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He is Arnold Wunschli, inventor, who is being kept a prisoner by the Nazi Gestapo at his home in Spandau, near Berlin.

The Swiss Chargé d'Affaires has asked the Wilhelmstrasse for an explanation why Wunschli is not allowed to leave Germany, in spite of the fact that there is no official charge against him.

During his twenty years' residence in Budapest, Wunschli acquired a Hungarian passport. He is related by marriage to one of the best-known families in Budapest, but the Hungarian Government has refused to ask for his release on the ground that they do not wish to complicate the present delicate situation in the interests of a naturalised foreigner.

Wunschli's family therefore approached the Swiss Consul in Budapest, who at once got in touch with Berne and set the ball rolling.

Berlin news scouts, smelling a good story, have besieged Nazi officials in vain for an explanation.

*Cavalcade* is able to give the following facts.

The Swiss-Hungarian inventor went to Berlin early in 1940 to offer the Nazis a steel garment of his own design which he claimed to be absolutely bullet-proof.

Hitler took a special interest in the invention and asked Gestapo chief Himmler to be present at the tests and send in a report. The tests were carried out in the Munich Gestapo headquarters court-yard, and as a result of Himmler's report Wunschli was given an order for six bullet-proof garments to be made to measure. They were for Hitler, Goering, Hess, Himmler, and the Führer's two A.D.C.s' Schaub and Brueckner. All but Hitler were fitted personally. The Führer's garment was worked out on a modelled dummy.

Wunschli was paid 25,000 reichsmarks apiece for the garments. He was provided with all the raw material and workshop facilities. It took him about six months to complete the order.

When the job was finished he applied for a visa to leave Germany. First, he was asked to stay for a time to execute further orders. When he pressed to go on a short visit to his family in Budapest he was told that his work was regarded as being of urgent State importance.

All his letters to Budapest were stopped, and he was not allowed to receive any incoming mail. Two Gestapo agents are permanently on duty outside his Spandau home.

That is all that can be ascertained about the affair for the present. Nazi officials refuse to make any comment on the case, but it is reported that the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires has got a sensational dossier ready for his Government in case the Wilhelmstrasse refuses to release Wunschli.

\* \* \*

As if started by an incendiary the "Bären" in Grindelwald was burned out on January 15th. The hotel was being used temporarily as a military hospital; all the patients were rescued in time. The

"Evening News," January 18th, mourns over the loss as follows:

British winter sports enthusiasts will have heard with a pang of regret that the famous Bear Hotel, at Grindelwald, has been destroyed by fire.

Many, with their skis stored in Alpine hotel ski-rooms, must be wondering when, if ever, they will use them again. For the Bear — oldest and most famous of winter sports hotels — to be destroyed by a mere civilian fire in these days seems a little ironical.

It was not until the '80's of the last century that winter sports became popular, and Grindelwald took the lead with a hotel specially designed to cater for winter sportsmen as well as summer tourists.

Grindelwald's ice was famous among British curlers and skaters. Enterprising photographers snapped them — the men in knickerbockers circling round oranges with the full dignity of the severely "English" style.

These photographs of their mothers and fathers hung on the walls of the passages, and now, I suppose, destroyed, amused many young British ski-enthusiasts.

Although the Bear was vast and old-fashioned, it enshrined many memories.

## THE "BLITZ."

Quite a number of individuals and institutions in our Colony have suffered badly from enemy action; to all and everyone we wish to extend our sincere sympathy. If our losses are irreparable or our activities interrupted it is but a contribution we are called upon to make in an unfortunately variable measure towards the creation of a better world. Worst hit as far as we know are the members of the Union Helvetia whose clubhouse near Shaftesbury Avenue is practically destroyed with the exception of the frontage; a deplorable feature is the number of fatal casualties that followed in the wake of the misfortune.

The following reports may be of interest to our readers:—

### Swiss Mercantile Society:

On Monday night, September 16th, at about 10 p.m., a high explosive bomb was dropped from a German bomber, making a direct hit on No. 36, Fitzroy Square (which is almost completely demolished) and damaging a considerable part of Swiss House (No. 34 and 35) particularly the back and interior.

The force of the explosion spent itself in the back of No. 36 bringing down tons of masonry, brickwork, etc., falling on to the back basement rooms of No. 34 and 35, covering the entire back area, completely demolishing the Gents Cloak Room, filling with debris the board room of the Swiss Benevolent Society, smashing through the skylight there, damaging the flue of the boiler and breaking away part of the caretaker's kitchen on the ground floor. The 2 rooms in the area and the caretaker's kitchen are beyond repair.

The other damage done is chiefly broken window sashes in the entire back of Nos. 34 and 35 including all windows of the various rooms and also in the two staircases, all shutters, which were in use for blackout purposes and for protection against flying glass and all blackout curtains.

In the interior of the buildings the entrance porch door, the doors to the waiting-room are blown in, class room No. 6 on the ground floor, W.C., Gents Rest-room in the basement, back lecture room on the first floor, class room No. 5 on the 2nd floor and 3 rooms on the top floor have the ceilings down whilst the double sound-proof doors on the first floor Lecture rooms are in pieces.

The roofs have the tiles damaged and dislodged.

Beyond a few broken glass panes on the first floor windows, the front rooms except on the top floor are in order. The Secretary's Office and the Members rooms are unspoiled. The former is now used by the S.M.S. Employment Department, whilst the members room is ready for any Committee or Board meeting for the various Swiss Societies using Swiss House. The Office of the Secretary to the Swiss Benevolent Society, who was away on holiday, was filled with debris and dust, but before his return it was cleared and is in use again.

On the eventful day Swiss House had besides the caretaker and his daughter as occupants 27 guests of the Swiss relief centre, the Matron, Miss Beglinger, 7 men and 20 females, most of whom awaiting there the hoped for departure of the special convoy to Switzerland.

It was almost providential that the matron had given orders, there being an alert warning on since about 8 p.m., that evening for all to be in the basement shelters by 9.30 p.m. instead of the usual 10.30 p.m.; had some of the guests still been in the upper rooms or staircases casualties no doubt would have occurred.

Beyond a few cases of shock amongst the Ladies the party was none the worse for the experience. Great credit is due to the Matron for her calm and resolute handling of a most ghastly business and experience, considering the evacuation had to take place in the pitch dark and with bombs and splinters falling all around. I should also mention that some 100 pieces of luggage left by the would-be passengers to Switzerland stored in the vaults under the pavement were all untouched and can be safely handed back to the owners.

The hard work of the Swiss Relief Centre, so nobly supported financially by the Swiss colony and so ably managed by the Matron and enjoyed by the guests seemed by a stroke to have come to an end, at least as far as Swiss House was concerned. The Home that was to give temporary shelter to air raid affected compatriots had been damaged and the inmates forced to evacuate.

To enable the restricted activities to be carried on at once at Swiss House instructions have been given to the builders to carry out immediate repair work to entrance hall, waiting room, Room No. 6 and principals offices.

With this work done the S.M.S., and all other affiliated Swiss Societies will have accommodation for their meetings and for the Relief Centre there will be available two offices as well as two rooms

to serve as temporary dormitories should these be required.

It is indeed fortunate that no lives were lost, that the damage is not more serious and that Swiss House — a centre that took so much labour, time and money for years, — can at least carry on its manifold Swiss activities even if at a reduced scale.

Sympathy must go to the Caretaker, Mr. Bossart, whose furniture has been badly damaged and who since the eventful evening has not tired to make the house as habitable as possible.

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### Pagani's Restaurant ("Star," December 14th):

Pagani's, one of the last of the old Bohemian restaurants in London, has suffered heavy damage recently.

For over 60 years it has been the resort of musical and other celebrities, who gathered there for luncheon or dinner. I am sorry to say that its wonderful museum room is no more. On the walls, carefully covered by glass, were the autographs, often flanked by drawings of, and by all sorts of notabilities.

Pellegrini, notable caricaturist, entertained King Edward VII, when Prince of Wales. Caruso, George R. Sims, Melba, Kreisler, Ysaye, Gigli, Richter, Scotti, the de Reszkes, Phil May, Paderewski, Pachmann, and hundreds of others were enshrined in that tiny room.

Here and there among the masses of scrawled autographs were caricatures of Caruso and some of his friends, all the work of the greatest of tenors. Caruso was a skilful amateur cartoonist, and in the self-portrait he did not seek to minimise his own rotundity.

On one wall were scribbled a few bars from Tosti's "Good-bye," done by Tosti himself at one of the Saturday night musical suppers which made Pagani's famous among musicians the world over. There were also some good specimens of Phil May's work.

Meschini, the gallant little Swiss patron, who is carrying on in the one room left, once told me that he had rejected fabulous offers for the rare autographs in that room.

Despite his ill-luck he can still welcome his lunch-time customers with the old smile.

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