

Swiss Embroidery Industry

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SWISS EMBROIDERY INDUSTRY.

In spite of the intense efforts made to restore prosperity to Switzerland's erstwhile most flourishing industry, exports of embroideries declined from the unusually high figure of 425,000,000f. and 5,899 tons in 1919 to 92,500,000f. and 2,570 tons in 1929., when fresh energetic but vain measures were instituted in order to stem the downward course. In 1930 the St. Gall branch, which specializes in embroidered handkerchiefs, suffered a severe blow as a result of a further increase in the already high import duties in the United States, in consequence of which exports sank to 68,600,000f. and 1,831 tons. Last year witnessed a further decline in trade, although great hopes had been placed on the renewed popularity of "broderie anglaise," which Paris fashion experts had launched at the beginning of the year. Unfortunately, "broderie anglaise" (which was the first machine-made embroidery to be produced in the "seventies," when it supplanted Scottish hand-made embroidery) presents no technical difficulties in its manufacture, so that foreign competitors were also in a position to take advantage of its "boom" to the detriment of Swiss embroiderers.

Swiss export trade in embroideries also suffered from the political upheavals which took place in former markets, such as Russia, China, and British India. Moreover, the financial crisis in Germany and in South America and the suspension of the gold standard in Great Britain, with the consequent devaluation of the pound sterling, proved disastrous to the Swiss embroidery industry. Normally, Great Britain absorbs about one-third of the total exports of Swiss embroideries and "plumets," and embroidery exporters lost heavily on outstanding credits as well as from a decline in orders. The following comparative table shows the importance of the British market for Swiss embroideries:—

Year.	Total Exports of Swiss Embroideries.		Exports to Great Britain.	
	Tons.	Mill.Frs.	Tons.	Mill.Frs.
1919	5,899	425.3	1,040	62.1
1920	5,578	411.9	1,416	98.7
1925	3,177	132.6	762	32.5
1928	3,283	113.4	812	26.0
1929	2,670	92.5	681	22.4
1930	1,831	68.6	573	20.0
1931	1,459	52.4	568	18.8

The introduction of the new British duties is one of the greatest calamities which have befallen the Swiss embroidery industry for many years. It is alleged that since they came into operation Swiss manufacturers have not been able to obtain any fresh orders. This is not surprising, as, when taken in conjunction with the fall in sterling, the sale of Swiss embroideries on the British market will be handicapped by an increase in price amounting to from 80 to 100 per cent. The Swiss Press, whilst loudly lamenting this fact, draws attention to the large quantities of tulle and cotton fabrics which are imported annually from Great Britain for embroidery purposes, and expresses the hope that this may serve as an inducement to facilitate trade relations between the two countries.

Export Duty on Embroidery Machinery.

Considerable surprise is expressed in embroidery circles at the recent decision of the Federal Council to introduce a duty of 800f. per 100kg. on all exports of used embroidery machinery, especially as attempts had been made for some years past, quite unsuccessfully, to obtain the institution of some such measure. At the time, however, pressure had been brought to bear by certain persons who were interested in sending abroad used embroidery machinery, pantographs, and automatic shuttle-embroidery machines. It would appear that in some parts of Eastern Switzerland entire mills were shorn of their equipment, which was exported to Japan, the Vorarlberg, Czechoslovakia, Italy, &c. Moreover, a number of firms had already begun to send their machinery to Great Britain, where they intended to establish factories in order to escape the consequence of the new tariff; these firms now find themselves placed in a very awkward position, with part of their plant already in England and the rest ready prepared for shipping, as the new Federal export duties render the dispatch of these machines practically impossible, the duty of 800f. per 100kg. working out at from 84,000f. to 112,000f. for every 10 to 15 yard Saurer shuttle machine weighing from 10 to 14 tons. These machines, which are now only worth perhaps one-tenth of their original price could be obtained before the War for 17,000f. for a Saurer 10-yard machine, 21,000f. for a 15-yard machine, and 10,000f. for a pantograph.

In introducing this new duty, the Federal authorities are desirous not only of preventing the emigration of the Swiss embroidery industry, but also of protecting the interests of embroidery machine makers, who complain that in consequence of the exportation of used plant, no fresh orders are being received from abroad.

The reduction and partial destruction of embroidery plant is being carried out systematically. At the end of 1931 the number of shuttle-machines

employed in Switzerland totalled 1,872, as compared with 5,116 in 1920 and 3,489 in 1922, while hand-embroidery machines only numbered 2,450, as compared with 7,063 and 3,670 respectively.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

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PERSONAL.

The many friends of Mr. J. H. Speich will regret to hear that his father, Mr. Hermann Speich, died at Glarus (Switzerland), at the age of 81. We extend to Mr. Speich, on behalf of our readers our deepest sympathy.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Wednesday, April 6th, at 7.30 p.m. — Société de Secours Mutuels — Annual General Meeting, at 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

Saturday, April 9th, at 7 p.m. sharp. (Reception 6.30) — Swiss Club Birmingham — Dinner and Dance — at the Grand Hotel Birmingham. (Tickets 7/- each).

Tuesday, April 12th, at 8.30 — City Swiss Club — Annual General Meeting, at Pagani's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, W. The Meeting is preceded by the usual dinner which starts at 7 p.m. (See Advert.)

Saturday, May 28th, at 2.30 p.m. — Swiss Sports — at Herne Hill Athletic Grounds.

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Dimanche 3 avril 11h. — Mons Crespin.
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BAPTEME.

George Rodney Collomb, né le 28 Avril 1931, fils de George William et de Mildred Collomb, née Johnston, le 27 mars 1932.

Pour tous renseignements concernant actes pastoraux instructions religieuses, etc., prière de s'adresser à M. R. Hoffmann-de Visme, 102, Hornsey Lane, N.6. (Téléphone: Archway 1798). — Heure de réception à l'église: Mercredi de 10.30 — 12 h.

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St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.
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Sonntag, den 3. April 1932.

11 Uhr morgens, Gottesdienst und Sonntagsschule.

7 Uhr abends, Gottesdienst.

8 Uhr, Chprobe.

Dienstag, den 5. April 1932.

3 Uhr nachmittags, Nählerem im "Foyer Suisse."

Anfragen wegen Religions-bezw. Confirmandenunterricht und Amtshandlungen sind erbeten an den Pfarrer der Gemeinde. C. Th. Hahn, 43, Priory Road, Bedford Park, W.4 (Tel: Chiswick 4156).