

Zeitschrift: Swiss express : the Swiss Railways Society journal
Herausgeber: Swiss Railways Society
Band: 4 (1994-1996)
Heft: 11

Artikel: With reference to the request (Swiss express June 1996) by Margeret Smith for a booklet about CGN Vessels [...]
Autor: Wood, Andrew L.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-855108>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

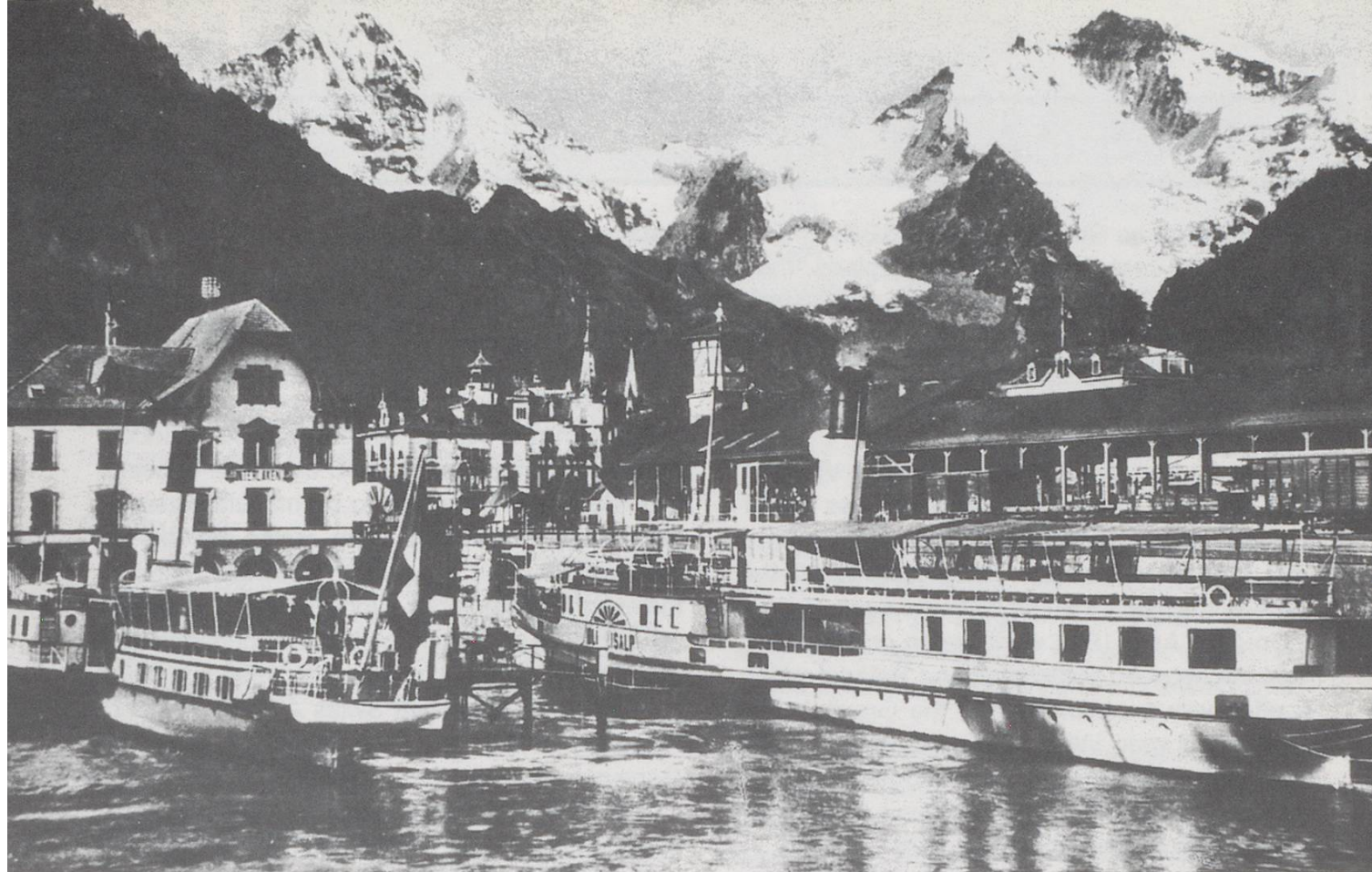
L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 14.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>



With reference to the request (Swiss Express June 1996) by Margeret Smith for a booklet about CGN Vessels I would recommend Paddle Steamers of the Alps by Brown and McKendrick (Ferru Publications - ISBN 1 871947 19 7 - £4.50). This is a short, well illustrated guide in English, to all the surviving Lake Paddle Steamers in Switzerland, Germany, France and Italy. I bought my copy at a model railway exhibition but any bookshop should be able to order it.

The book gives the information that the *Italie* was built by Sulzers of Winterthur (builders of the majority of the Swiss Lake Paddle Steamers - Escher - Wyss of Zurich being the other main builder), entered service in 1908 and was converted to diesel electric paddle drive between 1956 and 1958. The first conversion of a CGN boat, the *Geneve*, was completed in 1933 with the most recent, the *Nelvetie*, being completed in 1977. In all 6 were converted and 5 of these still survive although only the *Italie*, the *Montreux* and the *Vevey* see regular service. The other survivors are the already mentioned *Geneve* and *Helvetie*.

The *Talisman* mentioned by Ms Smith was originally built, in 1935 by A & J Inglis Ltd of Pointhouse on the Clyde, as a DEPV (Diesel Electric Paddle Vessel) and equipped from new with English Electric Co. Ltd generators and motor rather than being a conversion from a steam

powered vessel. Unusually the motor drove the paddles directly at up to 50rpm, rather than through gears. She was sufficiently successful to be re-engined in 1955 and had outstanding economy.

However the disadvantages of vibration and noise and lack of reliability associated with early diesels mitigated against the construction of more or conversion of any existing paddle steamers for the Clyde although a handful of other DEPVS were built on the Clyde for service in other areas. By the time the perceived problems with diesels were ironed out the Second World War had intervened and afterwards the general decline in the Clyde sailings market coupled with the rapid development of diesel and steam turbine powered propeller driven vessels saw the end of any potential for DEPVS in Britain. The *Talisman* was not the first British built DEPV but was probably the largest and most successful of the handful that were built or converted.

Ms Smith also mentioned the *Blumlisalp* on Lake Thun and I enclose a copy of a photograph of this vessel at Interlaken with Interlaken West station behind. I would estimate the photo to have been taken in the thirties or possibly earlier but if anybody has any more accurate ideas I would be most interested.

Andrew L. Wood