

E. Spleiss †

Autor(en): [s.n.]

Objektyp: **Obituary**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - (1946)

Heft 1058

PDF erstellt am: **12.07.2024**

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E. SPLEISS †.

1868 — 1946.

*"Life's race well run
Life's work well done,
Life's crown well won,
Now comes rest."*

We deeply regret to announce the death of Mr. E. Spleiss, Founder of the West End Fancy Bakery Co. Ltd., which occurred on Friday,

December 13th, 1946, at Putney Hospital, S.W.15.

A long, hard, and successful life has thus come to its close. Mr. Spleiss was in the real sense of the word a self-made man, and his life story has a romance all of its own; he had encountered, in his long life, both good and bad times. During the lean years, he showed an undaunted tenacity, and a determined will to succeed, and when his ambitions reached their fulfilment, he remained humble and modest.

The long struggle made him appreciative of life's bitter fight, and all through his life-time, he showed consideration and a deep understanding for those, who, like himself, had to start from small beginnings. His generosity, his courage, and a great sense of humour endeared him to all who had the privilege of knowing him.

E. Spleiss was born on the 25th of May, 1868, at Schaffhausen, where he received his schooling. On leaving school, at the age of fifteen, he started his apprenticeship as a pastry-cook and confectioner at Neuchâtel, after which he obtained various posts, in his calling, at Zurich, Lucerne, Engelberg, Fribourg, Lausanne and Geneva. In those days young men went from place to place to seek employment, and when luck was out, such temporary lodgements as workhouses or even local Police stations were encountered.

Like so many of his compatriots, he felt the urge to leave his native land to try his luck — far from the green hills and blue lakes — in foreign lands. He packed his bundle, small as it was, and left for France. At Nice and Cannes, he worked for a time as a pastry-cook in shops and Hotels, and when the season came to an end, he travelled to Paris, the city of glamour and gaiety; but there he was unable to find employment in his particular branch, and when funds became low, he applied for and got a job as valet-de-chamber. — No sooner had he saved some money than the "Wanderlust" seized him again, and this time England was his destination.

He received his first appointment at Guildford (Surrey) in 1890, and there he met with a big surprise. Having been used, to work on the Continent, from six o'clock in the morning to nine or ten at night, including the best part of Sunday; he was awakened on the first Sunday by his new employer, who presented him with a cup of tea and told him not to get up for a while, as no work would have to

be done on the Lord's Day, and to add to his surprise he took him, later in the morning, for a ride in his horse and trap. Being so generously treated, he decided then and there that England should be his future home. But this was not yet to be; after a stay at Leicester, he decided to pay a visit to the "New World." For some time he had saved one golden sovereign per week, and when this little horde reached the sum of £60, he departed for the United States to visit the World Exhibition which was held in Chicago in the year of 1893. Slowly but surely his savings dwindled; there was no money left to return to Albion's shores, nobody wanted a pastry-cook, and thus he was obliged to accept a job as a "stable-valet," a position which he held for six months. Leaving the fraternity of the animal world, he obtained again positions at Philadelphia and New-York.

But through all his stay in the States he hankered after England, the land, where he was so generously treated, and back he came, penniless but full of hope "to make good."

Many were his jobs in leading hotels and confectioners shops, intermingled with periods of unemployment, during one of these periods his fortune dwindled down to one penny, which was spent on a pear.

Then his luck turned; whilst looking for a job, he saw outside a baker's shop at Dawes Road, Fulham, a furniture van loading up, this van he followed on foot to its destination. Back he went, and applied to the Landlord for the tenancy of the shop. When told that same was not available, he informed the proprietor of the premises, that his former tenant has left, supplying him with the address of the defaulting former occupier. This smart piece of strategy, so impressed the landlord, that he accorded him then and there a lease of twenty-one years.

So in 1903, E. Spleiss became his own master, with a capital of £3. On the recommendation of a former employer he was accorded the necessary credit to obtain raw material. In the beginning, he pushed his own little two wheel cart about the streets for delivery. Thus he plodded along with obstinate resolution until he could afford to hire an errand boy and later on other help.

Eight years later, he managed to start a second shop to which were presently added four others, whilst he had to enlarge his factory to cope with the ever increasing custom.

During these long years of incessant work, and standing in the bake-house for hour upon hour, his hip became affected, and for the last thirty years he walked lame.

In 1927, he took his son-in-law, Mr. W. Bachmann, who was formerly successfully engaged in the Silk Trade in the City, into partnership, and a new era of expansion came into being. It was at this stage that the trade name of "Kencakes" was coined and adopted. Five years later, at the age of 64, Mr. Spleiss retired from business selling his interest to his former partner; but the rest was not of long duration. On the outbreak of the last war, scarcity of labour, etc., necessitated help, and once again he returned to the field of his former activity, this time

as Manager and Bakery Adviser, in which capacity he remained, with the West End Fancy Bakery Co., Ltd., until shortly before his death.

In his younger days Mr. Spleiss was a great sportsman, he was a member of the Thames Rowing Club, where he was affectionately called "Spiky," many are the cups which adorn his home at Putney; he was also a keen walker and clever swimmer. His hobbies were reading, gardening and carpentry.

Lack of time and his infirmity prevented him from playing a prominent part in the Swiss Colony, but he took never-the-less a keen interest in the doings of the Colony. For years, he regularly attended the 1st of August celebrations, and those who heard him sing so lustily on the 1st of August this year at the Stoll Theatre, — the songs which he learned many years ago in our country — realised that at heart he remained Swiss. His wish, to see the country of his birth once again, unfortunately was frustrated by his death. He had looked forward to attend a gathering of the "Zunft zu Schmieden"

in Schaffhausen, of which he was a member and from which he was the beneficiary of a yearly "stipendium" of fifty francs.

And now the eyes which shone so brightly are closed, the hands which clasped so warmly have grown cold.

A few days before his passing the writer had the privilege to pay him a visit; lying on that bed which proved to be his death-bed, he assured him, feeling that the end was near, that he had had a fair and square deal in life, "I had a good inning, and I am satisfied," he said; how many of us can say this, and what a consolation in their grief it must be for those from whom he has now departed.

He leaves behind a widow and a daughter, who were his constant companions and helpers, with him they shared joy and sorrow, and we extend to them our deepest sympathy in their bereavement, their loss is felt by many who have known this lovable and kindly man, may God grant him Peace.

ST.

*From a small trunk _____
to the contents of a
large house*

**WE
PACK
REMOVE
SHIP
INSURE**

*everything
to and from anywhere*

●
USE

**ALLTRANSPORT
LIFTVANS**



**ALLTRANSPORT BUILDING,
LITTLE TRINITY LANE,
LONDON - - - E.C.4**

