

Ernest Steiner †

Autor(en): [s.n.]

Objektyp: **Obituary**

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

Band (Jahr): - (1953)

Heft 1207

PDF erstellt am: **13.09.2024**

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ERNEST STEINER †

*That brave old heart has ceased to beat
That noble head is laid to rest.*

It is with deep regret that we announce the passing away, on Sunday, June 14th, 1953, of Mr. Ernest Steiner, a former Manager of Messrs. Volkart Brothers, London, at the age of 77.

Not only the Swiss Colony in Great Britain, but also his many friends have suffered a great loss; we, who have known him, worked with him, and appreciated the services he had rendered so faithfully and unselfishly in various Societies and institutions will miss his wise counsel and his courtesy. The writer has, on many occasions benefitted by his advice with regard to the policy and finances of the Colony's paper, his modesty and abhorrence of any publicity did not allow me to enumerate his many kindnesses in print, but now, Ernest Steiner has left us, I wish, and feel it my duty, to express my gratitude which he so richly deserves.

* * *

Ernest Steiner was born in Pfungen, near Winterthur, on August 8th, 1876. When he reached the age of five the family moved to Winterthur, in which town he received his schooling, first at the elementary school and afterwards at the *Gymnasium*, at the latter he laid the foundation of many intimate friendships which he cherished throughout his life, especially the one with Mr. George Reinhart, who subsequently became his chief.

In 1895, he joined the well-known and reputable firm of Volkart Brothers in Winterthur, and a year later was sent to their London Branch where he remained for 1 year. Then came the transfer to the Bombay office where the foundation of a successful business career was laid. Before long,

due to hard and conscientious work coupled with a keen intelligence, he was entrusted with the management of the Seed Department. Subsequently he was promoted to the Managership of the Madras Branch of the firm where he stayed until 1914. As he told the writer, he considered the 17 years, which he spent in India, the happiest time of his life.

In 1914, Ernest Steiner, was promoted again, this time he was made Manager of the London Office, he was succeeded in Madras, by his brother the late Mr. O. Steiner. During the 32 years in which he was in charge of the London Branch, retiring in 1946, after 51 years, in which he rendered conspicuous services to the firm, which on many occasions were acknowledged by the Board.

To his staff he showed great consideration, and a deep understanding, which made him loved by all.

He was a prominent member of the Baltic Exchange, the London Commodity Exchange, the Incorporated Oil Seed Association, a past President and Hon. Treasurer of the London Oil and Tallow Traders Association, and a Director of the United Association Ltd.

In spite of his heavy professional engagements, which left him but little time for other occupations, he found time to render many valuable services to the Swiss community in London.

Ernest Steiner was Chairman of the Swiss Economic Council from 1943-1953, a Trustee and Hon. Member of the Swiss Mercantile Society, and for a number of years Vice-President of the City Swiss Club.

His home life was a happy one, and his hobby was gardening. In his younger days he was a keen horseman, and he was proud of the fact of having been a corporal in the Bombay Light Horse force.

Mr. Steiner married Martha Staehelin (who died some 17 years ago) the daughter of Colonel Staehelin of Wattwil. He leaves behind two daughters Ruth and Elizabeth, a sister in Switzerland and a brother in London (Mr. H. Steiner) also nephews and nieces amongst them Dr. R. and Dr. H. Heberlein, and Mrs. Wasmer who were all very devoted to him, and to whom we extend our deepest sympathy in their great loss.

* * *

From his retirement, Ernest Steiner, has now gone to a deeper rest, he has served his fellowmen well, and we are proud that he was a countryman of ours, he has brought honour both to his native land and to his profession.

Eventide has come, the fever of life is over, and his work done, may the Lord, in His mercy grant him safe lodging and peace.

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