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A Train Called 'Redbeard' by Giles Della Gana

This article is intended to be the first in an occasional series on the origins of the names used for prestige train services working out of, within, or through, Switzerland. Though I had toyed with the idea for sometime, I was finally inspired by the publication of an article 'What's in a Name' by Iain and Mike Parsons, in journal number 8, December '93, of The Austrian Railway Group and my debt to them is freely acknowledged. Here I will deal with services bearing the names of famous people, real or legendary. It must be left to the reader to draw their own conclusions as to any policy this may reveal though I must admit to some disappointment that only one scientist (Einstein) and one engineer (Vauban) seem to have been honoured.

To make life interesting for those who have the temerity to attempt to write about such things, the railways keep the situation somewhat fluid by dropping some names and adding new ones so there are bound to be some omissions I'm afraid. I have included as many as I can find, those not running at the time of writing (September '95 to March '97) are marked '+'.

Albert Einstein

Train Nos.: EC 166 & 167

Route: Interlaken/Bern/Zurich/St.Gallen/
St.Margrethen>Munchen/Praha

Named after the German/Swiss/American mathematical physicist born in Ulm, Bavaria in 1879. Educated at Munich, Aarau and Zurich he took Swiss nationality in 1901 holding the position of examiner at the Swiss Patent Office, Bern, between 1902 and 1905. He won fame for his Special and General Theories of Relativity produced in 1905 and 1916 being awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1921. In 1909 he was awarded a special professorship at Zurich and became a professor at Praha during 1911 and 1912. From 1914 to 1933 he was director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Physical Institute in Berlin. Moving to Princeton in September 1939 he warned President Roosevelt that the Germans might make an atomic bomb, thus helping to initiate the Allies' own 'Manhattan' project. He took American citizenship in 1940, dying in 1955.

Angelica Kauffman

Train Nos.: EC 92 & 93

Route: Zurich/Brengenz>Munchen

Named after Swiss painter born in Chur in 1741, who was painting portraits at the age of eleven! In 1766 she went to London where she became famous for paintings of classical and mythological subjects together with further portraits. In 1769 she became one of the first Royal Academicians. The 1770's saw her working on wall paintings for the Adam brothers, even going so far as to apply, unsuccessfully, for a commission to decorate St. Paul's Cathedral. Eventually leaving Britain for her second husband's native Italy, she died in 1807.

Barbarossa +

Train Nos.: EC 486 & 487 (Still runs but no longer named)

Route: Stuttgart>Shaffhausen/Zurich/Chiasso>Milano

Named after Holy Roman Emperor Fredrick I, nicknamed Barbarossa (Redbeard). Born circa 1123. He fought a series of campaigns to establish his rule in Northern Italy finally winning over his Lombard subjects when he changed to a policy of clemency and compromise. After defeating rebellious barons he became one of the leaders of the 3rd Crusade (another was 'Richard The Lionheart'). However after winning two victories he was drowned crossing the river Saleph in 1190. He was buried in Antioch.

Canaletto

Train Nos.: IC 354 & 355

Route: Zurich/Chiasso>Milano/Verona/
Venezia

Named after the painter originally called Giovanni Antonio Canal (1697-1768). After studying in Roma he return to his native Venezia where he painted views of the city as souvenirs for foreign visitors. He spent much of the period between 1746 and 1756 in England, where he painted views of London. Returning home, he was elected to its Academy in 1763.

Carlo Magno +

Train Nos.: EC 4 & 5

Route: Dortmund/Essen/Koln>Basel/Luzern/
Chiasso>Milano/Genova/Sestri Levante

Named after the ruler known to English as Charlemagne (742-814). Becoming King of the Franks in 768, he fought a series of wars unifying all Germanic peoples into the largest empire in Western Europe since Roman times, establishing centralised government on a feudal basis. He was crowned as the first Holy Roman Emperor by the Pope in 800. When not at war he revived Latin scholarship and was a patron of the arts and sciences.

Franz Schubert +

Train Nos.: EC 64 & 65

Route: Basel/Zurich/Buchs SG> Innsbruck/
Salzburg/Wien

Named after the only 'Viennese' composer to actually be born in the city, in 1797. He began his musical career as a chorister, later making a living by teaching, until, with the help of friends, his was able to set up as a composer. Though considered the first great composer of 'Lieder', he is arguably best known for his 'Unfinished' symphony, even though he completed eight others. He and his friends used to hold musical evenings, known as 'Schubertiade'. He died in 1828, just as his music was beginning to win widespread recognition.

Gottardo

Train Nos.: EC 57 & 58

Route: Winterthur/Zurich/Bellinzona/
Lugano>Como/Milano

Derives its name from Gotthard (961-1038), the bishop of Hildesheim, born in Reichersdorf, Bavaria. He was canonised by Pope Innocence II in 1131. The pass named after him opened in 1170 following the building of the so-called 'Teufel Brücke' (Devil's Bridge) by Milanese masons. His feast day, celebrated in Milano, falls on 4th. May.

Gottfried Keller

Train Nos.: EC 94 & 95

Route: Bern/Zurich/Winterthur/St.Gallen/
St.Margrethen>Lindau/München

Named after Swiss writer and poet born in Zurich in 1819. He was largely self-educated after being expelled from school at the age of fifteen. He won scholarship at Heidelberg after the publi-

cation of poems after which he spent six years in Berlin. He returned to Switzerland and served as clerk to the Canton of Zurich from 1861 to 1876. He died in 1890.

Herman Hesse +

Train Nos.: IC 382 & 383 (Still runs but no longer named)

Route: Stuttgart>Schaffhausen/Zurich/
Chiasso>Milano

Named after German/Swiss writer and poet born in 1877. He left studies to be a theologian, as his father and grandfather had been, and entered the world of commerce. Moving to Switzerland in 1912, he took Swiss citizenship in 1923. Winning a Nobel Prize in 1946, he died in 1962.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau +

Train Nos.: 159 & 160

Route: Paris/Dijon/Dole>Vallorbe/Lausanne/Geneve

Named after the political philosopher, educationalist and essayist born in Geneve in 1712. Self taught, he had a series of menial jobs until moving to Paris in 1741. Living in Luxembourg from 1757 until his ideas, which were to influence the French Revolution, forced him to go back to Switzerland and then on to England. Returning to Paris in 1767 he went mad, dying in 1778.

Johanna Spyri

Train No.: ICE 271

Route: Frankfurt/Mannheim>Basel/Zurich

Named after the writer of childrens' books who was born in 1827 at Hilti, Canton Zurich. She began her literary career quite late in life, her most famous book 'Heidi', set in Canton Graubünden, being published in 1880. She died in Zurich in 1901.

Le Corbusier

Train Nos.: EC 969 & 982

Route: Paris>Basel/Zurich

This train is unusual in that it takes its name from a pseudonym - that of the Swiss architect and artist Charles Edouard Jeanneret (1887-1965). Born in La Chaux-de-Fonds, he left school to take up watch engraving but after being encouraged by a local art teacher to

study architecture he travelled throughout Europe. After settling in Paris in 1917 he wrote articles under the 'Le Corbusier' pen-name. His main interests were large urban projects and city planning. Though many of his own designs were rejected his writings exerted a great influence on others.

Manzoni +

Train Nos.: EC 50 & 51

Route: Winterthur/Zurich/Chiasso>Milano

Named after Italian aristocratic Romantic novelist and poet Alessandro Manzoni (1785 to 1873). His historical novel 'I Promessi Spasi' (The Betrothed) published in 1827 is held to be the greatest piece of Italian literature after Dante's 'Divina Comedia'. He became a senator in 1860. (Also see 'Verdi' entry).

Maria Theresa

Train Nos.: EC 60 & 61

Route: Zurich/Buchs SG>Innsbruck/
Salzburg/Wien

Named after Holy Roman Empress, born in Wien in 1717. Her disputed claim to the throne, supported by Britain and Hungary, led to 'The War of the Austrian Succession' fought between 1741 and 1748. Once secure on the throne she instituted financial and religious reforms, fostering agriculture, manufacturing and commerce. By these means she was able to almost double national revenues whilst reducing taxation! She died in 1780.

Monteverdi

Train Nos.: EC 39 & 40

Route: Geneve-Aeroport/Lausanne/
Brig>Milano/Venezia

Named after Italian composer Claudio Monteverdi, born in 1567. Around 1590 he was appointed a court musician to the Duke of Mantua and travelled in his service in Switzerland and the Netherlands. In 1612 the Duke died and he was dismissed. Fortunately he was appointed 'Mastro di Capella' at St. Marks, Venezia the following year. He stayed in this position until his death in 1643.

Pablo Casals

Train Nos.: E273 & 274

Route: Barcelona>Geneve/Lausanne/Bern/

Zurich

Named after Spanish cellist, conductor and composer born in 1876. In 1919 he founded the Barcelona Orchestra which he conducted until he left Spain, never to return, at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1936. In 1950 he founded an annual festival at Prades in France. He died in 1973.

Pestalozzi +

Train Nos.: E48 & 49

Route: Zurich/Buchs SG>Innsbruck

Named after Swiss educationalist Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, born in Zurich in 1746, who came to believe in the moral virtue of agricultural occupations. He set out his ideas in the book 'How Gertrude Educates Her Children', published in 1801. After false starts, he ran a school at Yverdon from 1805 to 1825. He died in 1827.

Raffaello

Train Nos.: EC 54 & 55

Route: Basel/Luzern/Chiasso>Milano/Roma

Named after Italian painter Raffaello Santi (or Sanzio), known as Raphael in English, born in Urbino in 1483. In 1505 he went to Siena, later moving to Florence. Served Pope Julius II in Roma from 1509, latter working back in Florence and Bologna. He died in 1520.

Rembrandt

Train Nos.: EC 2 & 3

Route: Amsterdam>Koln>Basel/Zurich/Chur

Named after Dutch painter Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn, born in Leiden in 1606. After early training he moved to Amsterdam. His work includes group portraits such as 'The Night Watch', self-portraits and etchings. Though now considered the first 'modern' artist and one of the greatest of all time., his personal financial situation was such that he died a pauper in 1669.

Robert Stolz +

Train Nos.: EC 168 & 169/EC198 & 199

Route: Zurich>Graz

Named in honour of the prolific composer of Viennese operettas. Born in 1880 has was an infant prodigy, at the age of seven he performed on the piano before Johannes Brahms. His first operetta was staged in 1909. After working on early film musicals in Berlin during the 1920's he went to Hollywood in 1940, returning to Wien in

1946. Still conducting in his nineties, he died in 1975.

Roland +

Train Nos.: TEE 74 & 75

Route: Hoek van Holland>Basel/Luzern/Chiasso>Milano

Named after semi-legendary Frankish hero who is said to have served under Charlemagne (see 'Carlo Magno' entry). He is supposed to have met his death at the battle of Roncesvalles, an actual event that took place in 778.

Rossini +

Train Nos.: IC 353 & 356

Route: Schaffhausen/Zurich/Chiasso>Milano

Named after Italian composer Gioacchino Antonio Rossini (1792-1868). Born at Pesaro he studied in Bologna and began writing comic operas when he was director of the Italian Theatre in Paris. He wrote his greatest work, 'Guillamue Tell' in 1829 (see 'William Tell Express' entry). Retiring to Bologna in 1836, he was forced to move to Florence in 1847 by disturbed political conditions. He returned to Paris in 1855.

Tiziano

Train Nos.: EC 74 & 75

Route: Hamburg/Frankfurt>Basel/Luzern/Chiasso>Milano

Named after the Italian painter Tiziano Vecellio (circa 1490-1576), known to English speakers as Titian. Famous for his revolutionary style of realism. He was widely acclaimed as the greatest of Venetian painters, his subjects being religious and mythological themes. After 1530 he did much work for Emperor Charles V.

Vauban

Train Nos.: EC 90 & 91

Route: Bruxelles/Luxembourg/Metz>Basel/Bern/Brig>Domodossola/Milano

Named in honour of the French soldier and military engineer Sebastien Le Prestre de Vauban (1633-1707). He brought about a revolution in siege warfare, directing such operations through the reign of Louis XIV. Ringing France with a cordon of forts between 1667 and 1688, he was created Marshal of France in 1703. He also found time to write on such subjects as bee keeping, silk manufacturing, pig farming and taxation and

invent the socket bayonet!

Verdi

Train Nos.: EC 4 & 5

Route: Dortmund/Koln/>Basel/Luzern/Chiasso>Milano

Named after the Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901). Born at Le Roncole, of humble, rural origins, his early musical education was subsidised by local well-wishers. His first success was 'Nabucco' of 1842 with 'Rigoletto' of 1851 and 'La Traviata' of 1853 establishing him as a leading operatic composer of his day. His Requiem of 1874 was inspired by the death of Alessandro Manzoni. Though a nationalist in his youth, politics were not to his taste. He did become a senator in later life however.

William Tell Express

Train Nos.: 1670 & 1677

Route: Luzern/Fluelen(Lake Steamer)/Bellinzona/Locarno & Lugano

A seasonal tourist service using normal workings named after the legendary Swiss patriot whose story first emerged in the mid thirteenth century.

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Who Did What

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