# Farewell to steam

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### Swiss Federal Railways System Now Completely Electrified

At the end of 1961 the Swiss Federal Railways Administration could announce that their entire railway system was equipped for electric traction. This change-over from steam operation, which was a costly system as all coal had to be imported from other countries, to the electric, three-phase alternating current overhead wire system, was started in 1906 with, at first, a few difficult experiments of an entirely novel system. In the course of years, the Swiss have spent millions of francs to have one of the finest, most up-to-date, clean and efficient and electrified railway systems in the world. Moreover, the rail lines often had to be laid out in very difficult terrain, like the transalpine lines, with their numerous tunnels, bridges, viaducts, avalanche-sheltered galleries and necessary constructions to safeguard the right of way.

While the State Railways and many of the smaller private railways and the so-called Tourist rail lines are electrically operated, there are still some railways using coal for power; but in coming years this system is expected to be changed, too. Switzerland is a great producer of electric power, using rivers, streams and lakes in the alpine regions to create electricity in numerous power plants, and while most power is applied to the industries, the railways and for home use, a good deal is also exported to other countries. In the U.S.A., in the last decade, the diesel engine has become the chief source of power in rail transportation, but the diesel motors emit an obnoxious exhaust which is not the case with electric power. The Swiss rail ways, therefore, are known for their very clean, efficient and punctual operation, and the Administration in Bern, under its able management, shows a remarkable attention to the wishes of the travelling public, as well as to the freight forwarders. As a result, the Swiss Federal Railways have in recent years been operated with a substantial profit in millions of francs, a rather rare occurrence with most railways of the world, whether state or privately operated. This fine surplus every year which the Swiss Government promptly turns back to the railway is then used for new equipment and improvements in the trackage and operation of the system. As the largest business enterprise in Switzerland, the Swiss Federal Railways are now benefiting from these improvements, and in view of the greatly increased rail traffic of the European Common Market Plan, a good future for the Swiss Railways seems assured for quite some time.

## FIRST NIGHT FLIGHTS FROM MANCHESTER IN MAY

Caravelle jets of Swissair are to start operating night flights to and from Manchester on May 18th. The twin-engined, 72-seat airliners will arrive in Manchester at 2.45 a.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays and will take off for Basle and Zurich 50 minutes later.

The Caravelles will keep within the noise limits laid down for night-flying by the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation.

The attraction of these night excursion flights will be the low fares. Return tickets will be £10 4s. cheaper than the ordinary day fares. A flight to Basle and back will cost £25 4s. against £35 8s.

## ANOTHER CARAVELLE FOR SWISSAIR

Swissair took delivery of another Caravelle at Zurich on 18th March, bringing the strength of its fleet of the twin-jet airliners to five.

The four Caravelles already in service with the Swiss airline are on lease from the Scandinavian Airlines System.

Within the next nine months another three Caravelles are due to be delivered to Swissair. The first aircraft in this second batch of four is BH-ICS and is named after the canton " Uri ".