

# Charm of the Walansee : a traveller's impressions

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article in itself is naturally not enough, and it will take some three years until all the provisions are established. Incidentally, the Swiss abroad are to be considered specifically. The new article was unanimously accepted, but a proposal to keep the sovereign rights of the Cantons explicitly was defeated by 101:22 votes.

Before the ending of the spring session the National Council had to hold an evening meeting in order to complete its business. The shortage of houses and flats came up once more and it was stated that it would not be possible to stop rent control by the end of 1964. Some other solution would have to be found. Then followed discussion on inflation, in which no fewer than 27 speakers took part. Federal Councillor Schaffner wound up the debate by accepting the various suggestions. He said there was widespread agreement on the diagnosis, but as to therapy opinions differed. The influx of foreign workers was being watched and it was reassuring that a number of organisations had voluntarily agreed not to ask for any further shortening of the working week for the time being. He felt that prices should not surpass the international level and any increase of prices at home would have to be kept at bay. The sitting was declared closed at midnight.

On the last day the alterations in the Cantonal Constitution of Geneva were approved unanimously, also the tax provisions in the Constitution of Uri, and Parliament agreed to give a new concession to the Neuchatel mountain railways.

At the end of the session the President announced that there were some 127 unfinished motions to be dealt with in the summer session, 78 from the previous sitting and to which a further 49 had been added during the present one. It might therefore be advisable to make the summer session four instead of three weeks. He thanked the M.P.s for the good work done, and a very fruitful session came to a close.

—The Swiss Observer

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## Charm of the Walensee

### A Traveller's Impressions

THE Walensee is a little-known lake near Zurich, to its south-east; it is the most attractive part of nature's road from Zurich to Chur or Choire, the capital of the Canton of the Grisons and an interesting old town. Before the railway age the stage-coach drove from Zurich to Weesen at the western end of the Walensee; then the passengers took the boat across to near Walenstadt at the other end, and another stage-coach took them on to Chur. But the Walensee is given to sudden, dangerous storms and there is a traditional recollection of the day when all the stage-coach passengers were drowned.

Weesen on its own signposts calls itself a **Stadtchen**. In itself it has no particular virtue. But its beautifully enclosed harbour has unusual charm and — except for those storms — an extraordinary tranquility with **flaneurs** swans in the water and the cow bells ringing from the mountain slopes. It is one hour's journey by train from the big industrial city of Zurich, but is pervaded by an air of infinite remoteness. To reach Walenstadt the boat is still the most pleasant way in good weather and gives the traveller time to enjoy the alternating blue and green waters of the lake: this journey takes just over an hour. It can, however, never be counted upon, as the boat service, although it emphasises its federal — not merely Cantonal — character on its time-tables, is strictly provisional: the time-tables only promise the service if the weather is fine and then not every day even in the season. Failing the boats the signposts announce 5 hours and 35 minutes to Walenstadt presumably on foot and the railway runs along the south coast of the lake. A new road has now been built along here too, to avoid the former not very safe ascent into the mountains which was forced upon motorists.

Not that Wallenstadt, which is an ancient and modern military centre, has any special attraction. But the village of Muhlehorn is worth a visit for the mill-stream cascading into the lake and for the view from the local policeman's house which is called the Chalet Belvedere. One can boat and fish and swim here as elsewhere on the lake.

From the next village, Murg, motorboats can be persuaded to take one to the foot of Quinten, a tiny village on the northern coast in no other way accessible. It has an old church and a restaurant, with Quinten wine in very short supply, and again a lovely view over the lake. The name — there is a Quarten and an Unterterzen too on the south coast of the Walensee east of Murg — confirms the tradition of Roman outposts here.

The mountains rise as sheer rock walls of the Walensee and yet even Muhlehorn and Murg jut out so as to have sun most of the day, and Weesen enjoys virtually all the sun there can be. The northern shore of the Walensee basks in the sun on a fine day. Its great pointed crags are suitably called the Churfirsten or princes of Chur, and behind them rises the peak of Santis. High up on the slopes near Weesen lies Amden, a winter-sports centre and easy to reach. South of Weesen, Schilt above Mollis is another good place for ski-ing, and farther up, beyond Glarus, Braunwald is a favourite; there are plenty of chair-lifts and the usual facilities.

The Walensee, whose northern shore belongs to the Canton of St. Gallen and its southern to that of Glarus, is thus not only the road to the Grisons. It is near, too, to Toggenburg and to Appenzell, and even to Schaffhausen to the north-west, and to the Lake of



Constance. It should also be mentioned that it connects easily by the Linthkanal with the upper portion of the lake of Zurich and the beautiful old city of Rapperswil with its majestic castle.

The adventurous traveller can take any of these directions. In the spring the most interesting might be the road to Glarus, the capital of one of the remoter Cantons.

—"The Swiss Observer," by courtesy of "The Times."

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## Obituary

### DON CHAMBERLAIN

Another member of our old guard was called away in Taranaki in March last and thus the ranks of our older Swiss immigrants start to diminish very seriously.

With the passing of Don Chamberlain, a life of boundless energy has ended, a mind of enormous capacity has ceased to think; a mind comparable to a river, whose force, if controlled, can create the energy to supply the needs of a nation.

Don arrived in New Zealand as a lad and he set himself a goal: to be the best farmer in the district and own the best farm. In attaining his goal he took setbacks in his stride and conquered them as they came along. He seemed to thrive on difficulties; the bringing up of a large family in depression times was no mean task. However, environment can't go past without making some impressions and it becomes all too easy to fall into a pattern where material things—the farm and cattle—assume too high an estimation of values and where one expects from others what oneself is capable to achieve and thus precipitates adverse results.

Don Chamberlain was a loyal supporter of our cause since the foundation of the Swiss Benevolent Society. He had the gift of giving a well thought out speech at patriotic functions and was very thrilled to go home to Switzerland with Mrs Chamberlain only two years ago. Unfortunately, indifferent health prevented him from enjoying this holiday to the full.

May he now, after a tempestuous voyage through the ocean of life, find rest and peace with the Shepherd. —W.R.

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