

Ruth Huggenberg at the Wigmore Hall

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JACQUES DUBS †

Jacques Dubs was born on the 12th March, 1896 in Albisrieden-Zürich and came to this country as a young man to learn English. He went back after one year and did his military service during the 1914-18 mobilisation. In 1919 he came back to England and started to work. He was headwaiter at the Claridges and later at the Savoy. Between 1933 and 1937 he owned and ran a hotel of his own in South Devon, but came back again to London in 1937 and bought the Vienna Café in Baker Street. After the war he acquired a farm in Great Missenden, which he kept till 1954.

Jacques Dubs was, of course, a character in the best sense of the word. I got to know him first at the Vienna Café when the London Group of the N.S.H. used to foregather there. He was an extremely able landlord there who managed to produce substantial meals even during the lean times of tight post-war rationing.

Little did I think, when the N.S.H. changed its venue that I was to see much more of Mr. and Mrs. Dubs. Some time before they retired from business, in 1957, they bought the house in Maresfield Gardens, in which my wife and I had lived ever since 1941. So Mr. and Mrs. Dubs became my landlords proper — and better ones I could not have wished for.

Very soon after, things began to happen. The house got painted, the former smoky coal central-heating became converted to oil and the garden, which previously had looked very neglected, took on shape. Jacques Dubs was fond of his garden and used to spend hours pottering about in it, tearing out a weed here and tending a shrub there. A Rhododendron bush, which I had given him as a contribution, has already produced six big blooms this year and has turned out to be one of the last bits of colour he was able to see from his garden room — before he went to hospital, never to return. It gives me pleasure to know that it gave him pleasure during his last few days at home.

Jacques Dubs, who has spent by far the greatest part of his life in this country, nevertheless remained a good Swiss at heart. He never forgot his Schwyzerdütsch, nor, if it had to come to it, its swearwords. Not that he ever used these against me, but certain people, such as lazy layabouts who never did an honest day's work, could annoy him intensely. He was particularly fond, family man as he was, of his two grandchildren Nicolette and Paul, as well as of a number of friends. Amongst the latter was the former Editor of the Swiss Observer, the

late Fred Stauffer. His sudden passing away last summer was a great shock for Jacques Dubs. He was also very fond of his faithful little dog Rye, which today looks quite lost without its master and wags its tail as if looking for new friends.

One always knew when Mr. Dubs was in a good mood, as he would then invariably start reminiscing about the times he had worked in some of the finest hotels in this city and met some of the most famous people. Or he would start talking politics, in which he took a lively interest. His last year or so was not an easy one, as he had undergone a very serious operation, from which he never quite recovered. But during the time he had to suffer, he had the great good fortune to be lovingly tended by an ever-loving, untiring wife.

Jacques Dubs passed away during the early hours of Sunday, March 6th, not quite a week before his seventieth birthday. During his life he was a member of the City Swiss Club and also a faithful reader of the "Swiss Observer". I hope, and believe, he would have approved of what I have said about him now, were he able to read it.

With Jacques Dubs a man has left our Colony and this world of whom it can truly be said that there was no make-belief and no false pretence in him. One had to take him as he was. I did, and grew to like him.

On behalf of his friends, neighbours and tenants I would like to offer my deep sympathy to his widow and family.

Gottfried Keller.

RUTH HUGGENBERG AT THE WIGMORE HALL

Miss Huggenberg's piano recital on Friday, 4th March, emphasized not only her considerable technical skill, but also showed her as a completely sincere artist. She began with a lively Beethoven Sonata, followed by Schubert's G flat major *Impromptu*. Several Brahms pieces, played with quiet simplicity, completed the first half of the evening — of these I particularly enjoyed the Rhapsody in G. minor.

The second half opened with Debussy's beautiful *L'Île Joyeuse*, and then came the major item, Schumann's *Faschingsschwank*. I have heard Miss Huggenberg perform on several occasions, but never have I enjoyed her playing so much as in this piece. The various movements were executed with great feeling and vigour; each part with its own distinctive mood, forming a wonderful whole — presented in a way which paid tribute not only to Schumann as the composer, but also to Miss Huggenberg's qualities as the performing artist.

P.L.U.M.

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