

The Birmingham Eccentric

PART 3

Thursday, April 13, 1950

So many of our friends are not
even and enjoyed during a year,
that, as time goes on, they become
like memories. Which is one reason
why successful living includes
the habit of writing them at stated
intervals. Friendly letters are like
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1 Teacher, 3 Assistants Instruct 200 Children

Austrian Mountaineers Are Democratic

By Robert Ball

Special Correspondent for The
Eccentric

ST. ANTON, Austria—
Since the war, every Aus-
trian schoolteacher has faced
the problem of bringing a
new education to pupils
whose first school experience
was in Nazi classrooms.

What is it like to deal with
these children? How much of Nazi
way still blocks their vision?
Americans have wondered.

It was a bright spring day—
marble-playing weather—when I
arrived in the little mountain
village of St. Anton, looking for
an answer to these questions.

The snow, which had served
skiers all winter, was melting off
the south slope of the mountains.

Just beyond the schoolhouse, the
cross on the steeple of the little
church, gilded in the sun, reminding
me that St. Anton, like the rest
of the Tyrol, is Catholic.



BALL

Teacher Franz Salzmann Supervises Classroom Work
Although in French zone, students want to learn English.

balancing mountaineer, cleared some
papers from his desk and offered me
a seat by the huge tile stove.

As "Oberlehrer," Salzmann is
in charge of the "Volksschule,"
where the children of St. Anton
receive their eight years of com-
pulsory education.

There are 200 pupils for Salz-
mann and his three young assist-
ant teachers to handle—too many,
but the hard-pressed Austrian
government can't afford to hire
more teachers now.

I HAD Salzmann tell me about
the curriculum before asking him
about Nazi influence.

The "Brave" bulk large, with
Austrian history, world geogra-
phy, and natural science.

Pupils copy lecture notes pain-
stakingly into work-books, which
they then illustrate with diagrams,
maps and forget-me-not borders
according to taste. In the fifth
grade they begin learning a for-
eign language.

Here there is some friction be-
tween school and occupation au-
thorities. Pupils and teacher want

to learn English, but St. Anton is
in the French zone, and the au-
thorities prefer that French be
taught.

(In the Russian zone, choice
has been ruled out. The compul-
sory foreign language is Russian.)

That pupils and teacher are in-
terested in America was indicated
by a large wall chart, "Bird's-eye
View of Manhattan Island," which
occupied a place of honor next to a
picture of Chancellor Figli.

TEACHER SALZMANN is no
stranger to Nazi injustice. With
the mayor and Hannes Schneider,
ski instructor, he was arrested on
the day of the Anschluss in 1938.
Still when I turned the conver-
sation on after-effects of Nazism,
he showed some impatience. Like
most Austrians, who can't under-
stand why Americans are still in-
terested in Nazism when the Rus-
sian menace is so immediate.

"As far as Nazi teaching is con-
cerned nothing is left at all," he
said. "That racial purity and 'mas-
ter race' business never took with
us mountain folk in the first place.
It is true, however, that the char-
acter of some of the young people
was spoiled by the Nazis."

"You see, the Nazis did every-
thing to the young. They flattered
them by telling them they were
the hope of Germany."

THEY ORGANIZED them, gave
them uniforms, took them on
hikes and vacation trips. In school
the emphasis was shifted from
classroom work to sport, and the
Party provided all the equipment.

"The Hitler Jugend even had
motorcycles to ride around on. In
this way the Party sometimes suc-
ceeded in driving a wedge between
the children and their parents."

"Since no one was allowed to
interfere with their activities,
some children decided they didn't
need to pay any attention to what
their parents said."

"This disrespect for the usual
authorities—home, school and em-
ployer—has carried over in some
cases. These youngsters don't want
to settle down and go to work.
They still have a taste of marching
around and singing songs."

I asked Teacher Salzmann if
any particular emphasis was
placed on teaching democracy.

"Yes," he answered, rubbing
his chin thoughtfully, "but we
don't need to emphasize that so
much up here. In the mountains,
everybody depends on his neigh-
bor and respects him."

"WE HAVE TO HELP each
other out here; we have to share
the grazing land; we have to make
the cheese cooperatively. You al-
ways hear that mountain folk are
democratic because they're inde-
pendent of the outside world.
"I'd sooner say we're naturally
that way because we just have to
work together among ourselves."

Have You Met . . .

Former Royal Oak residents,
Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Giddings
and daughter, Pamela who live at
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with the Verhoven Chevrolet
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Twelve Great Lakes Greyhound
Lines drivers, residents of Bir-
mingham were guests of R. W.
Budd, president of the company,
at one of two dinners being given
in the Coral Room of the Hotel
Fort Shelby in Detroit, yesterday
or today, as their driving sched-
ules permit.

These drivers are among the
group of 612 in
the district who
are being hon-
ored for com-
pleting the year
of 1949 without
an accident of
any kind.

Birmingham
drivers are Leo
A. Ayotte, 551
Chapin, who has
eleven years of
safe driving to
his credit; Keith
R. Colvard, 391
So. Woodward,
six years; Ward
Decker, 1491 Brandt, two years;

Arnold N. Dewey, 844 Hazel,
twenty-one years; Gerald R. Eller,
1332 Davis, twenty-two years;
Charles Howard, 266 S. Wood-
ward, one year; Lester Mayo, 255
Orrington, two years; Harry Phil-
lips, 1423 Bird, twenty-two years;
Jesse E. Sheets, 1571 East Humph-
rey, thirteen years; Warren R.
Williams, 4907 John R. road,
thirty years; Larry Sheets, 1411
Bennaville, twenty-one years; and
Byron R. Thompson, 912 Floyd,
one year.

Halsey to Speak

Maxwell Halsey, executive sec-
retary of the Michigan Safety
Commission and C. P. Van Blank-
ensteyn, chief of Safety and Traf-
fic, Michigan State Police, spoke
at the speakers' table were Gerald
Phelan, Manager of the Detroit
Industrial Council; G. C. Bu-
chanan; Harry Reimers, Interstate
Commerce Commission; C. Mc-
Whorter, Acting Chief Enforcement
Division Michigan Public
Service Commission; Inspector
James M. Lupton, Director of
Traffic, Detroit Police Depart-
ment; Frank Purdy, District
Director Interstate Commerce
Commission, who came from Chi-
cago; E. A. Moynihan, District
Supervisor, Interstate Commerce
Commission, from Lansing; and
Miss Florence Kleib, secretary
Michigan Trucking Association.

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wise and pound-foolish can apply to home-owners who
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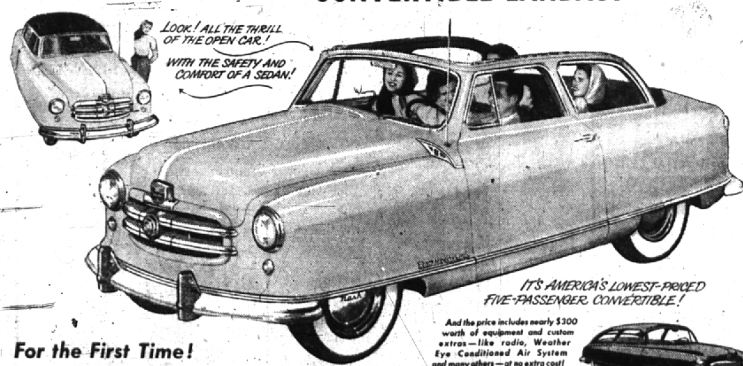
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