

# Deaths in Switzerland of special interest to women

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## AN APPEAL

From Robert J. Keller, Chairman of the Advisory Council

This is an appeal and I make no excuse for it. It is addressed to you, the readers of our "Swiss Observer", and I am making it on behalf of all the members of the Advisory Council.

We believe that our paper fulfils a useful purpose, not only to the Swiss Colony in Great Britain, but also to our many friends in the United Kingdom and abroad. It has been published for over forty years but I am sorry to tell you that owing to much increased costs of printing and mailing its publication has resulted in a net loss over the past three years of £927 15s. 0d. This loss has resulted in spite of the publishers having continued to give financial support in the way of free office rent and meeting part of the administration expenses, the Editor being far from adequately compensated financially and, I need hardly mention, the members of the Advisory Council gladly giving their services gratuitously.

We think it would be inadvisable to raise the annual subscription above its present level to 35s. We ask for

the support of every individual member in one, perhaps all, of the following ways:—

1. Through their personal influence obtaining new subscribers. There must still be many, both of the Swiss Colony itself and of its friends, who would find the "Observer" interesting and useful.
2. Taking out gift subscriptions for their friends or old age pensioners who can no longer afford the "Swiss Observer".
3. Using their influence to persuade business houses to take advertising space.
4. Giving donations by making their annual subscriptions something more than the minimum 35s.

The "Swiss Observer" is for the benefit of all of us who have the Swiss Colony in Britain at heart. Will you help us to keep it in being? Please do not leave it to "the other chap" — a modest help from everybody would see us through our difficulties. Don't let it be said that our present Colony cannot (or will not) do what its predecessors have done for so many years.

### DEATHS IN SWITZERLAND OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO WOMEN

During the last few months several well-known Swiss women have died. First, the news reached us that Miss Ida Somazzi had died in a Berne hospital at the age of eighty. Ticinese by origin, Bernese by birth, Miss Somazzi graduated at the University of Berne in 1919 as secondary teacher and Doctor of Philosophy. After a spell as private teacher in Argentina she returned to Berne and taught first at the Secondary Schools of Bolligen and Berne and later at the Bernese Teachers' Training College.

Before the second war Dr. Somazzi was a member of the Swiss League of Nations Association and after the war of the United Nations Association. She was a Swiss delegate at the General Conference of UNESCO in Beirut and President of the section on education of the Swiss UNESCO Commission. She was President and later Honorary President of the Swiss working community "Woman and Democracy". She was Chairman of the UNO and UNESCO Commission on questions affecting women, and she was also a member of the Commission on international questions of the Federation of Swiss Women's Associations.

\* \* \*

A few weeks later we heard of the death of another prominent Swiss woman, Mrs. Elisabeth Vischer-Alioth. She died in Basle at the age of seventy. As early as 1916 she was President of the Swiss organisation for women's suffrage, and all her life she worked resolutely for political rights for the Swiss women. Mrs. Vischer sat on the Citizens' Council of the town of Basle as representative of the "Evangelische Volkspartei".

\* \* \*

From São Paulo came the news that the well-known dialect writer, Frau Emilie Locher-Werling, had died there in her ninety-fourth year. She wrote a good many tales and poems in the Zurich dialect, especially also for children. Her comedy "Wie's ae cha ga" received a prize in 1905, and the Dramatic Society of Zurich made Mrs. Locher an Honorary Member many years ago.

\* \* \*

A well-known woman of different popularity died when Miss Cordelia Guggenheim became the victim of a

traffic accident at the end of August. She was the announcer of the Swiss Television Service. She was born in Ascona in 1935, but grew up in Zurich. There and later in Paris she was trained as a dancer and actress and began her career in Swiss TV on 1st January 1957.

\* \* \*

Mrs. Marie Sidler-Fuchs passed away in Schwyz at the age of eighty-nine. As wife of Landammann Rudolf Sidler, who died in 1938, she was very active in various welfare organisations. For forty years she acted as Secretary to the Foundation "Für das Alter".

\* \* \*

In October the *Doyenne* of the Neuchâtel Press died. Miss Blanche Baehler was a member of the editorial staff of the "Feuille d'Avis des Montagnes" and was seventy-three when she passed away at Le Locle.

\* \* \*

Mrs. Magdalena Stamm died at Schleithem at the age of 94. She was the head of the Printing Firm J. G. Stamm's Erben and widow of the Publisher and Printer Johann Stamm. She was actively engaged in the production of the "Schleithemer Boten".

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Finally, the Swiss Countrywomen's Association mourn their President, Frau Margrit Messmer, who died in Zurich at the age of 71. She was the wife of the first Zurich Farmers' Secretary, Arnold Messmer. After the early death of her husband, Mrs. Messmer worked in the Zurich Farmers' Secretariat where she devoted much time and energy to countrywomen's problems. For thirty years she was President of the Zurich Countrywomen's Association, and for the past few years she was President of the Swiss Countrywomen's Association. As representative of this organisation on the Council of the Associated Countrywomen of the World in London, the Editor had the privilege of knowing Mrs. Messmer and of appreciating her indefatigable efforts in the interests of the Swiss farm woman.

(Mainly based on A.T.S. news.)