has enjoyed many a season ski-ing in the Swiss Alps. Indeed, he has done so regularly, except for the war years, since the tender age of five. He is especially proud of the fact that he was one of the first Britons to return to the ski slopes near Davos immediately after the war.

But ski-ing in Switzerland is not Lord Sandford's only connection with our country. Far from it. As a parliamentarian he has played a very active role in the Anglo-Swiss Parliamentary Group.

But Lord Sandford has also enjoyed a varied and chequered career. He was, first and foremost, a sailor. He retired from the Royal Navy, with the rank of Commander, in 1956 – primarily because he felt a strong call to the Church. He was ordained a minister of the Church of England two years later and enjoyed the life of a humble country parson while he served as curate at St. Nicholas' church in Harpenden, Herts for a period of five years.

It was during his incumbency there that the Reverend John Cyril Edmondson succeeded to his title after the death of his father in 1959. So how did he feel about being a Lord whilst serving as a curate. "No problem" he says, "my flock treated me just as they would any other parson. I had succeeded in shaking off the mantle of my senior Naval rank and had settled into my new life very happily". He also married a parson's daughter, Catherine Mary Hunt, and is blessed with two sons and two daughters.

From 1965 to 1968 he served as executive chaplain to the Bishop of St. Albans but then the call to politics came to him. His political career was also a success story. He was Conservative Whip in the House of Lords from 1966 to 1968

and Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government during Mr. Edward Heath's administration. He has also served as Chairman of the Hertfordshire and Westminster Councils of Social Services. He was also a member of the Church Army Board for a year.

So why did this sensitive man, blessed with a social conscience as he undoubtedly is – a man with many advantages in life, decide to enter the political arena? Probably for the same reason that he relinquished a distinguished career in the Navy to become a parson. Because he felt he had to.

In his own words "given that we have a political system in which a limited number of privileged people are given a seat in the House of Lords, I felt it my duty to accept the responsibilities that come with the privileges".

But in conclusion let us return for a moment to Lord Sandford's ski-ing prowess. He is proud to report that he actually won a race against a team of Swiss Parliamentarians. But, he adds wistfully, that was before the Swiss Parliament managed to find its current "champions". One surprising snippet of information on the subject was that for up to 10 years after the war there were more experienced skiers in the British Parliament than there were in the Swiss. "This has changed now" adds His Lordship.

In spite of his busy life in the House of Lords, Lord Sandford is still a parson at heart. Whenever he can he likes to preach or conduct the occasional wedding or christening.

In thanking Lord Sandford for giving us this interview, and for the interesting tour of the House of Lords

and his hospitality there, let us hope that the British and Swiss communities will continue to benefit from his friendship for many more years to come. **WGS**



The Reverend Lord Sandford, President of the Anglo-Swiss Society.

SWISS BANK CORPORATION

Annual figures for 1975

At the Annual General Meeting of shareholders held on the 31st March, the Board's proposal to pay a dividend of Sw.Fr. 10 per share, to add Sw.Fr. 80 million to published reserves, to allocate Sw.Fr. 2.5 million to staff welfare funds (as before) and to issue new participation certificates of Sw.Fr. 100 nominal to existing holders of ordinary bearer or registered shares or participation certificates at the ratio of one for seven at a price of Sw.Fr. 130 were approved.

The Balance Sheet total per end-1975 amounted to Sw.Fr. 49,840 million (up by Sw.Fr. 8,800 million over the previous year) and net profit was Sw.Fr. 199.8 million (up by Sw.Fr. 21.8 million). Capital and Reserves as at the end of 1975, after all allocations, amounted to Sw.Fr. 2,470 million as against Sw.Fr. 2,059 million at the end of 1974.

Dr. E. F. Paltzer, General Manager, has now retired after over 40 years' service with the Bank and Dr. Franz Lütolf, formerly Vice-President with our New York Branch, has been newly appointed General Manager, both with effect from the 1st April.

LUCERNE – INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF MUSIC

The 1976 International Festival of Music, Lucerne, will take place from 18 August to 9 September. A preliminary programme has been published giving details of the various performances.

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