

THE EUROPEAN CORNER

A CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT
EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF EUGEN SANDOW

DAVID WEBSTER

Ed Note: This chronological list of the significant events in the life of Eugen Sandow was compiled by David Webster with the assistance of Biagio Filizola of Italy. We are greatly indebted to them for their persistence in trying to pin down the crucial dates in Sandow's life. B. T. White of England also cooperated in this study.

1867 2nd April: Sandow born in Konigsberg, Prussia.

1877 Visited Italy with father and was inspired by statues in the galleries there.

1882 Joined a travelling circus as an acrobat.

1884 Circus became bankrupt; Sandow stranded in Brussels.

1885 Began studying anatomy and physical culture. (I believe Sandow started gymnastics, etc. earlier and that he put the commencing age of 18 to enhance the image of earlier weaknesses and the efficiency of his own training methods. I base this view on his development and facial appearance in his earliest physique poses.)

1886 Met Louis Durlacher (Attila) and became his assistant.

1887 Visited Professor Edmund Desbonnet's gym in Lille, France.

1887 Adopted the stage name Sandow.

1889 Sandow in Italy. Attila in London.

1886-1889 During this period various well related incidents took place in Belgium and Holland. His visits to Attila in London, then to France and Italy were in these years. In Italy he beat all opposing wrestlers, including those in a match in which he had three opponents. One of these was Bartoletti, a name which has cropped up several times in my research over the years. Winning this match as well as the others made Sandow very famous and he was well written up in the press. Emperor Frederick William was in San Remo at this time and wanted to see this subject of his who was causing such a stir. Hence the Royal Command performance. Date likely to be 1889.

1889 September/October: Met Aubrey Hunt, artist. Posed for him as a Gladiator then departed for Britain. Hunt's painting of

Sandow was, much later, purchased by Joe Weider, USA. It hangs in Weider's building in Woodland Hills.

1889 28th October: Arrived in London at 6 AM. He said that he jumped Sampson's stage at the Westminster Aquarium that same night. My research casts doubt on this. He beat Cyclops.

1889 2nd November: Beat Samson at same theatre. The wager was never paid to Sandow. Then commenced a three month engagement at the Alhambra, London. He then had a short holiday in Germany where he booked Karl Westphal who took the stage name Goliath.

1890 February-May: A three month tour of the provinces followed immediately. Then came a tour of the largest towns such as Birmingham and at Henglers Circus in Liverpool. Return to London. Appeared at Holbom Music Hall with Goliath (Westphal).

1890 November: Court case against Landlord Brackenbury.

1890 10th December: While appearing at Holborn Music Hall he had a match with Hercules McCann. He also appeared at the Palace Theatre after his first provincial tour.

1891 28th January: Sandow's record-breaking spree to beat McCann's lifts. Appeared at London Pavilion with Loris.

1891 February: F. W. Pomeroy, noted sculptor, made the original Sandow statuette.

1891 Spring: Appearances at Birmingham and with Henglers Circus in Liverpool. Moved into Curative Physical Culture with seances for medics. Opened his first institute of Physical Culture.

1892 Continued success. Finished the year at Waverly Market Carnival in Edinburgh.

1892 December: Designed exercises for the British Army. The earliest records I can find of the introduction of Sandow's exercises for the British Army is in this month when on the 12th of December Surgeon-Major Deane of the medical staff of the Royal Military Academy delivered an important lecture with Sandow's assistance. Colonel Fox of the P.T. School, Aldershot, was another great supporter. Lived at 2a Hyde Park Mansions, London. Made patent application.

1893 April: Appeared at the Palace Theatre.

1893 June: Sandow opened at the Casino, New York He arrived in America only two weeks earlier. He later went on to the Tremont Theatre, Boston (where he was examined by Dr. Dudley Allen Sargent), and then went to Chicago for the World's Fair (World's Columbian Exposition), appearing at the Trocadero for Florenz Ziegfeld. A lot of his time was spent at this venue, also known as the Academy of Music. Made one of the first movies for the inventor Thomas Edison. Filmed by W. K. L. Dickson.

1894 Publication in Britain of *Sandow's System of Physical Training*.

1894 May: Wrestled with a lion in San Francisco.

1894-1896 Extensive tours of Canada and America.

1895 October 7th: "Sandow's Farewell" Opening at Chicago Auditorium for the season 1895-96. Then immediately after the Auditorium he went directly to the Academy ("Emphatically Sandow's Farewell").

1896 Sandow returned to Britain. Resided for a time in Manchester. Also at 32 St. James St., London. According to an original letter in my possession he charged L2-2/- for a physical culture consultation at this time. This was several weeks' wages for an ordinary working man. He developed a new act, then returned to America for a second time to fulfill a few outstanding engagements.

1897 Publication of *Strength and How to Obtain it*.

1897 Composed a musical march "Marche des Athletes" and a waltz "Sandownia."

1897 British appearances but now devoting much more time to commercial projects including: publishing, Sandow's Schools of Physical Culture, endorsements of products, consulting, postal courses, etc.

1898 February: Jumped Saxons' stage at Grand Music Hall, Sheffield.

1898 While in America collapsed with nervous exhaustion, caused by his very heavy schedule over the years. Returned to Britain and at Manchester married Blanche Brooks, daughter of Warwick Brooks, a photographer

who captured many of Sandow's poses.

1898 Started publication work on his magazine.

1899 Started a campaign for social reform.

1900 Sandow's Schools of Physical Culture. Sandow had five schools in London and others in Manchester and Liverpool. The main one was at 32 St. James St., Piccadilly. Here it cost Ten Guineas for three months' tuition, two lessons weekly. It was managed by his brother-in-law. There was a more down-market gym at 115a Ebury St., at L3- 10/- ditto. Others at 10, 11 & 12 Walbrook E.C., 185 Tottenham Court Rd., W.C. and even at the Crystal Palace. All except his St. James headquarters were closed by 1915. Sandow Ltd., operated from Victoria Embankment London, W.C. and Sandow's own Combined Developer Co. was at 17-18 Basinghall St. London E.C.

1901 Performed at the Tivoli, London

1901 1st August: Court case with Saxons. Sandow won.

1901 14th September: Albert Hall, London. Finals of great physique contest. Plaster cast made on suggestion of Prof. Lankester. Exhibited at the National History Museum in London.

1902 15th June: Embarked at Marseilles.

1902 11th July: Arrived at Freemantle, Australia. Appeared at the Theatre Royal, Perth. Made visits to fire brigades, police, etc. Growing social conscience.

1902 11th August: Sailed from Freemantle to Adelaide.

1902 15th August: Arrived Adelaide.

Appeared at the Tivoli Theatre privately for journalists.

1902 September onwards: Bendigo, Victoria, Ballarat, Melbourne, Newcastle, Sydney, Brisbane. Returned to Sydney and then to New Zealand.

1902 17th November: Arrived Auckland, then went on to New Plymouth, Stratford, Napier, Christchurch, Dunedin etc. Visited India, South Africa and the Straits Settlements.

1901-1902 Royal Scottish Commission set up in 1901, and he was on tours of inspection etc.

1906 Resided in Manchester. Applied for British naturalization, Accepted. Moved to 61 Holland Park Ave. Notting Hill, W., his London address until his death.

1907 Insured his life for L25,000. The Sandow Co., previously run at a loss, now made a profit of L7,300.

1908 Company profit increased to around L15,000.

1908 Contributed L1,500 sponsorship for Olympic Games in London.

1909 Gave L1,000 to Lord Esher's social campaign.

1910 Corset division added to me Sandow Company.

1911 Having previously been personal physical training instructor to King Edward VII, Sandow was now appointed Professor of Scientific Physical Culture to King George V. Dr. M. E. A. Wallis, consultant to Sandow's Curative Institute was struck off the medical register. Factory for Sandow's Health and Strength Cocoa opened at 5-21 New Kent Road, London SE. (closed by 1916).

1912 Litigation regarding use of "Health & Strength" title for Sandow's Cocoa.

1913 Work commenced building Sandow's cocoa factory at Hayes, Middlesex.

1914 Litigation regarding Sandow's trademark by an actress used in a corset advertisement.

1914 Sandow's Company lost money. A. W. Gamage, Chairman, resigned.

1914-1918 The World War put an end to most entertainment and leisure activities in Europe. It was particularly difficult for Sandow, having been a Prussian and still speaking with a German accent. The fact that he was a naturalized citizen did not help much. There were rumors that he had been locked in the Tower, and when these were proved false another rumor went around that he was a spy and a homosexual. The war, wiping out a generation of young men, took away many in their teens and twenties, his main market for bodybuilding.

1915 Litigation regarding allegations that Sandow's cocoa was made in Germany.

1915 Company in financial difficulties.

1916 Compulsory liquidation of Sandow Ltd., liabilities L20,438.

1917 Cocoa factory renamed Hayes Cocoa Co. Ltd.

1919 Compulsory winding up of Cocoa Co. Sandow ceased appearing in public. I cannot find any mention of his act being done after the war.

1919 Publication of his book *Life is Movement*.

1923 Earle Liederman secured Sandow's endorsement of the Liederman System of bodybuilding.

1925 14th October: After three weeks illness and attended by Sir Thomas Horder, Sandow died in London. Cause of death: aortic aneurysm.

1925 12th December: Auction notice.

1925 31st December: Will/Estate published.

Regarding his daughters' ages, a book published in 1915 gives Helen's age as 8 and Lorraine's as 18 months. Therefore birth-dates would be circa. 1907 and 1913. On the other hand, a photo of "Baby Sandow" was published in Sandow's magazine of 1901. This ties in better with the pictures of Lorraine at the age of 15 used in a book published in 1919. She would have to have been born before 1904 as the pictures had to be taken some time before publication. Curiously, by marriage, Helen became Mrs. Strong.

This list is not by any means exhaustive. Other dates and references are in my new book, *Sons of Samson*, now awaiting publication. However, I would welcome any corrections and additions; these may be sent to me at 43 West Rd., Irvine KA 12 8RE Scotland.



Sandow, with his travelling troupe and Florenz Ziegfeld in San Francisco—1893.