

Fritz Wespi †

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LOUIS HAUSSAUER †

We deeply regret to announce the passing away, on 19th December 1960, of Mr. Louis Haussauer. He was born in Geneva in 1895. He finished his schooldays at the Ecole Professionnelle of Geneva, after which he joined a well-known Geneva firm of manufacturing jewellers, where he learnt all he could of the watchmaking and jewellery trade, working at the bench. In his leisure, he was a very keen mountaineer and skier, and several of his London friends spent happy days in his company in those far-off days, on the tops of mountains or by the ski slopes.

At the beginning of the first world-war, this luxury trade being seriously disorganised, he, like many other well-trained craftsmen, decided to come to England. He arrived in London early in 1916 and soon found work, starting a small workshop in Queen Victoria Street, with Emile Meyer, watch importers, and later on a larger one in association with Carey & Clemence.

After the war, he launched out and started importing high-class Swiss electrical apparatus; but when heavy duties were suddenly imposed in England he took the initiative to start assembling, and later on entirely manufacturing, electric water-heaters and thermostats; to-day, the factories he created — Sadia Works at Northolt and at Salisbury, Wiltshire — are many times the size of the original one, and the Company counts amongst the largest, if not the largest, of English firms producing electric water-heaters exclusively. He has constantly improved the models by taking out

new patents (he was always trying new ideas on experimental benches), and some years ago a branch factory was opened at Johannesburg for the South African trade, and another branch is now being developed in the Low Countries to serve the Common Market of Europe. At present more than 750 persons are employed.

He travelled extensively all over the world, after the war, in order to study the markets and arrange contacts; and the firm enjoys a great reputation thanks to the high quality of their production, due in no small measure to the hard and painstaking efforts of Louis Haussauer.

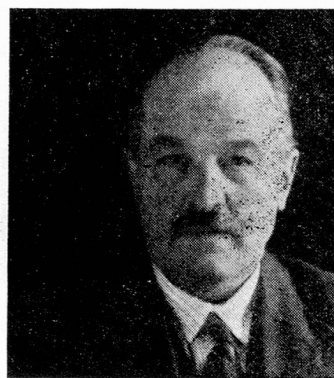
Louis was a member of the Helvetica Lodge, but since the war was not often seen in Swiss circles, due to his absorbing interests which left him little leisure. He was a very keen golfer, associated with the Sudbury golf club, which he captained for a time.

His last few years were spoiled by failing health, and he knew some time ago that doctors could not help him further; but he remained staunch in the face of adversity, and slowly and gradually retired from his normal active life. He leaves behind two sons and two daughters, and the sons are now carrying on with the help of the devoted staff of the factory.

He has shown by his example what can be achieved by hard work and perseverance, and we offer his widow and his family our deep sympathy in their great loss.

Farewell, old friend: we shall meet again when our time comes.

A.B.



FRITZ WESPI †

Another veteran of the Swiss Colony has gone from us — Mr. Fritz Wespi. We are very sorry to report that he died at his home in Potters Bar on Friday, 16th December 1960, after a prolonged illness.

Mr. Wespi was born on 18th January 1884 in Aarau, and after finishing his schooling at the Kantonsschule there he entered the Aargauische Kantonalbank as an apprentice. In 1905, like so many young men, he followed the trek abroad and went to Milan, where he worked for three years with the Banca Com-

merciale Italiana. His next ambition was to go to England, and he arrived in London in 1908, finding employment with the Bank of Athens. When the Banca Commerciale Italiana opened their London Office in 1911, he rejoined this institution and before long made a name for himself as an expert in documentary credits, and head of this department, being promoted to signature-holder in 1919. Unfortunately, the compulsory closing of the bank's London Office, after having been taken over by the Custodian of Enemy Property in 1940 owing to the war, cut short his prospects of completing his successful career there. But he soon found a new outlet for his activity and experience by joining partnership with a friend of his in the hides and skin business in the City. This venture proved very prosperous, and in 1951 Mr. Wespi decided to retire.

He was always a keen gardener, and essentially a home lover. In 1913 he married an English lady and they had two daughters, now mothers — of four and five children respectively who were a great joy to their grandparents.

In his younger days in London, Mr. Wespi joined the Swiss Mercantile Society and he and his wife were seen at many social functions of the Colony. In spite of his long residence in England and his fondness for the land of his adoption, he remained a true Swiss at heart, ever attached to his homeland.

Our deepest sympathy goes to his widow, his daughters and their families in their sad bereavement.

J.Z.



JOSEPH CHRISTEN

Some time ago Mr. Joseph Christen of 374 Euston Road, N.W.1, celebrated his 70th birthday, and we extend to him our sincere congratulations. He was born at Wolfenschiessen (Nidwalden) and received his education in Zug. At an early age Mr. Christen indulged in the sport of skiing with what then was known as a pair of "Fasstauben"; although these were

of primitive construction he nevertheless soon acquired a remarkable efficiency, which prompted him to purchase a pair of real skis, and in 1907 he became a teacher of skiing both at he Zugerberg and in Engelberg. To make a living he took up, after an apprenticeship, the position as assistant chef de cuisine at the Grand Hotel Schönfels on the Zugergerg. This did not prevent his taking up the sport of skiing more intensely, and in 1911, Mr. Christen was appointed teacher of skiing by Fritsch & Co. in Zurich. During this period he took part in many competitions. In 1913 he won the championship at the "Innerschweizerischen Ski Rennen", and successively won first prizes in the "Dauerlauf" and the slalom.

That same year, he came to London, where he intended to stay for a short time to learn English, having in his pocket an engagement as skiing teacher for the winter season at Gstaad (Bernese Oberland). This engagement came to naught, as in August 1914 he had to join his regiment for the frontier occupation. In April 1916, Mr. Christen was released from the army and returned to this country, and his job as Ski teacher came to an end. From 1917 to 1922 he occupied the post as manager at the New Corn Exchange restaurant, Mark Lane in the City, after which he became steward at the "Schweizerbund" (Swiss Club), 74 Charlotte Street, W.1, which post he held for six years. He joined the then Swiss Gymnastic Society and won many prizes at Swiss sports meetings at Herne Hill. In 1928, Mr. Christen was elected president of the "Schweizerbund" and president of the Swiss Gymnastic Society. In the same year he purchased a boarding-house which was managed by his wife, whilst he joined a commercial concern under the management of Mr. R. W. Dreyfus, and in a short time became foreman. Mr. Christen could look thus forward with confidence to a successful career. Alas — these expectations did not materialise. In May 1941, during one of the worst bombing periods, his house at 77 Charlotte Street received a direct hit and was totally destroyed. Eight people were killed, amongst them his wife, whilst he was buried under the burning débris, pinned between two walls. He was found and fortunately rescued, but badly injured, which necessitated long treatment at the University College Hospital where he was taken. After many months of suffering Mr. Christen was able to walk again, and was offered a home by his former chief, Mr. Dreyfus, until he had fully recovered. In 1946 he was offered a position as caretaker by the firm Heddon Smith, which he occupies to this day thanks to his benefactor Mr. Dreyfus.

This is the story of a man who at one time rendered good services to the Swiss Colony, and who — through the misfortunes of war — saw a promising career come to naught. He has borne his troubles with courage, great fortitude and few complaints as a real Swiss, and we wish him a comfortable and carefree eventid of his life.

ST.

CITY SWISS CLUB

A meeting for the "young" members of the City Swiss Club has been arranged for Wednesday, 25th January 1961, at 6.30 for 7 p.m. at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1.