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History of the Swiss Consulate of New York

by Louis H. Junold

(first published in 1926)

*Like the falling of a star,
Or as the flights of eagles are,
Or like the fresh spring's gaudy hue,
Or silver drops of morning dew,
Or like the wind that chafes the flood,
Or bubbles which on water stood;
Even such as man, whose burrowed light
Is straight called in the paid tonight,
The wind blows out, the bubble dies,
The spring entombed in autumn lies,
The dew's dried up, the star is shot,
The flight is past, and man forgot*

~ Francis Beaumont

To my mind the greatest interest of the world is the life of man! His sacrifices, his service, his sorrow; his love, success and disaster are all the unfathomably mysterious thing called Life. The harder his trials, the more his tribulations, the greater his writhing for justice and beauty—the richer his life and the greater his appreciation of it.

Perhaps it is my keen love of biography and the extraordinary interest in the study, which has inspired me to write about my predecessors, whose lives though not within the category of the heroic

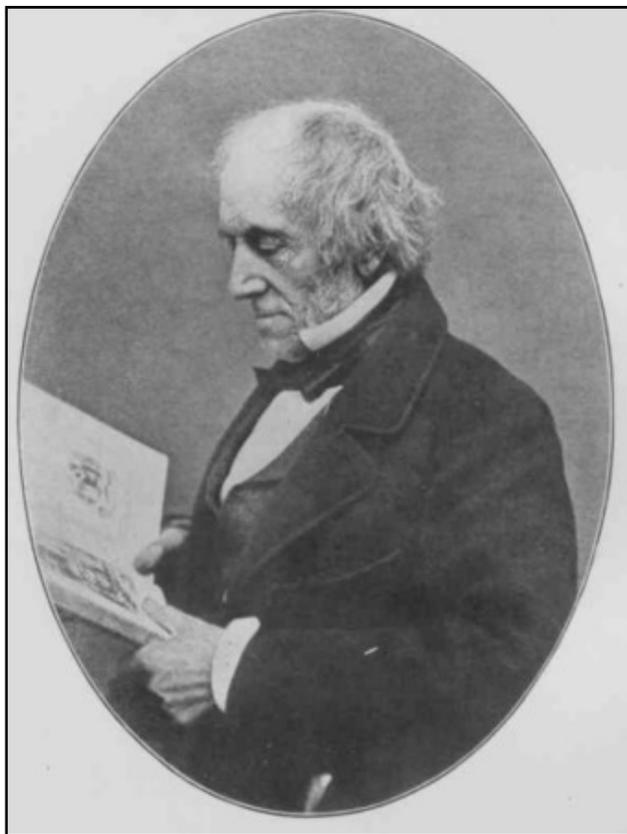
and though not gloriously acclaimed by the world, having left no very deep “footprints on the sands of time,” still have rendered a true service to mankind and their country. They have triumphed over difficulties and perplexities, and they have accomplished their tasks in a silent and dignified manner, and so left the annals of the New York Consulate their names as clear torches to light the way for those who follow on a path of duty well defined and firmly trodden.

Let us rub the lamp of our imagination and with a sweep roll back the years to picture New York the city of the early nineteenth century. To its quaint houses and figures the scent of the old world still clung and its colonial aristocracy savored still of the courts and kings. Courts and kings with influence dimmed, yet by this very dimness enhanced in charm.

Across this picturesque background flitted the figures of the ladies of the day with their tiny waistes and voluminous dresses of unbleached and watered muslin which even the cold breaths of winter could not bar; and their sweet smelling delicate violets worn in honor of the Bourbon Kings of France whose political emblem they were: gave that little touch of elegance which so charms the onlooker.

Society was not privileged to sojourn in Florida or the Riviera in winter; nor to Newport or Europe in summer. A few weeks at Saratoga Springs, on the banks of the Hudson or the Rockaways was the modest summer diversion of the Upper Ten. Indeed there was also a dearth of theatrical diversion, for unlike today’s extravagant galaxy of amusement, New York of 1822 boasted of but one theater, the Park, with a seating capacity of 2,500.

It was but a few years before 1822 that the present system of streets and avenues in New York was decided upon by a special commission appointed by the city. It is remarkable that these commissioners could have anticipated the huge population a century in advance. Instead of embellishing the city, as many others had done, by adopting a plan with circles, ovals, and stars, the commissioners



*Henri Casimir
de Rham
(1785-1873).*

wisely adopted the plan of straight lines and in so doing saved a great deal of space.

At this period when progress, the developing of industry, and the education of the laboring classes were stimulating the minds of the people, Henri Casimir deRham, born July 15th, 1785, at Giez near Yverdon, Switzerland, son of Johann Christoph Wilhelm de Rham of Brunswick, Germany, and his wife, Anne, daughter of Sir James Kinlock, Bart of Gilmerton, Scotland, was appointed on July 23rd, 1822, the first Swiss Consul at New York.

De Rham was probably one of the most prepossessing men of his time, being well over six feet tall and singularly handsome, combining a splendid physique with an attractive personality. He was educated at the Military School of Munich, Germany, and came to

New York in 1805 when there were not more than 80,000 inhabitants here. At the time of his appointment, however, the city had grown and there was approximately 18,000 dwellings with a population of 125,000, making about seven inhabitants to each house.

The first Swiss Consul in New York was particularly well adapted for the position as he was not only a staunch friend and sincere adviser of the Swiss, but he was a widely known and influential business man, which attributes are said to be primary requisites for a successful Consul. He had a brilliant mind, was an ardent reader, and to the very last interested himself in the current topics of the day.

I cannot mention Mr. De Rham's business career without paying the tribute to his success which a brief resume offers.

* * * *

De Rham started businesses about 1803 at 79 Washington Street. Shortly after the War of 1812, he formed a partnership with Isaac Iselin, who had been a partner of the house of Le Roy Bayard & Company, under the firm name of the de Rham & Iselin engaged in banking, importing, and commission business, dealing principally in the dry goods from France, Switzerland, and Germany. They did a large commission business, sold cargoes of all kinds of merchandise, did also a profitable banking business and were the heaviest buyers of foreign exchange in New York.

Most houses which were expensively engaged in foreign commerce in 1813, found their connections and resources cut off and were obligated to close up their business. De Rham went through the crises safely and was one of the heaviest subscribers to the Government Loan of \$16,000,000 which was authorized, but only \$4,000,000 was offered. Henry C. de Rham's subscription was \$32,300.

The firm moved in 1823 to 44 Broad Street. This building was burned in 1845, the concern losing all its records. They subsequently occupied offices at 25 Exchange Place, 49 Wall Street, and 79 William Street.

In 1815, Maria Theresa, daughter of Doctor William Moore, the brother of Bishop Benjamin Moore, and of his wife, Jane Fish, descendants of John Moore, who came to America in 1657, became the wife of Henri Casimir de Rham.

De Rham took his brothers-in-law, Benjamin and William Moore, into partnership. In 1836, Isaac Iselin retired to return to Basle, Switzerland. Later Wm. Moore also retired and Benjamin Moore died. The business was continued under the name of de Rham & Company by Mr. de Rham who remained active therein until his death.

The de Rhams had four children; three sons, two of whom died in early manhood, and one daughter. Until 1826, they had a private residence at 60 Greenwich Street, after which they moved to 22 Park Place, and in 1850 purchased from Henry Brevoort the property at the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and Ninth Street, which remained in the family until 1920. The de Rhams also owned a country place at Norton's Cove on the Hudson River at the foot of what is now 42nd Street. In 1834, de Rham bought a country place in the Highlands of the Hudson directly opposite West Point, which he named "Giez" after his birthplace, and which in 1926 was still owned by his family, and occupied by his grandson Charles de Rham. In 1845, he purchased property at Newport, Rhode Island, and spent a portion of each year there.

On August 2nd, 1842, he retired from the post of Swiss Consul.

Mrs. De Rham passed away in the year 1855, but her husband lived many years after, growing old gracefully, and retaining until the end a fine brain and a kind heart beloved by all who knew him.

The game of whist was among his favorites, and he played it with great exactness and gusto even after he had passed the age of 80.

So great was his enthusiasm of the game that he belonged, until his death, to the Thursday evening Whist Club which was established in the early part of the nineteenth century, and which met formerly at Henry Leight's. At this time, the following members belonged:

Dr. J. Augustine Smith, Alexander Duncan, Gouverneur Kemble, William Kemble, H. C. de Rham, I. W. Smidt, A. C. Rossire,

A. P. Pilot, Mr. Bartlett, Sir Edward Cunard, Eugene Dutilh, Royal Phelps, W. B. Duncan, August Belmont, Charles March, Mr. Kingsfords, George Moke, Henry Chauncy, and William C. Peckergill.

Mr. de Rham took an active interest in religious matters and was a member of the Episcopal Church. From 1836 to 1847, and from 1864 to 1873, he was a vestryman of St. Philip's Church in the Highlands. He was also on the vestry of the Grace Church in New York before it moved to its present location at Broadway and Tenth Street.

The year 1873 closed the life of Casimir de Rham. Time and space do not permit relating the many colorful incidents and adventures which must have filled his interesting career, but in the conciseness a life of usefulness and service is revealed—a life well spent.

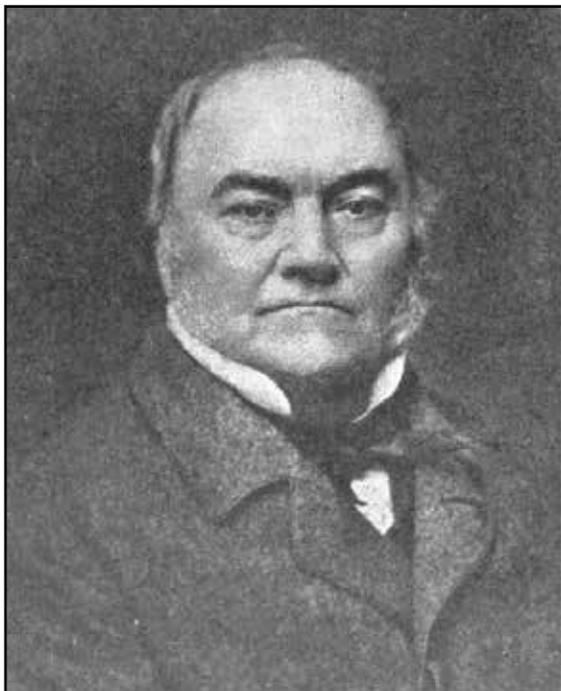
Thus an earth glorified with the beauty of autumn and tinged with the wistful soulfulness of winter received back her own, and on October 5th, Henri Casimir de Rham was buried beside his wife in the cemetery of St. Marks in the Bowery, New York.

* * * * \

Upon the retirement of Henri Casimir de Rham, Louis Philippe de Luze, a man of considerable popularity both in business and society, was appointed Swiss Consul at New York on August 2nd, 1842.

De Luze was born in Frankfurt, Germany, on September 14th, 1793. He was a descendant of Jean Jacques de Luze, a Huguenot who left France in 1688 to settle in Neuchatel, Switzerland, and whose son de Luze was knighted by Frederick the Great; son of Jean Jacques, Alexandre, was Captain of the Swiss Guards and died valorously at the Tuilleries in “1792” defending Louis XVI of France. His name is engraved on Thorwaldsen's Lion of Lucerne.

On April 26th, 1821, Louis Philippe de Luze married Sarah Ogden, the eldest daughter of Thomas Ludlow Ogden of New York. The witnesses at the wedding were Henri Casimil de Rham, Alphonse du Plasquier of Neuchatel, and William H. Astor of New York.



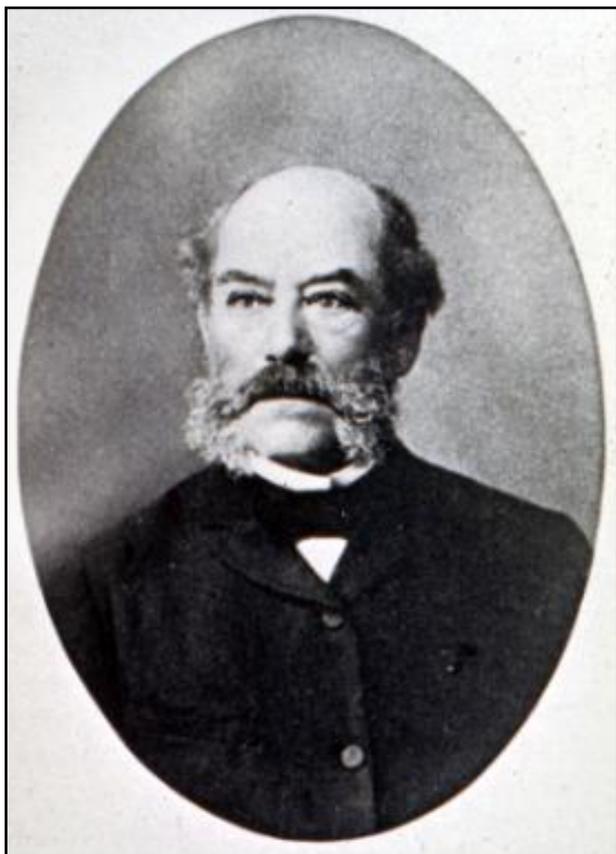
Louis Phillipe de Luze (1793-1877).

De Luze made many trips to Switzerland the beloved country of his father.

He lived at various places in New York: 26 Park Place, 26 Beach Street, and 6 Greenwich Street. Around the year 1863, he bought a large brownstone house at 16 East 33rd Street where he resided in winter, and spent his summers at Greenwich, Connecticut, and College Point, L. I.

It is worthy of mention and interesting to relate that during Philippe de Luze's administration and on February 3rd, 1846, the first appeal was made for the foundation of a Swiss society. The appeal met with success and a society was formed and called "Helvetia Lodge No. 1." It was composed mostly of laborers and small merchants.

At about this same time, the Helvetia Rifle Club was organized, whose members were skillful marksmen: and the first Swiss singing society, "The Helvetia Maennerchor," was organized in January 1858.



*Adrian George
Iselin (1818-
1905).*

Due to the continuous appeals for help from the needy Swiss, the organization of Benevolent Society became absolutely necessary and so in 1846, Louis Philippe de Luze was appointed the first President of a society which has and still continues to aid, assist, and comfort many needy, disappointed, and wary souls who have wandered far from their never to be forgotten country. Switzerland has stood universally as an undreamed of Paradise; a co-mingling of art, music, and poetry in its ever glorious mountains. Travelers never forget its splendor and grandeur. Imagine then the yearning of a native whose footsteps have led him to other lands.

During the consularship of Louis Philippe de Luze and on December 30, 1853, Adrian George Iselin was appointed the first

Swiss Vice Consul at New York. He was born September 18th, 1818, at the country place occupied by his father, Isaac Iselin, situated on what is now known as Riverside Drive, just south of General U.S. Grant's tomb—at that time a city of vast importance, still growing, still surging onward reigning pompously in wealth and population. A revelation since 1822!

Iselin was particularly well known in the social and business world. He was a banker and the founder of the still existent firm of A Iselin & Company, bankers, at 36 Wall Street, New York City. He came to New York after the return of his father to Switzerland and entered the dry goods importing firm of which his brother-in-law, Henry Barbey, was a member. From this firm sprang that of Moran & Iselin, engaged in the dry goods importing and banking business from 1840 to 1854. In the latter year, the senior member of the firm, Mr. Charles Moran, withdrew to found the firm of Moran Bros., bankers. The business of the old firm was continued under the name of A. Iselin & Company, still existent in 1926. In 1864, Mr. Iselin withdrew from active participation in the dry goods business, but continued the banking business under the name of A. Iselin & Co. He retired from the firm in 1878, leaving the business to be continued by his sons and grandsons.

The dry goods business of the firm of A. Iselin & Co., was continued successively by Girard Barbey & Co., Richard Iselin & Co., Iselin, Neeser & Co., and is now, in 1926, carried on by William Iselin & Company, with Mr. Iselin's son, William, and two of his grandsons as partners. While he retired from A. Iselin & Co., in 1878, Adrian Iselin remained actively interested in many important business and charitable enterprises up to the date of his death. He was one of the founders of the New Rochelle Water Company. He acquired control of the Buffalo, Rochester, & Pittsburgh Railway Company and it was mainly through his efforts and good judgment that this company developed into an important coal-carrying road.

In 1845, he married Eleanora O'Donnel in Baltimore, Maryland.

Both Iselin and his wife were very charitable and did much for the city of New Rochelle where his family have had their summer homes, contributing generously to the erection of its schools and churches, as well as to various benevolent undertakings. He always took great pride in Switzerland, the home country of his ancestors.

Iselin was one of the founders of the Metropolitan Opera House—that pile of masonry around which clings so much of the glory and beauty of the music world, both in the shadowy remembrances of its past in the living fame of its present singers. He was also prominent in many enterprises such as the American Museum of Natural History, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Hospital for the Relief of the Ruptured and Crippled, and many other worthy undertakings which are vital and silent tributes to a great humanity and charity.

In 1895 when the Iselins celebrated their golden wedding anniversary, Adrian Iselin presented to the city of Basel, the monument to Isaac Iselin, the Secretary of State, which stands in the Schmiedenhof.

On December 1st, 1873, Consul de Luze retired from the service, and died four years later at Collge Point on August 21, 1872, and was buried in the family plot at Greenwood Cemetery. A stone monument in the form of a Swiss cross covers his grave.

Ten years after the retirement of de Luze and on June 8, 1883, Adrian Iselin also left the service. But his career did not stop there for he lived many years after—to the end a man of great prominence and philanthropy, whose name will always be linked with the progressive and financial history of New York.

Iselin passed away on March 28, 1905, in New York.

* * * *

The next and third Swiss Consul at New York whom I have the pleasure of writing about is Jacques Bertschmann. His life prior to the appointment as Consul is perhaps the most interesting of any. For

each episode is so mixed with the historic and romantic figures of the nineteenth century that it reads far more like a story than a biography.

Bertschmann was the son of Jacob Bertschmann and Barbara Punfschilling Bertschmann. He was born in Bettingen near Basel, Switzerland, on November 17th, 1835. The Bertschmanns had lived in the locality of Bettingen since the fifteenth century and his father was a man of prominence in his town. Many members of his family had been officers in the Pope's Swiss Guard for generations, and had also served in the French and Swiss armies.

His early education was at a school some miles distant from his home. Later, he entered the Politechnical School in Zurich.

Upon the second marriage of his father, Bertschmann left home and commenced a tour of Russia by sleigh. There he chanced to meet Prince Orloff, the Russian Ambassador to France and member of a well known noble Russian family. Prince Orloff became attached to young Bertschmann and took him to Paris as his private secretary. They arrived in Paris just prior to the Paris Congress following the Crimean War, and so it became the duty of Bertschman to record the minutes of the conference for Prince Orloff.

As secretary to the Prince and also undoubtedly because of his striking personality and handsome appearance, Bertschmann obtained entree into the gay and fashionable society of Paris—Paris and France under the regime of that unscrupulous autocrat Napoleon III—a more gay and fashionable court than that of beautiful Empress Eugenie would have been hard to duplicate; for in those days, all the brilliance and beauty radiated from Paris. The gaiety during Bertschmann's sojourn in the city was augmented by the birth of the Prince Imperial in whose honor many festivities were given, and it was then that he chanced to meet Otto von Bismarck the Prussian Minister to France.

His career was not just diplomatic, for in 1859 he received a commission as Captain on the staff of Marshall MacMahon and fought in the Battles of Magenta and Solferino against the Austrians. Some time later he engaged in the silk business in Paris and came to the

United States in 1861 as a silk agent. Here he met du Pasquier and entered into a partnership with him. A few years later he accepted the agency of the Switzerland General Marine Insurance Company of Zurich with headquarters in New York, becoming the first foreign agent of a marine insurance company in this country.

On December 1st, 1873, he was appointed Swiss Consul at New York, in which post he held until December 31, 1912, when at the age of 77, he resigned. Upon his retirement, the New York Swiss Club on December 14th, 1912, combined the celebration of their anniversary with a banquet at the Hotel Astor in his honor.

Bertschmann's consularship was characterized by great popularity and although he filled his position with dignity, his charming manner and sociability were manifest on every occasion.

He was a clever orator, being concise and impressive; a good entertainer ever ready to render the popular Swiss Yodels; and above all a man of great benevolence to his poor countrymen. He was President of the Swiss Benevolent Society in the years 1870, 1871, and 1872.

Probably the last appearance in Swiss circles of this splendid old gentleman was during the great war on August 16, 1917, at a small luncheon given by me at the Union Club in honor of the new Swiss Minister, Sulzer, and the Swiss Mission to the United States which had arrived the day before from Europe.

To the last days of his life, Paris, France; the brilliant French Court of Napoleon III; the memorable years from 1856 to 1861 when he and so many men influenced French—I might say universal history—were ever present with him. His fondness for France, her literature and people, his predilection for memoirs, especially such as treated of the 1st and 2nd Empires, were strong characteristics.

Bertschmann died at his residence, 306 West 73rd Street, New York City, on October 28, 1918, but his memory still lives fondly in the hearts of those who knew him, for one rarely forgets such a personage.

His wife, Mrs. Emilia Becker Bertschmann, and his son Louis, passed away a few years before him, his sole survivors being his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Mante Smith Bertschmann, and her two sons (his grandsons) Jean Jacques and Louis Frederick Bertschmann.

During all these years, Swiss Societies were continuously cropping up, and some of them have been perpetuated successfully to this very day.

The year 1869 greeted the organization of the Grutliverein, the Societa Ticinese di Mutuo Soccorso and the Jura Maennerchor; in 1884, the Societa Patriotic a Liberale and the Swiss Club, and from 1869 to 1884 and in the ensuing years, many others.

I would prefer that I had the time and pace to write in detail regarding the organizing, purpose, and splendid work of the many societies that have been formed; but I will say that each and everyone of them have endeavored to bring about a fine spirit of fellowship, sociability, and benevolence among their compatriots, and they have not endeavored in vain, or to many, a Swiss society as a center of many enjoyable evenings where friends are to be had "but for the asking," a pleasing contact with fellow countrymen, a haven of comfort to a homesick heart.

On June 8, 1883, and during Bertschmann's consularship, James Eugene Robert was appointed Vice-Consul of Switzerland for New York and the New England States, upon the retirement of Adrian Iselin.

Robert was born in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, on July 22, 1833. Due to his father's business interests in the United States especially in importing Swiss watches, the family came to New York in 1840. James Eugene Robert was educated in New York City, but took up special courses in Koenigsfeld, Germany. Upon the completion of his education, he entered his father's watch importing firm. He kept in close relationship with the country of his birth, and made frequent trips to Switzerland. While in New York, however, he always took an active part in the Swiss colony.

Mr. Robert's life was characterized by a great philanthropy to not only his own compatriots but to humanity in general, and his home in New York at West 71st Street was noted for the hospitality, kindness, and lavish manner of its host.

He was one of the founders of the Swiss Benevolent Society in New York, held several times the office of President of that organization; and it was mainly due to his tireless effort that the Swiss Home on West 67th Street was made possible in 1904.

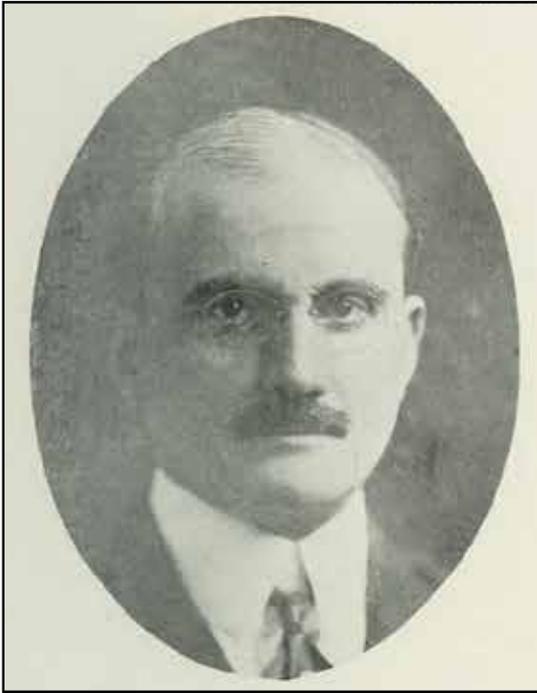
Eugene Robert was a religious man and took a great interest in church work. During his lifetime, he was an active member of the French Evangelical Church at 126 West 16th Street, and held the position of Elder and Treasurer of the church for almost 50 years.

He was a charter member of the French Branch of the Y.M.C.A. in New York, and was on the Board of Governors for many years. He was one of the founders of the French Evangelical Home for Young Women in New York, and its treasurer and trustee from its foundation until the time of his death. It is to be noted that he took a special interest in all French and Swiss charitable organizations. He was also actively interested in the Franco-American Committee of Evangelists that later became the American Huguenot Committee.

Robert's business activities included the position as director of the Germania Fire Insurance Company and the Empire City Fire Insurance Company of New York. He retired from business in 1890 and on October 3rd, 1907, died at his country house in Greenwich, Connecticut.

* * * *

So the years have marched on and dim figures and places have receded into the haze of the past and to whatever of immortality Providence has granted them; and I am now confronted with the task of writing about myself and my times. Concerning the former, I must



*Louis Henri Junod,
Importer of Embroi-
deries and Laces,
Consul of Switzer-
land in New York
City.*

confess to having little of interesting personal history to relate, about of the latter I am less skeptical.

New York had surged onward into the towering restless, ambitious city of the twentieth century. The city of Walt Whitman so marvelously describes in his poem “Manhatta,” and in these lines:

“Numberless crowded streets, high growths of Iron, slender, strong, light, splendid uprising toward the skies.

“Trottoirs throng-d, vehicles, Broadway, the women, the shops and shows,

“A million people—manners free and superb—open voices—hospitality—the most courageous and friendly young men,

“City of hurried and sparkling waters! city of spires and masts! City nested in bays!”

My service to my country began in March of the year 1909, with the appointment as Vice Consul during the consularship of Jean

Jacques Bertschmann, and in that period my duties consisted mainly in attending many of the Swiss gatherings as a representative of the Consulate of Switzerland, since such affairs were rather arduous for the ageing Consul. I succeeded Bertschmann on January 1, 1913, as Swiss Consul at New York; and before continuing, allow me to recount a few events of my early life.

I was born at the rectory adjacent to the Calvinist Church of Serrivres, a suburb of Neuchatel, Switzerland. It was my father's first parish and he had preached there for eight years prior to my birth. On the site where his church was built in 1666, the Reformer Guillaume Farel, a disciple of Calvin, preached on December 14, 1520.

My first public school education was at Basel, Switzerland, where my father had accepted the rectorship in the French Huguenot Church. I was rather an unmanageable and recalcitrant youngster with a tremendous amount of vitality and energy which led me into so many scrapes and accidents that my parents quite despaired of my ever reaching manhood, and undoubtedly caused the principal of the school in Basel where my father held a position of some consequence, to advise him sending me to a severe boarding school.

Accordingly, at the age of 13, I went to a boarding school at Peseux near Neuchatel which I attended for two years.

In the meantime, my parents moved to Nice, France, where my father accepted the post of President of the Theological College, and it was there that I joined them and finished my education at the college of Nice.

At a rather early age, I showed an aptitude for drawing which my parents fostered, and which proved to be absolutely invaluable later. When I entered the Swiss embroidery business, I soon learned that artiseness and taste are essential prerequisites for success.

Whatever of artistic talent I possess, is unquestionably inherited from my mother, a very gifted woman, who wrote beautifully in German and French. She also had a lovely voice, drew and painted admirably and displayed considerable literary talent, the

last undoubtedly a heritage from her uncle, Jean Jacques Reithard, the noted Swiss poet.

Early in my career, I became interested in importing Swiss manufactured articles to the United States, and at the age of 22 I came to this country as the special representative of Steiger & Company, the then largest manufacturers of embroideries in Herisau, Switzerland. A measure of success attended these efforts and a few years later I decided to settle permanently in New York, and thus became the selling agent for several additional Swiss manufacturers. Since 1907, the business has been known as L. H. Junold & Co., Importers.

On January 15, 1898, I married Laura Duane, daughter of John B. Ireland, of New York—the great-great-grandson of General William Floyd, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence; and on her mother's side a descendant of Judge James Duane, first post Revolution of New York.

We have one son, Henri Pell Junod, born in New York, December 10th, 1900, who served with distinction in the late World War as a member of the Canadian Royal Air Force. He is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (June 1923), at the present time (1926) making a name for himself in the iron and steel industry.

In 1909, as I stated before, I became Vice-Consul, and in 1913 Consul, and so come to the most interesting events of my consular career, the Great War!

At the time when the war broke out, I was in Switzerland, and was permitted to witness the brilliant mobilization of the Swiss army of July 31, 1914. It was at noon that the Cabinet in Berne ordered the mobilization and on the afternoon of the same day that order was known throughout the Alps. On Saturday morning of August 1st, I saw shepherds from the remotest tower at the recruiting station wearing their uniforms and carrying their guns, and on that afternoon all tunnels, railroads, and bridges, were patrolled by soldiers.

I cannot tell you how much this impressed me; what efficiency, what promptness, what eagerness to serve! Whatever is said of

patriotism, its faults, or its fineness, it is to me unquestionably the most unselfish human emotion.

On August 30th, I arrived at Paris, and on that same day, I beheld the first German aeroplane that flew over the city, scattering the solemnity and peace of a Sabbath afternoon with its infernal bombing.

The second of the three visitations that I beheld occurred on August 31st, at 4:00 p.m., and that directly above me in the busiest quarter. I noticed with surprise that the Parisian population showed far more keen interest and astonishment than of fear. Their pluck was admirable. Although on Tuesday morning, September 1st, with the news that the Germans were rapidly nearing the gates of Paris and with the rumor that the President and Cabinet were leaving for Bordeaux the following day, a wave of anxiety did sweep the populace.

On the evening of that day at 6:15, near the opera house, I saw another German plane and distinctly heard the reports of three bombs as they were flung from the machine.

On September 6th, I sailed from Havre on *S.S. France* to leave awakening chaos behind, and so swept out into the vastness and aloofness of the sea. Yet the deadening lull of its waves could not silence the echo of those bombs, nor its coolness wash from my memory the vivid pictures of cities, countries, and people, thrown into the wild turmoil of war.

Most of the people on board ship expected daily to receive news of the capture of Paris, and it was not until our arrival at New York that the faint news of that valorous epic of the Marne reached us.

I was happy to return to New York again, for my voyage though particularly interesting and exciting, was over-shadowed by that great oncome of sorrow, a sorrow that would never be effaced and which only time could alleviate of its poignancy.

These ramblings along the paths of my memory have now brought me to a wilderness of events and incidents closely interwoven with the entrance of America into the Great European conflict, and from which I will endeavor to exact the most vital and memorable.

On February 8, 1917, the German Consul General at 11 Broadway, turned over his office and papers to the Swiss Consulate, and that office was then made a branch of my Consulate at 100 Fifth Avenue, as the Swiss Government had been put in charge of the German interests during the war.

Dr. Paul Ritter, then Swiss Minister to the United States, and I attended to the departure of the dismissed German Ambassador Count Bernstorff, who sailed on February 19th, 1917, with his family, his staff, and their families on the Danish liner *Frederick VIII*. There were 55 persons in the party and, strange to relate, a tremendous quantity of flowers were sent to the dismissed ambassador.

Three months later, on May 4th, after having received safe conduct by me, acting for the Swiss Legation, Admiral von Hintze, who had arrived in New York from China, where he was German Ambassador, sailed on the *S.S. Ryndam*.

In June of this same year, which stands in my mind as one of the endless departures, the largest reception ever given by the Swiss Club was tendered at the Hotel Astor to the departing Swiss Minister De. Paul Ritter.

The new Swiss Minister Dr. Hans Sulzer arrived on August 15th with the Swiss Mission, consisting of Johan Syz, member of the Swiss Parliament, Colonel Staempfli, and Professor William Rappard.

Minister Sulzer proved to be one of Switzerland's most popular Ministers, a man particularly capable and tactful to handle a delicate situation as only a born diplomat could have mastered. His successful stay in America terminated in January 1920, for his ponderous business enterprises in Switzerland required his attention and they refused to remain any longer.

Marc Peter, member of the Swiss Parliament from Geneva, succeeded Hans Sulzer, and he is still holding the post of Minister Plenipotentiary of Switzerland to the United States.

Minister Peter has had the distinction of holding the highest political office in the Canton of Geneva.

He has done much to strengthen the friendly relations between the United States and Switzerland, and he is admirably second in his task by his most charming wife. She was formerly Miss Jeanne Lachenal, daughter of Adrien Lachenal, a former President of Switzerland and one of its most eminent and brilliant statesmen and lawyers.

The Swiss in the United States are justly proud of their two representative in Washington.

On December 25th, 1917, I sailed to Bermuda with Dr. Jenney, Secretary of the Swiss Legation at Washington, D.C., in order to inspect the German prison camps. The trip was exceedingly interesting and our return voyage on the steamship *Cascapedia* most uncomfortably thrilling. The *Cascapedia* was a 1,800 ton boat build for the St. Lawrence River service, but due to the shortage of boats sent temporarily to Bermuda, it was entirely unfit to cope with the terrific storm that shook the ocean and flung its mighty rage on the ship, for the vessel crawled along, requiring five days to travel 700 miles, and on some days not even exceeding 40 miles.

For 48 hours we expected to be shipwrecked; nor did a cabin half full of water and a pool on my bed alleviate my anxiety, and adding this to the fact that the captain refused to share any information concerning the run of the ship, you will readily understand cause for a little discomfort both mentally and physically.

For four days, sleeping or eating was an impossibility and two days before our arrival at New York only five cups were left, everything else had been broken and we had to wait our turn for breakfast. I think that was perhaps the first time, although I had crossed the ocean 70 times, that I had ever felt any fear of the sea or ever paused to consider the helplessness of man and the utter frailty of a vessel caught in the Titan arms of the waves and hurled about like wisps of spray on the mighty battles of the sea!

So we come to 1918. The fourth of July of that year witnessed a large parade of foreign born American citizens who marched on Fifth Avenue in the costumes of their native country. Among them

Switzerland appeared and made a showing of which I shall always be proud.

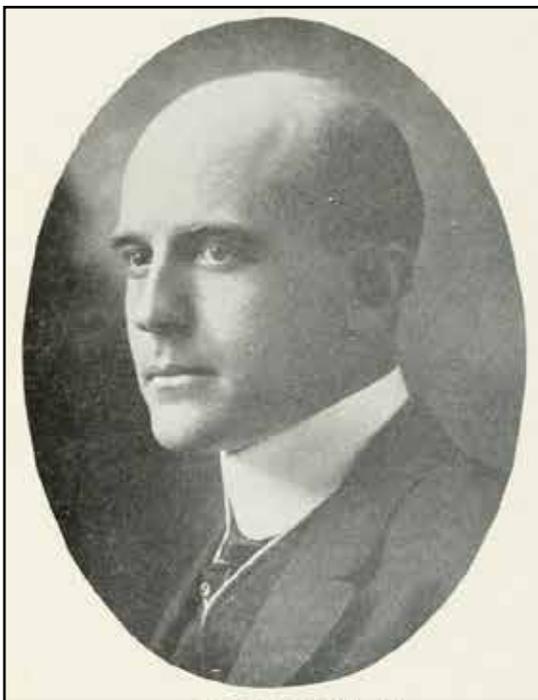
On September 15th, Carl Buenz, the former Director of General of the Hamburg American Line, and prior to that German Minister of Mexico, and German Consul General in New York, died in the Atlanta prison. He was cremated in North Bergen, New Jersey, on September 14th, at 11:00 a.m. And on this occasion, I represented the German Government.

Six Swiss journalists, invited by George W. Creel, head of the Committee of Public Information in behalf of President Wilson, arrived on September 15th on the *S.S. Espagne*, and a few days later were entertained at a luncheon given in their honor at the Waldorf Astoria by the Committee of Public Information, which event was attended by many of the leading Swiss citizens of New York. On October 7th, the day of the presentation of the first German peace note to President Wilson by Mr. Oederlin, Charge d'Affairs of Switzerland, these same journalists were received by President Wilson in the afternoon, when they were accompanied by George Creel, Mr. Norman Whitehouse, Mr. Dossenbach, and myself.

A farewell dinner was given for them at the Hotel Astor on October 16th, by the New York Swiss Club, upon which occasion Mr. Creel was the principal speaker and I made a very brief address, in the course of which I mentioned the regret of the Swiss Chargé De Affairs at being detained in Washington on very urgent official business. This remark of mine brought a wave of laughter from the audience as everyone knew that his absence was due to the exchange of notes regarding preparations for the Armistice of November 11th. Of that great event I need make no mention, for it is something that I feel sure will be unfading in the minds of all beholders, and for those who remember it not, I leave its description to the historians.

On December 13, 1918, I left New York with Frederick Oederlin to inspect the German prison camps at Fort Douglas near Salt Lake City, Utah.

*Henry Escher, Jr.,
Lawyer at Escher &
Fox until appointed
Vice-Consul of Switz-
erland in New York
City.*



In closing I might add that during my absence in Europe the German Division of the Swiss Consulate was turned over again to the Germans by Vice-Consul Escher on December 31st, 1921.

* * * *

And Vice-Consul Escher is the next gentleman about whom I have the honor to write. He was born in Brooklyn, and is the son of Henry Escher who came to this country in the late 1850s.

Mr. Escher is a graduate of the New York University Law School, holds an Honorary Degree from the St. Lawrence University, and has studied Civil Law also at Neuchatel, Switzerland.

He has practiced law since 1897, particularly international law, and is the New York representative of the Swiss Legation of Washington, D.C., and the New York Consulate.

Escher's interest in International Law during the Great War led to his representing the Swiss Confederation in some important negotiations and litigations which resulted from the outbreak of hostilities.

In 1912, he married Ella Muried Goepel of Brooklyn and they have two sons.

On January 1st, 1913, Henry Escher became Swiss Vice-Consul at New York, and he has always proven to be a ready cooperator and good adviser in any plan or event for the welfare of his countrymen.

A great interest in their compatriots is a true characteristic of the Escher family, for they have all been very prominent in the history of the Swiss Benevolent Society, and for 15 years different members of the family have served as Presidents of that organization.

John G. Escher was President in 1855; his father, Henry, held the same office for eight years; and Mr. Henry Escher is the President today and has been for the past six years.

Mr. Escher and his family reside in Englewood, New Jersey, and he maintains law offices at 14 Wall Street, New York City.

Vice-Consul Escher has been of valuable service to Switzerland and his countryman. He is esteemed and respected by all who know him for his many sterling qualities.

A century has been travelled through, the end is reached and in conclusion, I only regret my inability in not having procured more personal and intimated data concerning the lives of my predecessors. But in the midst of long ago as those little human incidents that bring us nearer to one another fade into oblivion, the abstract remains. If, however, I have made those who have gone before, live but for a few brief moments with you, my aim has been more than fulfilled.

*“Tis all a chequer-board of Nights and Days
Where Destiny with men for pieces play:
Hither and thither moves, and mates and slays,
And one by one back in the closet lays.”*