Zeitschrift: Helvetia: magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand

Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand

Band: 80 (2014)

Heft: [4]

Artikel: Dead famous in Switzerland

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943954

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Swiss Watching

Dead famous in Switzerland

by Diccon Bewes

When it comes to Switzerland, foreign celebrities are like elephants - they come here to die. Of course, the low rates of tax and high level of privacy might have something to do with it, but it is interesting how many stars are buried here. While their graves are strewn all across the country, they are particularly concentrated along the shores of Lake Geneva; in comparison, Germanspeaking Switzerland is relatively free of dead celebrities. Don't ask me why. It seemingly has little to do with language as few were native French speakers. In fact many were British-born. Perhaps it's just a low-tax variation of the British love-affair with France.

The list below is my pick of some the most famous foreigners buried in Switzerland. What's interesting is that most worked in the arts, and ten were authors, from literary heavyweights James Joyce (pictured) and Thomas Mann to pulp-fiction masters Alistair MacLean and James Hadley Chase. Although all were born abroad, some were Swiss by the time the died, eg Peter Ustinov and Hermann Hesse.

And while all of them will now remain Swiss, there is one corner of Switzerland that is forever England: in tiny Corsier-sur-Vevey cemetery, three great Britons are buried, with Charlie Chaplin laid to rest next-door to James Mason and over the way from Graham Greene. So if you are into a bit of cemetery tourism (don't laugh, it's astonishingly popular), Corsier is a good place to start, before

James Joyce's grave site

setting off in search of famous graves in the rest of Switzerland.

Canton Geneva

Richard Burton, British actor: (d 1984) Celigny

Alistair MacLean, British author: (d 1987) Celigny

Jorge Luis Borges, Argentinian author: (d 1986) Plainpalais Cemetery Geneva Jean Calvin, French reformer: (d 1564) Plainpalais Cemetery Geneva Sir Humphrey Davy, British scientist: (d 1829) Plainpalais Cemetery Geneva

Canton Vaud

David Niven, British actor: (d 1983) Chateau d'Oex Vladimir Nabokov, Russian author: (d 1977) Clarens Charlie Chaplin, British actor: (d 1977) Corsier-sur-Vevey Graham Greene, British author: (d 1991) Corsier-sur-Vevey James Mason, British actor: (d 1984) Corsier-sur-Vevey Coco Chanel, French designer: (d 1971) Bois-de-Vaux Cemetery Lausanne Pierre de Coubertin, French Olympic founder: (d 1937) Bois-de-Vaux Cemetery Lausanne Peter Ustinov, British actor: (d 2004) Nvon Henri Nestlé, German industrialist: (d 1890) Territet Audrey Hepburn, Belgian actress:

Ticino

(d 1993) Tolochenaz

(d 1985) Vevey

Robert Palmer, British singer: (d 2003) Lugano Hermann Hesse, German author: (d 1962) Montagnola Erich Maria Remarque, German author: (d 1970) Ronco sopra Ascona Paulette Goddard, American actress: (d 1990) Ronco sopra Ascona Patricia Highsmith, American author: (d 1995) Tegna

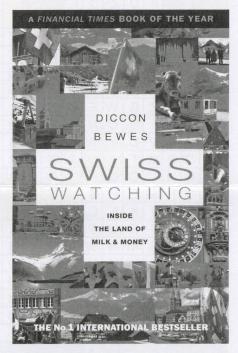
James Hadley Chase, British author:

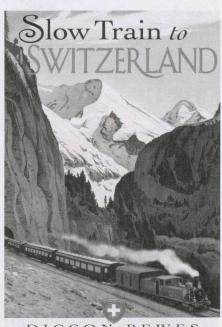
German-speaking Switzerland

Erasmus, Dutch thinker: (d 1536)
Basel Cathedral
Meret Oppenheim, German artist:
(d 1985) Birsfelden Cemetery Basel
Thomas Mann, German author:
(d 1955) Kilchberg Cemetery Fluntern
James Joyce, Irish author: (d 1941)
Fluntern Cemetery Zurich

Paul Klee, German artist: (d 1940) Schosshalde Cemetery, Bern Elias Canetti, German author: (d 1994) Fluntern Cemetery Zurich Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, German singer: (d 2006) Zumikon Cemetery Zurich

Diccon Bewes is a Briton living in Switzerland and has an uncanny talent to observe the intricacies of Swiss culture and character in his witty but insightful commentary. His book "Swiss Watching" ("der Schweizerversteher" in German) was published in June 2010 went on to be a Number 1 bestseller in Switzerland and a Financial Times Book of the Year. More recently, Diccon has published his new book "Slow Trains to Switzerland". Diccon has kindly allowed us to publish the occasional article written by him. Order online through bookdepository.com





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