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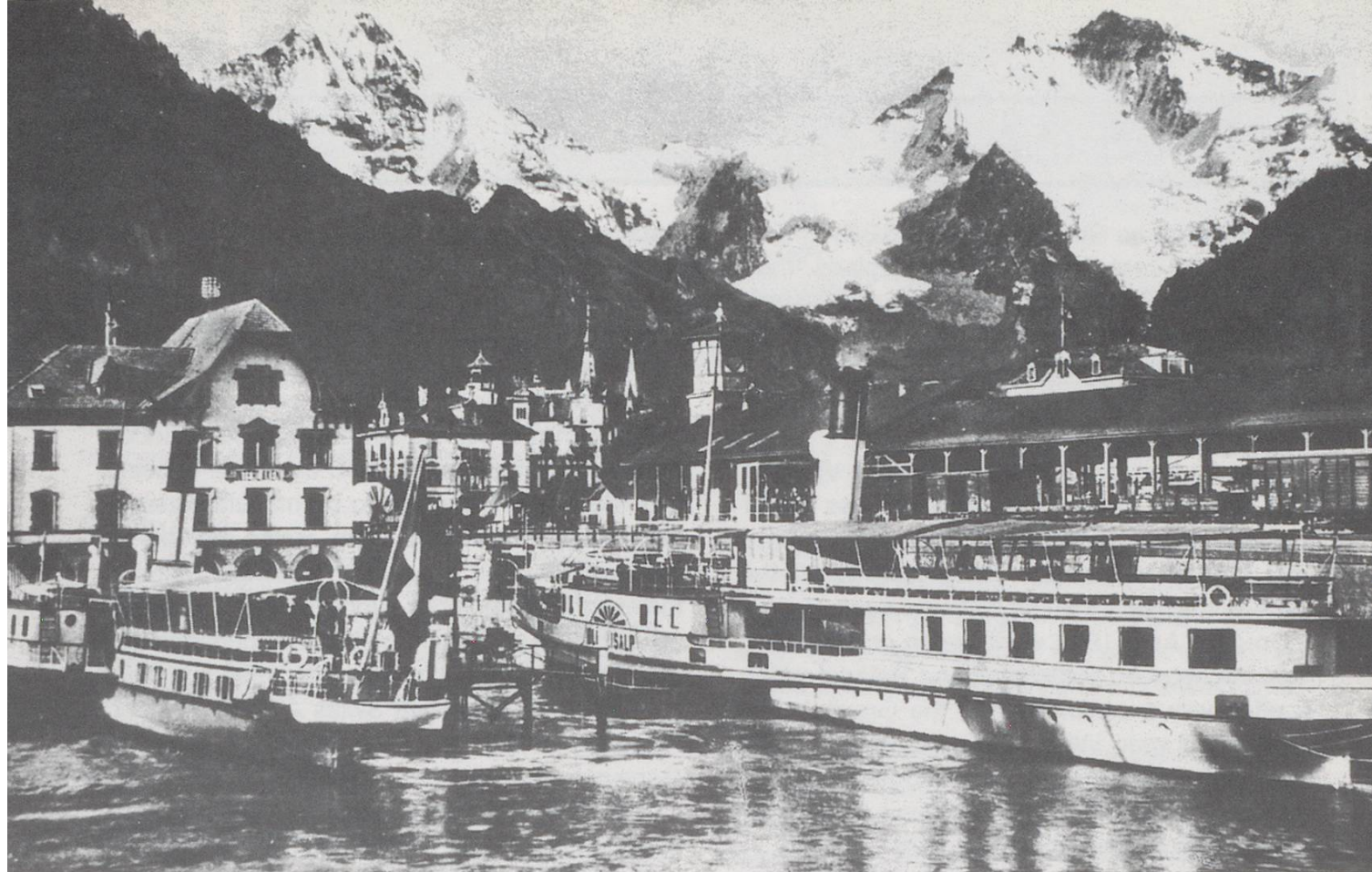
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With reference to the request (Swiss Express June 1996) by Margeret Smith for a booklet about CGN Vessels I would recommend Paddle Steamers of the Alps by Brown and McKendrick (Ferru Publications - ISBN 1 871947 19 7 - £4.50). This is a short, well 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