

Woman's Observer

Objektyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): - **(1983)**

Heft 1801

PDF erstellt am: **15.08.2024**

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STARTING a life in a new and strange country is quite a challenge, but this month Woman's Observer features two ladies who came to England without knowing a single word of English.

Both entered into business and, strangely enough, neither

has had any real contact with the Swiss community since coming to Britain.

If anyone wishes to contact either of these independent and courageous ladies, the Woman's Observer editor will be pleased to pass on your letters.

I have been a stranger in a strange land

Exodus 2, 22

MARIETTA Zangenegger came to England from canton Appenzell in 1930 and, like so many other young women, took a domestic position so that she could learn English.

She writes: "I had to work as a housemaid for just 7/6d (37p) a week, even though I was already earning 35 Sfr at home.

"But the people were so nice and kind that I stayed – and, by the time I met the man who was to be my husband, I could speak English quite well."

The young Marietta had met an airman, Thomas Walton, and they courted for several years.

She later became cook to the

family she worked for, and moved with them when they went to London. "They liked my Swiss cakes very much," she remembers.

After three years, the household split up, and Marietta went to work for the brother of her former employer – he was married to an American millionairess.

It was while she was working for this couple that Marietta married Thomas at the Swiss Church. And the millionairess came to the wedding!

After that came what Mrs Walton describes as her "ups and downs". She had two sons, but



Mrs Mariette Walton

then her husband became ill and was finally invalided out of the RAF in 1947.

To provide for her family, she bought a hotel and ran it, virtually single-handed, for 16 years.

"I had to work very hard," she recalls: "My husband could only manage to do the books. I ran the hotel for 16 years and sometimes I do not know how I managed."

Eventually, the Waltons gave up the hotel and converted it into furnished flats which they rented. And they set out on a long-planned trip to Switzerland.

It was not to be. Tragically, Thomas Walton died of a heart

attack in Dover during the first stage of the journey.

"That was 20 years ago," says Marietta Walton, "and it was the hardest time in my life. While in business, I could not make friends, but I have now made some very nice friends.

"After being here for 53 years, I could not leave England as much as I love Switzerland. I have liked it here so long; I am happy here. I have met only kindness, and I am very thankful for it.

"I have never heard of any Swiss people around where I live in Gainsborough, Cleveland. But if there are any, it would be so nice to meet them."

To England ... much against my will

WRITES Miss Marguerite Bourgoïn, who now lives in Northampton: "I came to England as a child of 13 (very much against my wishes) and, speaking only German, went straight to a boarding school near Watford (Herts). I had left my beloved Lucerne and found the contrast in the countryside and lifestyle very depressing.

"I soon learnt to speak English and, after a while, spent two years in France to learn French in a boarding school in Le Mans. I received a diploma – coming back to England speaking better French than the French girls.

"When I started my first job in the offices of a manufacturing firm in London, one of my jobs was to type a report in German to the company's head office on

production, orders received and executed, stock position etc. Being connected with this firm, I was lucky enough to be able to use my languages.

"This then helped me get an important position on the board of another firm making leather travel goods and fancy goods. I was able to travel to the Continent to look for new ideas and new materials and I arranged to import materials from Switzerland. However, I never had enough time to stay long in Lucerne and usually had to return to London having seen my father's family only for a brief time.

"Eventually I designed my own lines and the company, then employing about 200 workers, started to export goods to the Continent, including Switzerland.

"My childhood in Lucerne was most exciting. I had both grandparents and great grandparents. The latter lived in Kriens then only a village.

I would very much like to be put in touch with Swiss subscribers to the Observer with a view to making friendships. I long to speak to someone about my beloved Switzerland."

Tasting snacks

SUPER for snacks with drinks, Gruyère Moons, feather-light savoury biscuits, make intriguing, high-protein teatime treats for children.

They are an excellent standby for the bar or the late-night biscuit tin too, because they keep so well.

As to their cost – just see how many you get! If you don't need them all at once, freeze half the dough.

Ingredients:

6oz plain flour (150g)
6oz unsalted butter, softened (150g)
6oz grated Gruyère cheese (150g)
1 egg
Salt to taste
A few grains Cayenne pepper
1 egg yolk

Method:

Blend together the flour and

butter, and work in the cheese and the egg. Blend thoroughly, adding seasoning to taste, to make a soft dough. Dust the dough with flour, and chill for at least 30 minutes.

Cut the dough into two equal proportions, and leave one portion chilled while rolling the other. Roll out the dough $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3mm) thick, on a well-floured surface.

With a tumbler cut into circles, then cut into each circle to make half-moon shape. Re-roll all the trimmings and re-cut. Repeat until all the dough is used.

Place on a lightly greased and floured baking sheet and brush with egg yolk. Bake in oven preheated to 350°F, 180°C, Gas four for eight minutes. Use the second portion of dough in the same way. Serve warm or cold.

with Gruyere

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