

H. Oswald †

Autor(en): [s.n.]

Objektyp: **Obituary**

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

Band (Jahr): - (1959)

Heft 1335

PDF erstellt am: **17.09.2024**

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H. OSWALD †

With the passing away (briefly reported in our last issue) of Mr. H. Oswald, Managing Director of Brown, Boveri (British) Ltd., the Swiss Colony mourns the loss of one of its most prominent members.

His untimely departure in the prime of life has cast a deep gloom over all those who have come in contact with him, either in business or in a private capacity; because Henri Oswald was a likeable and unassuming man. Through his integrity and great sense of duty and kindness, he was able to assemble around him a large circle of friends.

He bore his long — and often painful — illness with courage and patience and without complaint in the hope of an ultimate recovery, but, alas, it was not to be. Death has released him from his sufferings, but has deprived us of a dear friend. The departed had a brilliant career; by intelligence and hard work he mounted to the top of his profession, and his family life was an exceedingly happy one.

* * *

Mr. Oswald was born in 1902 in Aadorf (Ct. Thurgau), where his father (and earlier his grandfather) had acted as a Notary and Judge.

He received his primary and secondary schooling in his native town, and thereafter completed a three-year course at the Technical College Winterthur, and in addition received two years' practical shop training at the works of Brown, Boveri & Co. A.G. at Baden.

In 1923 Mr. Oswald matriculated and entered the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich, where he obtained in July 1927 his degree as an engineer (Thesis: Hydro-Electric Power Stations with special reference to the economic utilisation of hydraulic energy).

During the four years' study at the University he did his military service reaching the rank of lieutenant in an engineering unit. In this period he joined the "Akademische Maschinen Ingenieur Verein" Zurich, of which he became President for one year.

After a previous visit to London (1927), Mr. Oswald entered in 1928 the British Brown, Boveri Ltd. London, as a contract engineer, which concern he left in 1932, to take up the position of factory

representative and residing engineer in India for the Swiss Brown, Boveri Company. During his stay in India he was able to assist in the establishment of the firm of Brown, Boveri as steam and electric power plant engineers and contractors to industrial and public utility undertakings, and, *inter alia*, was responsible for the layout and contract of the entire power station of the Pallivasal hydro-electric project in Travancore State.

Upon being appointed Managing Director of British Brown, Boveri Limited, Mr. Oswald returned to London in the spring of 1937, and subsequently was offered a seat on the Board. On the retirement of his predecessor, Mr. A. C. Eborall, he became Managing Director of the British Brown, Boveri Limited in 1947, which Company is the British subsidiary of the Swiss Brown, Boveri Company.

In 1938 Mr. Oswald was elected an Associate Member of the I.E.E., and was admitted a full Member in 1943. He was recently instrumental in obtaining an important contract for his firm, worth considerably more than half a million pounds, from the Governing Board of the National Institute of Research in Nuclear Science.

Notwithstanding the responsible position which he occupied, leaving him but little leisure time, he took a keen interest in the affairs of the London Swiss Colony. In 1940 he joined the City Swiss Club, where he served on the committee for a number of years.

Mr. Oswald was elected President of the Swiss Economic Council in 1952, which post he held for four years. In 1956 he was elected Chairman of the Assembly of Presidents of Swiss Societies in Great Britain for one year. In these various offices he rendered conspicuous service to the Colony. He considered his work — as he once mentioned to the writer — "as being a patriotic duty". Henri Oswald was indeed a great patriot, and was never happier than when spending a holiday with his family in our homeland. He was a Member of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique.

Mr. Oswald married in 1938 a compatriot of ours, and is survived by his widow, a daughter and two sons, to whom we extend our most sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

In this sad hour of parting, we thank him, beyond the grave, for all he has done so unselfishly for our Colony in particular, and in a wider sense for our country. We who have enjoyed his friendship will always remember him with affection.

May he rest in Peace!

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The Cremation (private) took place on Saturday, 10th January, at the Kingston-on-Thames Crematorium. The Rev. C. Reverdin conducted the service, and amongst the congregation were a Director of the firm of Brown, Boveri & Co. Baden, and the Swiss Ambassador, Dr. Armin Daeniker, accompanied by Messieurs R. Faessler and E. M. Bircher. The City Swiss Club was represented by Mr. Th. von Speyr, the Swiss Economic Council by Messrs. M. Wiesendanger and R. de Cintra, and the "Swiss Observer" by Mr. A. Stauffer.