

# Four hours over the high Alps

Autor(en): **Fawcett, Douglas**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1936)**

Heft 738

PDF erstellt am: **24.07.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-686767>

## **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Inhalten der Zeitschriften. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern. Die auf der Plattform e-periodica veröffentlichten Dokumente stehen für nicht-kommerzielle Zwecke in Lehre und Forschung sowie für die private Nutzung frei zur Verfügung. Einzelne Dateien oder Ausdrucke aus diesem Angebot können zusammen mit diesen Nutzungsbedingungen und den korrekten Herkunftsbezeichnungen weitergegeben werden. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Die systematische Speicherung von Teilen des elektronischen Angebots auf anderen Servern bedarf ebenfalls des schriftlichen Einverständnisses der Rechteinhaber.

## **Haftungsausschluss**

Alle Angaben erfolgen ohne Gewähr für Vollständigkeit oder Richtigkeit. Es wird keine Haftung übernommen für Schäden durch die Verwendung von Informationen aus diesem Online-Angebot oder durch das Fehlen von Informationen. Dies gilt auch für Inhalte Dritter, die über dieses Angebot zugänglich sind.

**THE MANCHESTER SWISS CLUB'S CHRISTMAS TREE.**

**Saturday, the 21st of December, 1935.**

In spite of one of the worst spells of cold, fog and slush, the kind and generous efforts of the Manchester Swiss Club's President and Committee were crowned with a well-deserved success: a goodly company of nearly one hundred members and guests gathered round a fine Christmas Tree in one of the loftiest rooms of the "Grand Hotel."

The many lights of the traditional "Tannenbaum," an ever new delight to children, spread brightness in the hearts of everyone. Thanks to its atmosphere of goodwill and cheerfulness, Christmas makes children of us all.

The tree, a well-grown sapling, fully sixteen foot high, was tastefully lighted and adorned, tastefully in both senses of the word: from its branches hung many gifts for the children as well as numerous bags of sweetmeats which proved later on that our practical Swiss Ladies, who provided those tit-bits, are first-class confectioners, in every way equal to the good wives of the "Auld Land o-Cakes."

Our untiring President, Mr. Kübler, then addressed the assembly, welcoming all those present in the name of the club. He also spoke specially to the children for a few moments.

Nothing sweeter could encourage better a truly Christmas-like "Gemütlichkeit" than the singing of the dear old tune "Heilige Nacht" (Voici Noël). How many of us, old folks, far away in years and miles from the dear old Swiss home, revived the fading memories of their youth! A short reading of the nativity followed, and we all sang the favourite Hymn "O du fröhliche, o du selige."

A young accordion soloist played some Christmas carols. Two little singers treated us to the well-known "O Tannebaum." Unfortunately, their notes did not quite reach the highest branches of the Christmas tree; however, they most gallantly piped it through. The piano having condescended to lower its pitch by a good major quint, they gave a fine rendering of their second song.

About that time a panic spread among the smokers: pipes, cigars, cigarettes seemed to disappear by magic; it was rumoured that a dinner was to be served in the room the same evening. This proved nothing worse than a false alarm, it soon became very noticeable that Lady Nicotine was again among us.

The children having stormed the tree and carried their booty away, the other guests received each a neat paper-bag full of most delicious "Güezi."

A "Tombola" had been arranged, a most generous one; it seemed as if every ticketholder received a prize.

Saying "Good-Bye" to our "Tannenbaum," we adjourned to another hall where a most recherche little supper was awaiting us. Judging by the happy faces at the various tables, full justice was done to the delicious fare.

To the accompaniment of the accordion, the celebration of the first "Christmas-Tree Gathering of the Swiss Club Manchester" closed with the singing of "Rufst Du mein Vaterland."

The heartiest thanks for a well organised and very pleasant evening are due to our enthusiastic President and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Kübler, to our Swiss Consul and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. Schedler, and to all the Committee and Members of the Swiss Club (of Manchester), as well as to the Ladies. Prompted by their generosity and kindness of heart, they invited "en personne" the most humble members of our colony, a practical example of true Swiss Solidarity.

"UN POUR TOUS, TOUS POUR UN."  
S.E.B.

**THE GENEVA UNIVERSITY CLUB.**

The Geneva University Club held its annual dinner on Friday, December 13th, at the Cumberland Hotel. The President, Pastor Hoffmann-de Visme was in the chair. Proposing the toast of our Alma Mater, he spoke of Geneva and of the Societies to unite its old students which were springing up in Warsaw, Bucharest and Belgrade. Societies such as these helped to bridge the immense walls that nations had built round themselves. He read from the Journal de Genève an account of the Dies Academicus held last summer and concluded his speech by dropping his knife on to the marmite de l'Escalade and repeating the well-known phrase "Ainsi périssent les ennemis de Genève."

Sir St. Clair Thomson when proposing the health of the Geneva University Club suffered from a slight grievance. It appears he had expected to answer for the guests, and had prepared himself accordingly. He felt like the Scottish Minister who had left his sermon behind and said to his congregation that under these circumstances he must depend entirely upon Divine Guidance, but hoped to do better for them in the

afternoon. Anyone listening to Sir St. Clair Thomson would wish nothing better than Divine Guidance for him. After telling us several amusing stories, he told us that he held the Swiss Federal Degree in medicine and was a graduate of the University of Lausanne. He looked back upon his student days there with great pleasure and many of his contemporaries had since shed lustre on their university. He congratulated the Geneva University Club on being just over 4 years old and enjoying its 5th Annual Dinner.

Sir John Stavridi in proposing the health of the guests made special reference to his personal indebtedness to Sir St. Clair Thomson who operated upon him when in great misery and fighting for breath on account of a Quinsy. He said that we were fortunate in having Sir William Goscombe John, R.A., as a guest that evening. His sculptures were to be seen in many of the streets of London, which had been beautified by his work. Sir John said that the senior members of the Society had chosen Geneva as a place of study solely because of its Academic attractions. But now a new city had arisen that was a centre of world political thought. To that city and what it stood for the world he was looking in our present international difficulties.

Sir William Goscombe John, replying for the guests denied that his influence upon the London streets was on the scale suggested by Sir John Stavridi, but he was glad to be a guest of the Club and thanked it for its hospitality and wished it well.

In addition to members and guests we were glad to welcome two young Doctors from Geneva University who are staying temporarily in London. It was a surprise meeting for them, as even one did not know that the other was in London. We particularly appreciate these contacts and invite any old student of Geneva University to send their name and address to the Hon. Secretary, Geneva University Club, 31, Highbury Place, N.5.

A short report of the societies activities during the past year was circulated to members during the dinner.

**SWISS CULINARY SOCIETY.**

Our readers might be undoubtedly interested to hear, that the nett proceeds of the very successful Charity Ball, arranged by the above mentioned Society, and which took place on Monday, November 25th, at the Union Helvetia Club, 1, Gerrard Place, W., amounted to 290 5s. 0d.

This amount was handed over to the French Hospital in London, through the intermediary of the Honorary President of the Swiss Culinary Society, Mr. G. E. De Brunner, and we wish to congratulate the Society on their splendid achievement. The French Hospital has always opened their doors wide for our compatriots, and this fine contribution from one of our Swiss Societies is a befitting thanks offering which honours both the Society and the Swiss Colony.

**SWISS GYMNASIAC SOCIETY LONDON.**

**Eidgenössisches Turnfest 1936.  
17th to 20th July in Winterthur.**

The forthcoming year will in addition to the Olympic Games be distinguished by the Holding of the Federal Gymnastic Festival in Winterthur shortly before the Games.

The Swiss Gymnastic Society London — always provided circumstances and finance permitting — has provisionally decided to take part so that the Swiss Colony in London should not be without a representation on this auspicious occasion. Training has already commenced, but there are still vacancies for young Swiss Gymnasts — either Swiss born or born in England of Swiss parents — to compete for places in the team. They are cordially invited to appear at training any Wednesday evening at 8.45 p.m., at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1. After the festive season training will be commenced on Sunday mornings at 11 a.m., at Finsbury Park running track for the athletic side of the compulsory programme viz.: Relay race and long jump. It is probable that a team of 12 men will be selected in the early spring.

Juniors and Ladies teams will continue as usual, the former on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. and the latter at 8.45 p.m. on Fridays, both at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1. New members are always welcome.

XYZ.

**SWISS TENOR FLIES TO RESCUE B.B.C.**

Hughes Cuénod, the Swiss tenor, received a telephone message from Mr. Edward Clarke, impresario for new music to the B.B.C. on the Wednesday before Christmas, asking him to sing the tenor part in the oratorio "Paradise Lost" by the young Russian composer Igor Markievitch, forty-eight hours later.

He accepted, and never having seen the score before, began to study it in the aeroplane to Croydon. If he had not been able to accept the invitation, or had not been able to learn his part in time, the B.B.C. would have had to cancel the

whole performance, for which orchestra and chorus had worked for days. Mr. Clarke personally thanked M. Cuénod for the effort he had made.

M. Cuénod studied at the *Conservatoire* in Basle and afterwards in Vienna. He now divides his time between Paris and Geneva.

**FOUR HOURS OVER THE HIGH ALPS.**

By MR. DOUGLAS FAWCETT.

Half past eight on an autumn morning. The *bise* (north wind) is blowing mildly. A light mist floats above the lake of Thun, but east and south-east the Eiger, Monch, Jungfrau and other great peaks of the Oberland pierce a clear sapphire sky. Surely a promising day for one's last mountain flight of the season.

Ah! a telephone call ..... *Alpar Bern* aerodrome reports fog over the Aar valley and various lakes, but adds that it seems low and local only. Excellent! Soon our car is purring up the hill and we are leaving Oberhofen for Belp, near Berne, best of all centres for those visitors who may desire to sample real mountaineering by aeroplane. Here we meet Herr Direktor Pili-chody, the veteran pilot, take our seats in the Leopard Moth which has never once faltered during our many wanderings, nose into the wind and, taking off, swing eastward.

*Prominent Landmarks.*

We are bound for Innsbruck, using valleys and low passes only as landmarks — flying among and over the mountains. So from the outset we climb continuously. We soon have the fog areas and mist zone below us, and climb through a cloudless sky with visibility of scores of miles in every direction, sunshine flooding mountains on which newly fallen snow marks the onset of winter. Navigation here, even in November, is easy — one steers by eye with only occasional glances at the map. In England it is tiresome to have to steer so often on a compass course while tied to that monotonous 2,000ft. level in order not to falsify wind calculations. Here we go as we please: already we are over 9,000ft. up when leaving the Emmenthal. We skirt the Brienzer Rothorn in view of the green Lake of Brienz, and indescribably superb are the mountain spectacles to right and left. We pass next between the Lake of Lungern and Meiringen in the Haslithal. This latter valley leads towards the famous Grimsel and Furka passes, Gletsch and the Rhône glacier, but this time we are not bound for Gletsch and, crossing anon the Dammastock, find ourselves at 12,000 ft. or so looking down on Hospenthal, near the beginning of the St. Gotthard Pass, hard by which is a prohibited area which has to be avoided. We continue for some way in the direction of the Val Leventina, in which the Ticino river and St. Gotthard railway run towards Bellinzona and Italy. We then turn to the left, crossing the Lukmanier Pass, the sight of which recalls motor rambles. All the while the Leopard climbs.

It is cold—outside. Ice formation? None. The dry north wind is blowing; there is a slight haze showing in the originally clear sky, but no clouds are seen at our altitude at any point of the compass. Joy-fliers in the High Alps like the *bise*, as do mountaineers. We think twice about going up if the southerly *foehn* is threatening; we may be blown into valleys, apart from the risk of the deposits of ice. When the *bise* rules, *alto-cumulus* and peak-streamers can ordinarily be dodged, and I have not noticed any icing trouble due to such manœuvres as circling for photographs round the top of the Matterhorn through cloud. On another machine we had the A.S.I. venturi iced up when the *foehn* began to blow at 16,000ft., over Mt. Blanc. The wind was not strong, but it later caused a downward drop of the order of 650ft.

Bumps? None troubled us during the present flight, as fog below and the absence of cumulus clouds would suggest. The entire journey was as smooth as any round I can recall over Heston or Hatfield. But don't let any reader suppose that the High Alps are always thus amiable. His dream will pass! A day such as this is rare.

The Lukmanier Pass (I can sight its Swiss starting point, Disentis, very far away in the valley of the Vorder Rhine), the St. Bernardino, and the Splügen are left behind and now we swing to the right and follow roughly the line of the Julier Pass to Silvaplana, at which point the Engadine is crossed and a course is steered to the left of two giants flown over by us last year—the Piz Palu and the Bernina (13,304ft.). The mountains between the upper Engadine and Austria seem without number, but who cares at a feast of beauty like this? As Lubbock says in his *Scenery of Switzerland*, it is "impossible to give any idea in words of the beauty of high snow-fields" — and if as mountaineers we can say this, how much more enthusiastic shall we become as pilots! There is risk incurred in our wanderings, of course, but are not the best things often enjoyed only at their price?

Though the Leopard is moving at more than 100 m.p.h. it seems sometimes that progress is extremely slow. High speed high up is the most  
(Continued on page four, column two).

**HEALTH NEWS.**

The introduction of the winter air service to Switzerland has already proved highly successful, judging from reports of the heavy bookings well in advance. This ever-more-becoming-popular mode of travel, overcoming the tediousness of long rail journeys, changing from train to boat and vice-versa and often non too pleasant channel crossings in mid-winter, will be a boon to winter sports enthusiasts quite apart from the fact, that now most of the famous Swiss resorts, whether in the Grisons, Bernese Oberland or Western Switzerland, can now comfortably be reached the same day. These greatly improved travelling facilities undoubtedly will induce a larger number of enthusiasts to consider the question of a short respite during the long winter months in order to regain that energy, vigour and health required to fight the constant attacks of the winter chills and fogs, etc. A winter sports holiday needs only one trial to make one really appreciate its full value, for the benefit derived therefrom more than compensates the cost of the experiment. It is true, however, that the winter tariffs of the famous hotels, where your arrival is registered in the "Fremdenliste," are in many instances beyond the means of a would-be-visitor, but there are plenty of smaller hotels, equally as modern and comfortable as the "palaces," whose rates compare very favourably with English seaside resorts! The writer has had the opportunity to sample an hotel not advertised in the foreign press or tourist agencies and was so much impressed by the up-to-date comfort, attention, service and the much more homely atmosphere than in larger hotels, that he is eagerly looking forward to the next visit.

For the benefit of prospective winter sports enthusiasts as well as those, who for reasons of health need a change of climate, I can highly recommend the



Eden Hotel, Lenzerheide (Grisons).

I am giving this unbiased opinion with the greatest of confidence, that anyone fortunate enough to make the experience, will gladly endorse my recommendation. Lenzerheide is one of the famous resorts in the Grisons, some 5,000ft. above sea-level, and apart from being a skiers' paradise, offers every facility for skating, tobogganing, sleigh excursions and alpine flights. The Eden Hotel occupies an excellent position off the main road, adjoining ski-terrain and within 5 minutes' walk of the large open-air skating rink. Central heating, hot and cold water in every room, private bathrooms and light signals instead of bells all add to the comfort of the guests, whereas the flat roof-top and the balconies facing south afford ample facilities for sun-bathing. The "cuisine" enjoys a reputation of its own unequalled by some of the larger rivals, whilst attention and service take top notes in promptness and efficiency. The very fact that the Hotel has some 30 rooms only, is responsible for the homely atmosphere which is so much in evidence among the guests. A postcard to the Manageress will bring you by return an illustrated booklet containing all the information required. A comparison of the tariff alone with other prospectus will prove that the "EDEN HOTEL" rates are second to none.

E.A.N.



**To SWITZERLAND in  
— 3 HOURS BY AIR —  
LUXURIOUS TWIN-ENGINE  
— DOUGLAS AIR LINER —**

*Smooth and comfortable*

**LONDON-BASLE OR ZURICH  
£13. 16.0 RETURN**

**SWISSAIR**

Booking by any travel agent or Imperial Airways (General agents of Swissair) or Swiss Federal Railways, 11b, Regent Street, S.W.1.

**CITY SWISS CLUB.**

Messieurs les membres sont avisés que  
**L'ASSEMBLEE MENSUELLE**  
aura lieu mardi 7 Janvier au Restaurant PAGANI,  
42, Great Portland Street, W.1. et sera précédée  
d'un souper à 7h 15 précises (prix 5/-).  
**ORDRE DU JOUR:**  
Procès-verbal. Admissions. Divers.  
Démissions. Cinderella.  
Pour faciliter les arrangements, les participants sont priés de bien vouloir s'inscrire au plus tôt auprès de Monsieur P. F. Boehringer, 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2. (Téléphone: Clerkenwell 9595).  
Le Comité.

placid way of filling in time that I know. After sighting Samaden, Zernetz and the Ofen Pass, I note that we are at about 14,250ft. and apparently travelling at perambulator rate — but the air speed indicator notifies its dissent!

All the Italian frontier on our far right is prohibited area up to the Brenner Pass which, over the innumerable peaks and snowfields, we reach at long last, enjoying a good look as this much discussed gap, about 5,000ft. high, in the Alps. On our left, thousands of feet below in the Inn Valley, I descry Innsbruck. The picture is magnificent. Innsbruck has an aerodrome and this offers us what is probably the only inviting landing-place noted during our flight. But we are much too interested in the scenery of the High Alps to land.

We return to Belp by the route of the Engadine, Arlberg Pass and Lichtenstein, crossing then the Rhine Valley to the left of Coire and the Linthal over Glarus, leaving the great Glärnisch mountain on our left. The lakes of Constance and Zurich are cloud-roofed and we cannot land, as had been arranged, at St. Gall. Passing over the canton of Schwyz, we reach the Lake of Lucerne, nearly above Brunnen. The arm of the lake towards Fluelen ("Lake of Uri") is clear, but the rest cloud-roofed; the peak of the Rigi emerging from the smother like an island.

We leave Pilatus on our right and, crossing the Emmenthal, find the Aar valley and our home-aerodrome devoid of mist; and so our luck still holds.

In 3 hrs. 55mins. we have covered 406 miles — an excellent average for our Leopard Moth when the climbing is taken into account.  
*Flight.*

**Tell your English Friends  
to visit**

**Switzerland**

**and to buy their Tickets  
from**

**The Swiss Federal Railways,  
Carlton House, 11b, Regent St., S.W.1**

**Special Reduction on Fares in Switzerland  
30% from DECEMBER 15th until APRIL 15th 1936.**

When at HAMPTON COURT  
have Lunch or Tea at the  
**MYRTLE COTTAGE**  
Facing Royal Palace, backing on to Bushey  
Park between Lion Gate and The Green.  
P. GODENZ, PROPRIETOR.

**UNSERE SCHWEIZER HEIMAT  
MA PATRIE** The New N.S.H. Book  
on Switzerland.

**THE FINEST GIFT FOR THE SWISS ON ALL OCCASIONS.**  
PRICE 4/- Postage 6d.

Stocks at Swiss Mercantile Society, 34, Fitzroy Square, Swiss Observer, and A. F. Suter, 133, Fenchurch Street, E.C.3

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS.**

Tuesday, January 7th, 1936 — City Swiss Club — Monthly Meeting — (preceded by dinner 7.15 sharp) at Pagani's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, W.

Friday, January 17th—Nouvelle Société Helvétique — Annual General Meeting, (Supper at 3/- to be served at 8 o'clock) at "Foyer Suisse," 15, Upper Bedford Place, W.C.1.

Saturday, February 22nd, 1936 — Annual Banquet and Ball — Swiss Mercantile Society — at the Trocadero Restaurant, Piccadilly, W.

**SWISS BANK CORPORATION,**

(A Company limited by Shares incorporated in Switzerland)

**99, GRESHAM STREET, E.C.2.**  
and 11c, REGENT STREET, S.W. 1.

Capital Paid up £6,400,000  
Reserves - - £1,560,000  
Deposits - - £39,000,000

**All Descriptions of Banking and  
Foreign Exchange Business Transacted**

**: : Correspondents in all : :  
: : parts of the World. : :**

Telephone Numbers:  
MUSEUM 4302 (Visitors)  
MUSEUM 7065 (Office)  
Telegrams: SOUPFLR  
WESDO. LONDON

"Ben faranno i Pagani.  
Paragatorio C. xiv. Dante  
"Venir se ne dee giù  
tra' miei Meschini."  
Dante. Inferno. C. xxvii.

Established over 50 Years.

**PAGANI'S  
RESTAURANT**

GREAT PORTLAND ST., LONDON, W.1.

LINDA MESCHINI } Sole Proprietors.  
ARTHUR MESCHINI }



**Divine Services.**

**EGLISE SUISSE (1762),**  
(Langue française).

**70, Endell Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.2.**  
(Near New Oxford Street).

Dimanche 5 Janvier. 11h. — J. Per. 6. v. 16.  
"Vous trouverez le repos" — M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme.

3h. Réunion de l'Alliance Evangélique — Invitation à chacun.

6h.30 — M. R. Santy. —

L'Ecole du Dimanche reprendra le 12 Janvier à 11h.

Un chaud merci à tous ceux qui m'ont aidé pour Noël — Bonne année à chacun!

M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme reçoit à l'église, 79, Endell Street, W.C.2, le mercredi de 11h. à 12h.30 et sur rendez-vous à son domicile, 102, Hornsey Lane, Highgate, N.6. S'adresser à lui (téléphone: ARCHway 1798) pour tous renseignements concernant les instructions religieuses, les mariages et autres actes ecclésiastiques.

**SCHWEIZERKIRCHE**

(Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.  
(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den 5. Jänner 1936.

11 Uhr morgens, Gottesdienst und Sonntagsschule.

7 Uhr abends, Gottesdienst.

8 Uhr, Chorprobe.

Anfragen wegen Religions-bezw. Confirmandenstunden und Amtshandlungen sind erbeten an den Pfarrer der Gemeinde: C. Th. Hahn, 43, Priory Road, Bedford Park, W.4 (Telephon: Chiswick 4156). Sprechstunden: Dienstag 12-2 Uhr in der Kirche; Mittwoch