

KELLER, THE OWNER OF CANOE PLACE INN

Noted Restaurateur Dies— Proprietor of Maxim's During the Prohibition Era

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

SOUTHAMPTON, L. I., Feb. 26

—Julius Keller, proprietor of Canoe Place Inn, Hampton Bays, L. I., who was well known as a New York restaurateur for many years, died in Southampton Hospital today. His age was 81.

Born in Switzerland, Mr. Keller came to this country at the age of 16, started as a waiter and rose to be the owner of Maxim's and other places that now are practically legendary.

In 193 he wrote a book, "Inns and Outs," which was published by Putnam's. It was an autobiographical sketch of his career, in the big money and out. He told of having been captain of waiters at Delmonico's when a man who owed the place \$1,500 entered. Mr. Keller served the guest half a meal and then gave him a blank check to sign. The guest paid.

Another of Mr. Keller's stories concerned the days when he had no money. He went on the bread line which Julius Fleischman operated near Grace Church and received a square meal. Later, when he had "made his pile," and was about to go to Europe, he met Mr. Fleischman, and was his host at dinner, but never mentioned the bread-line incident.

In the book Mr. Keller admitted frankly that during prohibition days he had "strung along" with many of the top-flight rum-runners, as well as many of the old-time politicians, with whom his cafes were popular.

In 1920, when he was president and treasurer of Maxim's, then at 108 West Thirty-eighth Street, Mr. Keller was found guilty of violating the prohibition law and sentenced to jail. Before he began serving the term, however, the sentence was reversed. He was known to many as "the father of cafe society," and also was reputed to have been one of the first to introduce the gigolo, or male dancing partner, to this country. One of his original male dancing partners, he said in his book, was the late Rudolph Valentino.

Mr. Keller was prominent as a speaker for the Restaurant, Hotel, Club and Allied Industries Association in its drive in 1932 for the repeal of prohibition. He was a Democrat.

In 1935 he was elected president of the Hampton Bays National Bank. He had been proprietor of Canoe Place Inn for many years.

He leaves a widow, Mrs. Mollie Roache Keller, and a son, Henry.