

Shuttlecock with the notaris

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SHUTTLECOCK WITH THE NOTARIS.

There are always incidents that occur on a holiday which, because they were of unusual interest or of especial pleasure, remain in one's memory.

So it was on my recent escape from routine when I went to France for three weeks.

The first item on the programme might well be named "The Notable Notaris", and this was not a high wire act at Pinnders Mammoth Circus which I saw in Calais. Almost the last meal I had before I left England was at the Berkeley Arms near London Airport where I mentioned to Arnaldo Notari, who had been *maitre d'hôtel* there for many years, that apart from France I intended to spend some days in Geneva. He told me his brother, Bruno Notari, had been manager of the Station Restaurant there, but understood he now had his own café nearby and asked me to look him up. This I did with great success, because Bruno turned out to be a jovial, hospitable and interesting person.

He is the proud owner of a busy café, Le Chemin der Fer, behind the station, speaks six languages fluently, and specializes in Merlot del Ticino, one of the best of the red wines from the canton of Ticino in the Italian part of Switzerland, better known in that locality as Nostrano. We consumed several carafes of this during my three days in Switzerland, while he told me about his adventures in the war where he served in the Swiss Navy, which was far from being a popular myth. Switzerland purchased several ships to form a merchant navy to carry vital supplies for her country, a country surrounded by warring tribes. They brought goods to the ports of Genoa, Marseilles, Lisbon and Barcelona, by arrangement with all parties. Swiss flag or no, it did not prevent them from getting bombed on occasions.

On hearing I was returning to London Bruno asked me if I would carry a message to his cousin, Willy Notari, and explained that he owned a restaurant in St. Martin's Lane called La Coquille, so when I got back I set off to discover Notari Number Three and found M. Willy dining in his own restaurant. He introduced me to his companion who to my astonishment turned out to be another brother, Freddie Notari, who has been staff head waiter of that shrine of *cuisine Française* in Jermyn Street, L'Écu de France. For fourteen years I had known him as such for some years, but never realized his name was Notari.

La Coquille is unpretentious, has a sort of family air about it, many of the staff having worked for M. Notari for over twenty and thirty years. Bombed out of Pagani's he took over La Coquille and remained open throughout the war, each diner on arrival being given a small card which read "La Coquille will stay open for dinners unless a bomb falls on the building".

In season it specializes in shellfish but French and Italian dishes and grills are always available. It is also extremely inexpensive.

I have been back to see M. Notari and have listened to some fascinating reminiscences of the great days of Pagani's in Great Portland Street, where for over thirty years he worked with his father, Faustino Notari, who died in harness after fifty-five years' service and who as *maitre chef de cuisine* did so much to assist Giuseppe Pagani and Arturo Meschini in making this restaurant world-famous.

What a place it became! The walls of the artists' room were covered with thousands of signatures, including those of Maeterlinck, Melba, Tchaikovsky, H. G. Wells, Whistler, Oscar Wilde, Phil May, King Edward VII, Caruso and Sarah Bernhardt.

The "Dining Out" there must have been magnificent and I can do no better than quote Edward Cecil when writing about the walls of this room, utterly destroyed, as was the rest of Pagani's, by bombing early in the war: "On them, carefully preserved under glass panels, are five thousand signatures, sketches, scrawled bars of music, or other autographs left behind by men and women who in this room, where they have known some of the happiest hours of their life journey, have been moved to give their testimony to a well-liked place, where they have rested and enjoyed the good fellowship and the comfort of human life, lived as it can only be lived by those who are not dullards".

I. Bickerstaff.

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WEATHER RADAR FOR SWISSAIR'S DC-7Cs.

First among the European airlines, Swissair is to have RCA weather radar installed in the four Douglas DC-7C aircraft it has on order. The equipment is designed to detect areas of bad weather conditions at a distance of over 155 miles.

Specially developed for civil aircraft by the Radio Corporation of America, the equipment will give the pilot early warning of weather disturbances ahead and allow him to avoid them by changing course. At night or in fog it can also be used to detect other obstacles ahead, such as mountains. Passenger comfort and punctuality will be further improved as it will be possible to fly the shortest course around bad weather areas without a reduction in speed.

The RCA radar is the first commercial screen apparatus to work on "C" band frequency (5,400 megacycles per second). The equipment weighs less than 143 lbs.

Swissair will take delivery of its DC-7Cs towards the end of 1956 and the beginning of 1957.

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