

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1942)
Heft: 1004

Artikel: Railway centenary
Autor: [s.n.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-690650>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 30.03.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

francs of 2½ per cent. notes with a term of five years. In these two cases also, amounts subscribed exceeded the amounts first offered. The Government raised 320 millions by the first loan and 270 millions by the second. The loans contracted in 1941 made it possible to convert outstanding loans of 320 million francs. The Government thus succeeded in borrowing 830 million francs of new money. In addition, 142 million francs of Treasury bills were placed on the market, principally with banks.

RAILWAY CENTENARY.

(*"Railway Gazette,"* September 11th, 1942.)

The creation of a national traffic museum to be opened in August, 1947, on the occasion of the centenary of the first Swiss railway, was brought a step nearer by the constitution in February last of an association for the promotion of a Swiss Museum of Communications & Transport. Its president is Dr. Cottier, formerly Secretary-General of the Federal Railways, later Manager of the 3rd Division, and now Director of the Federal Transport Department, who presided also over the study commission set up in 1939 to make preliminary contacts and investigations. The results so far achieved are due to a great extent to the activities of M. Eugène Fontanellaz, the future Director of the museum, who is a former official of the Federal Department of Industry & Labour and has considerable experience of railway matters, having been for some years a locomotive engineer at the Skoda Works. The museum is to be in Zurich, most probably near the site of the transport section of the National Exhibition of 1939, on the left shore of the lake, with track connection to the adjacent Zurich-Wollishofen Station. It will be divided into six sections, concerning water, road, rail, air, communications (post office, telephone, telegraph, and radio) and tourist traffic respectively; each will be housed separately but will have connecting galleries. In addition to numerous documents, photographs, maps, and charts, it is intended to show a large range of models, to a uniform scale of one-tenth, representing locomotives, carriages, and wagons of the principal Swiss railways at various periods, and the co-operation of Swiss model-railway clubs may be enlisted in this connection. Appeals have been made to railwaymen and the general public for contributions in the way of documents, tickets, and other items of particular interest, relating especially to the earlier years of railway history. Full-size exhibits include one of the original cars of the Vevey-Montreux-Chillon Tramway (the first electric tramway in Switzerland), and electric locomotive No. 2 of the Burgdorf-Thun Railway. The first locomotive of the Rigi Railway, which was shown at the National Exhibition in 1939, also has been preserved. Unfortunately, none of the original locomotives of the first Swiss Railway, from Zurich to Baden, are in existence, nor were any complete drawings available; but by careful research at Esslingen and Karlsruhe M. Fontanellaz has been able to assemble authentic data regarding the first engine, named *Limmat*, and these are being co-ordinated at present with a view to the construction of a replica, which, together with coaches, will be prominent in the celebrations and afterwards will tour the country before going to the traffic museum.

NIKLAUS VON FLÜE.

(Reprinted with acknowledgement from *"The Swiss-American,"* August 1942.)

The blessed Niklaus von Flüe is undoubtedly one of the most eminent figures in Swiss history. According to a tribute paid to him a few years ago by Federal Councillor Philip Etter, President of Switzerland for 1942, he started life as a peasant on his own free soil. He was tall and straight like the towering rocks of his mountainous homeland. His face and arms were tanned by sun, wind and rain. He was a soldier and officer, and as such he fought under the flag of his native canton of Obwalden in the old Zurich war from 1436-50. He also participated in the drive to Thurgau and in other campaigns.

Against his real inclination he became a member of the Court of Justice and the Council of State. He was a Democrat to the bone and took an enthusiastic interest in the fate of the small and free canton of Obwalden. He never hesitated to confront his colleagues in court and in the council with the sometimes unerring instinct they sensed that Niklaus von Flüe possessed all the qualifications for President of their canton.

However, Niklaus von Flüe declined this honour. Nobody could understand his decision except his still youthful wife Dorothea, who had presented him with five sons and five daughters. She knew of her husband's inner conflict, of his higher destination, of his nightly prayers to the Master who was calling him for service dedicated to Him. And this strong heroic woman fought her own victorious battle. She was ready to let her husband follow the divine voice. In the year 1467, when he had reached the age of fifty, Niklaus von Flüe, strong in body, possessor of a fine wife, ten children and many distinctions, owner of a flourishing homestead with cattle and land, left all this to seek complete solitude.

At last Brother Klaus, as he was affectionately called by the people, was free. He was free from worldly property and worldly cares. He now could devote himself to God and his country. He remained in his retreat praying when, from 1474-1477, the Confederates had to wage war against Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. In due time the soldiers of Obwalden returned home victorious, heavily laden with valuable booty. Niklaus von Flüe did not like this, for he knew the danger of unwonted foreign riches. Soon differences arose between the towns and peasant cantons. The latter feared for their rights of equality and ancient privileges; they opposed the admission of the cities of Fribourg and Soleure to the Swiss Confederation.

There was danger that the young Swiss Nation was going to be divided by Civil war. The delegates of the Assembly convening in these matters at Stans in 1481 were about ready to disband, threatening to take up arms. At this crucial moment the venerable Niklaus von Flüe was called from his mountain retreat, one hour's walk above Sachseln on the Brünig route. With his great love for his homeland the saintly man succeeded to reconcile the delegates. He reminded his listeners of the democratic ideals which their forefathers had adopted almost 200 years previously and so convincing was his counsel that within an hour all their differences could be settled. Fribourg