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FORTUNE UNCLAIMED IN SWISS BANKS

A special department was set up by the Swiss Government today to deal with the deposits, thought to total several million pounds, placed in secret accounts in Swiss banks by people seeking to escape Nazi persecution before and during the war, and since unclaimed. The property consists of cash paid into numbered accounts as well as securities, works of art, precious stones, jewels, and other valuables placed in safes.

The new department, which will have considerable research facilities, will first try if possible to trace the owners or their heirs and return the valuables to them. Failing that, the assets will be handed over to philanthropic organizations set up to assist victims of the Nazi regime. To this end there will be some relaxation of the strict secrecy which Swiss bank accounts normally enjoy. The department will, when necessary, call on the Attorney-General to order the opening of safes or the examination of numbered accounts.

(By courtesy, "The Times", 11.6.1963.)

SWISS SNOW CLEARING EQUIPMENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Rolba Ltd., London, have just delivered one of their Swiss Rolba "Snow Bull" heavy-duty snow blowers on crawler tracks to the Northumberland County Council main Depot at Longbenton, near Newcastle upon Tyne. The new machine will be put in action during the coming winter in the border country and for the mountain roads leading over the Pennines from Northumberland into Cumberland. By means of its crawler tracks the machine can climb onto snow drifts of any depth and carve the snow off in layers right down to the road surface. (During the past winter drifts of up to 20 feet were experienced in this part of the North East.)

About 150 Rolba snow blowers are so far in operation in the British Isles, most of them Swiss built, and their number is rapidly increasing. In view of the heavy snow falls of last winter large orders have already been placed by authorities in the U.K., for instance an order of about £16,000 by the City of Bristol for six Swiss built Rolba "Snow-Boys" (snow blowers and loaders) and two Swiss built Rolba 2012 with driver's cabin (snow blowers and loaders).

Of interest may also be that last winter one "Snow-Boy" was supplied to the Cairngorms Chair Lift near Aviemore, Inverness-shire, which is run by the Cairngorms Winter Sports Development Board, the first serious attempt at creating a winter sports centre in the British Isles. (The chair lift is also Swiss.)

Another rather unusual customer who has acquired a "Snow-Boy" during the last few months is London Transport, who have been using the "Snow-Boy" for platform snow clearance at those Underground railway stations which are out in the open.

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DON'T MISS THE SWISS

In Scandinavia, tourists wishing to meet the people and not only do sightseeing may contact special organizations such as "Meet the Danes", "Sweden at Home", "Find the Finns" and "Know the Norwegians". A similar programme has just been introduced in Switzerland under the heading "Don't Miss the Swiss". Initiator of this "get-together" plan is Mrs. Maud Brink, a Swede who during five summers in Stockholm helped make 700 contacts per season of which about 60% developed into friendships for life. Under the patronage of the Zurich Tourist Office, Mrs. Brink has opened her office in the lovely Meise Guildhall, where the city Tourist Office is located. Asked about the prospects of her enterprise, she answered in the words of a journalist who had made use of the service offered in Sweden: "The real pearl in the shell of travelling are the people. If you see everything there is to be seen in a city, do everything that can be done but do not come into personal contact with the population you've missed the best . . ."

[S.N.T.O.]

PHOTOCHEMICAL CENTRE NEAR FRIBOURG

The big Swiss chemical and pharmaceutical products firm of Ciba is at present building a photochemical research centre near Fribourg, on a site extending over almost 5,000,000 square feet; the investment involved in the first stage of this new project amounts to approximately 80 million Swiss francs; three hundred people, including some forty university-trained scientists, will be employed in the laboratories. The new research centre is destined to become the main element in the photochemical group recently created by Ciba; this group consists of four firms, two of them Swiss, the Tellko films and photographic papers factory, at Fribourg, and Gretag, in Zurich, which produces large-screen colour television sets.

[O.S.E.C.]

NEW SIMPLIFIED SWISS ADDING MACHINE

Everyone will agree that the addition of long columns of figures in the retail trade, offices and industry even can be a most tedious process, a source of unnecessary fatigue and especially of innumerable errors when done in the head! Now for many firms, addition is the main and often the only operation to be done with figures, so that the big investment involved in the purchase of a regular calculating machine is just not justified. In order to answer the needs of countless large and small firms faced with this problem, a Swiss manufacturer is launching on the market a simplified adding machine, known as the "Simex-Caroline", which is extremely simple to operate and covers the range of figures up to 99,999.99. After setting the counter to zero by pressing on a button, the operator sets the number on the machine one after the other by inserting a finger into the space on a toothed wheel corresponding to the required figure, and pushing it right down, thus turning the wheel, until the finger will go no farther. The result of the addition is indicated in the apertures on the top of the machine. This light apparatus, weighing less than 4 lb., small (10¼ x 8¾ x 5¾ inches), simple (no electrical connection, no handle) and very reasonable in price, will render invaluable service not only to firms not possessing unlimited financial means and a large skilled staff but also to big firms, for all departments which seldom have calculations other than additions to perform. The "Simex-Caroline" will therefore be a welcome innovation in all firms in all parts of the world.

[O.S.E.C.]