

# Some Swiss who made it in London

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Lausanne. Up to the moment of writing no court case has, as yet, occurred. There is, however, one case pending in which, according to official information, a particular caterer "does not seem to be inclined to obey an injunction" and which, ultimately, might lead him into court.

While, as has been shown, the Pricewatcher has certain powers, his ability of correcting prices and thus combating the price-inflation is, unfortunately, small. His price-correcting function has only an infinitesimal effect on the cost of living index, since food and beverages in catering establishments influence the index merely on the fringe. Nevertheless it has been proved that the Pricewatcher's activities do have a deterrent effect on many hoteliers and restaurateurs and this in itself is a welcome development.

Gottfried Keller

## SOME SWISS WHO MADE IT IN LONDON

by Anne Cendre

Swiss landmarks in London are by no means confined to the Swiss Centre, the Swiss Church or Swiss Cottage (which is Swiss only in name). A study of the A-to-Z London Atlas will show that three streets bear the name of Geneva, two of Lausanne (one of which has a "Swiss Tavern") and one of Neuchatel. These streets are to be found in very different areas of London. There is, for example, a Geneva Road in Brixton leading to Geneva Terrace. It is in a rather rundown area under redevelopment. Some while ago, many of the houses were empty with their doors and windows hoarded up to prevent the invasion of squatters. The road presents a dreary sight and is used by few passers-by, who are for the most part coloured.

The names of Geneva, Lausanne and Lucerne can also be seen on a pillar at St. Pancras Station, possibly indicating the former destinations of Continental departures.

Many interesting facts on the history of the Swiss of Britain are to be found in a series of articles by Mr. Beat de Fischer, former Swiss Ambassador in London, for the magazine "Versailles" published in part by the Foundation for the history of the Swiss abroad.

Ambassador de Fischer thus tells his Swiss readers, to their surprise, that the bicycles they used to go to school with in the days when traffic was a little more manageable may have been of genuine Swiss origin although British-made. Renold, founder of a prosperous bicycle factory of that name, was an industrialist from Aargau who came to settle in Britain.

Schweppes is a household name in the whole world, but few people are aware that it comes from Jean-Jacques Schweppe, a German who came to Geneva, married there and became a Geneva citizen before coming to Britain to make a fortune. He sold his soda water in spherical bottles called "drunken bottles" designed in such a way that their cork was wet all the time and prevented the carbonic gas from escaping.

Closely allied to Schweppe products are the syphons one refills at the off-licence up the road. They were likewise invented and manufactured by a Swiss, a certain Eugster who hailed from Canton Appenzell. Imperial Chemical Industries, one of Britain's largest undertakings, was the offspring of a chemical factory founded by a "Zurcher," Sir John Brunner. Madame Tussaud was a Bernese, Glyndebourne Festival was launched by a Mr. Christie who descended from the Christins of Fribourg. Roget's *Thesaurus* was compiled by the Genevese Pierre Marc Roget, and Louis Necker, another Genevese, was the first to draw Scotland's geological map.

Geneva has in fact played a most important role in the life of the British. Thus the Royal Academy of Arts had a Genevese President named Auguste Carlini, and one of the first Editors of the Penguin collection was called Rieu and was of Genevese origin.

Had Germaine Necker, the future Madame de Stael, listened to her mother, she would have married William Pitt. She refused as she found that the English Statesman's nose was too long and that she disliked London's weather. But later Madame de Stael was scheming to wed her own daughter Albertine to Byron, while her mother had in her time been courted by Gibbons.

Despite London's fog, Germaine de Stael made several trips to the city where she had many friends. London had a flourishing Genevese colony in those days. She was greatly appreciated in English society for her wit. Byron considered her as the most distinguished woman writer of the Century.

In more recent times, one of the stars of the most successful musical of the sixties, "Hair", was a Swiss: Olivier Tobias, son of the famed German actress Maria Becker. There are several other eminent Swiss artists in Britain, including the pianist Albert Ferber and the singer Hugues Cuenod. Many more artists, although not living in this country, make London their regular port of call. One of them is the organist Lionell Rogg. Hardly a season passes by without a full house seeing him take the organ at the Royal Festival Hall.

### SWISS LIFE ASSURANCE BENEFITS: OVER ONE BILLION IN 1973

In 1973, for the first time, the benefits paid out by Swiss life assurance companies topped the billion franc mark. Out of the 56,778 persons who died in Switzerland during that year, 10,909, i.e. over one in every five, possessed a life assurance policy. Benefits paid out

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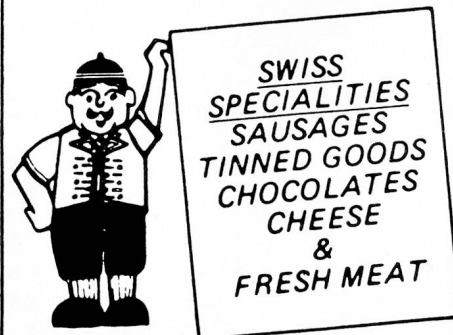
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Sundays: Holy Mass at 6.30 p.m. with sermon in German, in the Club hall, ground floor.  
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**RESIDENCE OF CHAPLAIN:** Bossard, Swiss Catholic Mission, 48 Great Peter Street, (2nd floor), London SW1P 2HA. Telephone: 01-222 2895.

**SERVICES IN GERMAN:** at Eglise Suisse, 79, Endell Street, W.C.2, every Sunday at 9.45 a.m. Sunday school takes place on the first and the third Sunday in the month for children of all age groups. Children assemble in the church with their parents who attend the normal Service. Liturgical Service takes place every second Sunday in the month. Services also at John Southworth Centre, 48 Gt. Peter Street, S.W.1 every Sunday at 6.30 p.m.

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totalled 1,005.4 million francs, 13.3 million of which consisted of supplementary benefits for accidental death. It should be pointed out that 2,119 of the policy holders who died had paid less than three annual premiums amounting in all to 2.6 million francs, while their beneficiaries received payments totalling 48.9 million. Life assurance benefits do not however refer only to cases of death. In fact, many insured persons still alive on the expiry of their policy also receive benefits from their company. This is the savings aspect of insurance, which makes an appreciable contribution to easing the situation in old age. The importance of this form of saving is obvious when one considers that of the total of 1,005.4 million francs paid out by Swiss insurers, 211 million only was paid as a result of death. No less than 549 million francs was paid to

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## A New EDITOR for The Swiss Observer

The Advisory Council of "The Swiss Observer" regrets to announce that the Editor wishes to resign shortly. This interesting position is therefore offered to any man or woman, Swiss or other national thoroughly familiar with Switzerland, who is interested in Swiss problems, political and economic life, education and culture and anything which occurs in Switzerland.

Knowledge of German and/or French and the ability to write in English are essential. Close co-operation with Swiss organisations in London and the U.K. and some administrative work are part of the job.

*For further information please contact . . . . Oscar F. Boehringer, 55 Woodstock Road, London NW11 8QD.*

policy-holders still alive. To this amount should be added 179.2 million francs paid by way of life annuities and 66.2 million as compensation for sickness and disablement.

### International Conference on the Safety of Life at Sea

The fourth International Conference on Safety of Life at Sea was held for a week at the end of October in London. Convened by the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation (IMCO), it was attended by delegations from 67 countries with the representatives from the International

Labour Organisation and the International Telecommunications Union and observers from 9 non-governmental bodies with shipping and maritime interests.

Switzerland was represented by Dr. Albert Weitnauer, Swiss Ambassador in London, and Mr. René Serex, First Secretary of the Swiss Embassy.

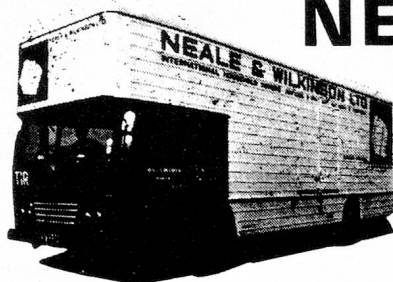
As a result of its deliberations, the Conference adopted the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, which incorporates new regulations on fire protection for passenger ships and tankers and on the carriage of grain in bulk, and a more speedy procedure for adopting future amendments and bringing them into force.

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