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A. WILD †

It was with deep regret that we learned of the passing away on 11th September 1958, in Bournemouth, of Mr. A. Wild, of the Highcliff Hotel, Bournemouth, at the age of 89.

Mr. Wild was born near Basle, and was a "Stadtbürger" of Zurich. After an apprenticeship he obtained an appointment, in the early nineties, as head waiter at the Hotel St. Georges, in Interlaken, but soon the "Wanderlust" got hold of him, and we see him next as a receptionist at the Hotel Britannia, in Venice.

In 1894 he returned to Switzerland, where he obtained a post as secretary at the famous Hotel Baur-au-Lac, in Zurich. Due to his capabilities, integrity and keen sense of responsibility, he was appointed manager the same year, at the early age of 25, and this post he held for five years.

Once again the spirit of adventure took hold of the young man, and without much ado he packed his bag, this time departing for Egypt, which country at the beginning of the century was one of the most fashionable of the world's winter resorts — the playground of British, European and American Society.

In the city of Cairo, at which he arrived on 1st November 1898, to take up the post of manager at the Savoy Hotel, he really began his brilliant career. With great zeal and almost uncanny foresight, he set to work at once to improve and modernise the hotel of which he had been put in charge; so much devotion to duty had its reward, the name of the energetic young Swiss soon became known amongst the members of his profession, and his advice was sought and acted upon by his colleagues, many of whom were much riper in age and experience.

An engagement as general manager of the Nungovich Egyptian Hotels followed, comprising the following Hotels:— *Cairo*: Savoy Hotel, Grand Continental Hotel, Hotel d'Angleterre; *Pyramids*: Mena House Hotel; *Helouan*: Grand

Hotel Helouan, Hotel des Bains Suphur; *Alexandria*: Hotel Casino St. Stefano.

During the eighteen years (1898 to 1916) which the deceased spent in Egypt, this bred and born republican became "mine host" to a galaxy of crowned heads and its contingent of Princes, Dukes, Barons, Counts and hundreds if not thousands of lesser lights.

Honours of all kinds began to be showered on him; he was appointed Court Caterer during the reign of the Khedive Abbas Helmy Pasha, and received the title of Bey for his efforts in connection with the furthering of Tourism in Egypt, he became a Cavaliere of the Italian Crown, and so on.

Notwithstanding his heavy professional duties, he found time to take a keen interest in the Swiss Colony in Cairo, and for many years he was a member of the "Cercle Suisse de Caire".

Unfortunately, towards the end of 1915 his wife's health began to fail, and on medical advice it became necessary to seek a different climate; in 1916 Mr. and Mrs. Wild left Cairo and came to London.

His first venture in this great Metropolis was the purchase of the Hotel Petragrad, in North Audley Street, in partnership with Mr. Montague Gluckstein (the chairman of Lyons Company) and Mr. Lionel Asprey.

During the First World-War this Hotel was commandeered as a Canadian Hospital, and in 1919 Mr. Wild acquired the Royal Court Hotel, Sloane Square, S.E.1, which establishment he at once began to improve. The Royal Court Hotel was in fact one of the first Hotels to have hot and cold water installed in all rooms. It is now managed by his son, Mr. R. Wild.

In 1943 control of the Highcliff Hotel in Bournemouth was bought, which, after complete renovation and modernising, was opened three years later, and is to-day one of the most up-to-date establishments in this fashionable health resort.

The deceased is survived by his widow and two sons, to whom we extend our sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

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OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Our next issue will be published on Friday, 13th March 1959. We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donation over and above their subscription: A. J. Gomiero, H. Knapp, H. E. Messmer, J. D. Bernoulli, Mrs. C. Schaerer, E. P. Banderet, J. A. Donat, A. C. Boller, E. Rognon, R. R. Schmid, Mrs. M. Zimmermann, A. C. Stahelin, F. E. Brunner, Mrs. L. C. West, B. O. Cogliatti, W. Tschuy, E. F. Schwenter, Fred Blaser.

LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY.

A report of the Annual Luncheon which took place on Saturday, 14th February 1959, will appear in our next issue.