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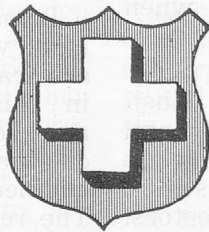
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HELVETIA

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OF THE



SWISS BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY IN
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GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

19th YEAR.

MARCH, 1956.

AUCKLAND.

OBITUARY

It is with very much regret that we have to inform our compatriots that Mr. Henri Blanchard, the former Consul for Switzerland in New Zealand, passed away in Switzerland on March 24th, 1956. It will be remembered that owing to ill health, Mr. Blanchard returned home in June of last year, and we are sad to say that his condition slowly deteriorated.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his widow and two little daughters.

NEWS OF THE COLONY

Swiss Club's Annual Picnic

Once again members of the Swiss community gathered at Te Ngute Park for the Swiss Social Club's annual picnic and sports meeting. Held in fine weather and ideal surroundings, it attracted a large attendance, including a number outside the province. There was also a sprinkling of new arrivals. A feature of the day was the display of "Kantons Fahnen" recently purchased for the club. The many competitions for young and not-so-young created a lively atmosphere. The principal event, of course, was the steinstossen, which was again won by Mr. A. Muller, of Eltham, who thus becomes the first to have his name engraved on the handsome silver cup twice. Mr. F. Gwerder, of Mangatoki, was second, and Mr. W. Unternahrer, of Wellington, was third.

Just to mention some of the competitions, there was: Nail-driving for ladies and gents, stepping the chain (all keenly contested), lively Swiss music created an air of homeliness and was generously provided by a host of willing players.

A. SCHICKER.

Centenarian Ready for Heavy Day

Probably the only person in Taranaki, if not New Zealand, who took part in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, Mr. Solomon Zinsli, Waitara East, recently celebrated his 100th birthday. He was a private in the Prussian 47th Infantry Division.

Born in Switzerland on February 28, 1856, Mr. Zinsli, better known at Waitara as "Ted," apparently acquired his taste for travel during his early service as a soldier.

After the war he spent two years in Germany as a cobbler—a trade he still follows in a casual sort of way—and then migrated to England. There he found some difficulty in overcoming the language, so he packed his bags and visited Austria, Sicily and Italy.

While working as a tourist guide at Naples, he heard of the opportunities offering in New Zealand, and in due course he arrived at Wellington on September 17, 1878.

When the Boer War broke out, Mr. Zinsli enlisted with the 1st Regiment of the New Zealand Contingent. He served in South Africa from 1900 to 1902.

When the First World War started, Mr. Zinsli tried to enlist. He lowered his age, for the benefit of the recruiting office, but unfortunately for him his wife got to hear about it and promptly put her foot down.

Mr. Zinsli had come to Taranaki in 1887, and before moving to Waitara in 1921 he lived at Waverley, Moumahaki and Eltham. He planted his roots in New Zealand, he said, because he was able to find the freedom and scope his heart desired.

Mr. Zinsli is as active as many people only half his age. It is his proud boast that he has never been inside a hospital or in a dentist's chair, and he can still read his newspaper without the aid of glasses, although he does need them when he reads at night.

As a proof of his interest in life, Mr. Zinsli joined the Clifton Lodge of the Royal and Ancient Order of Buffaloes at the age of 94 and accepted