

# Col. Elliott W. Springs Dies In

## New York

### Textile Leader Dies Of Cancer

Col. Elliott White Springs, colorful textile executive of Ft. Mill, died today in a New York hospital where he had been a patient for about three weeks. He was 63.

Col. Springs, president of the Springs Cotton Mills and Springs Mills Inc., which operates mills in Fort Mill, Lancaster, Chester and Kershaw, died of cancer of the pancreas at Memorial Hospital in New York City.

He had undergone surgery for the malignant condition in Charlotte Memorial Hospital several weeks ago.

Col. Springs, who also won distinction as a World War I air ace and short story writer, is survived by his wife, Frances Ley Springs; a daughter, Mrs. H. W. Close and seven grandchildren. A son, Leroy, was killed May 12, 1946, in a glider accident near Lancaster.

Cremation will be in New York and memorial services will be held in Ft. Mill at a later date. The family requests that in lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be sent to the Marion Sims Memorial Hospital at Lancaster or Memorial Hospital in New York.

In addition to his position with the Springs Cotton Mills and Springs Mills Inc., Col. Springs also headed a number of other organizations. Among them are the Bank of Lancaster and the Kana-whah Insurance Co., both of Lancaster.

Col. Elliott White Springs was born at Lancaster July 31, 1896, the son of Leroy and Grace Allison (White) Springs. His father founded the Springs organization and he increased its holdings tremendously.

He graduated from Culver Military Academy in 1913 and received his A. B. degree from Princeton University in 1917, at the start of World War I.

He received his LL.D. degree from the University of South Carolina in 1949.

Upon graduation from Princeton, he enlisted in the armed services

as a private, aviation section and entered training at Oxford University.

He advanced from private to sergeant, to lieutenant, to flight commander, to squadron commander, to captain. He served with the 85th Squadron, R.F.C. and 148th Squadron, U. S. A. S.

He was officially credited with destroying 11 enemy planes. He was decorated with the D. S. C., Distinguished Flying Cross (British) and Medal of Honor.

In 1919 he became test pilot for L.W.F. Airplane Co., and flew the first cross-country airplane race from New York to Toronto. He was made a Lieutenant Colonel in 1942 and assigned as Executive Officer in charge of the Charlotte Air Base. He retired in 1942 from active flying.

As an industrialist, he began his business career late in 1919 as a cotton weigher. He became Secretary - Treasurer of Kershaw Mills in 1920 and has been President since 1931.

Col. Springs was also well known as an author, having written such books as "Nocturne Militaire" (1927); "Leave Me With a Smile" (1928); "Above the Bright Blue Sky" (1928); "Contact" (1930); "In the Cool of the Evening" (1930); "The Rise and Fall of Carol Hanks" (1931); "Pent-Up and Penthouse" (1931); "War Birds and Ladybirds" (1931) and "Clothes Make the Man" (1948).

Col. Springs was considered one of the leading civic leaders of South Carolina. He has built many recreational facilities for his employees in each of the towns where he had a plant, including swim-

ming pools, golf courses and recreation buildings. He also built a summer vacation camp, Spring-maid Beach at Myrtle Beach for his employees.

He was president of the Marion Sims Memorial Hospital; Member of Quiet Birdmen; National Aeronautical Association, Reserve Officers Association, Authors League of America; Dramatist's Guild and American Legion. He was a Presbyterian, a Democrat and Mason. He belonged to the Players Club, Racquet and Tennis Club and Princeton Club of New York.

Evening Herald, Rock Hill

Thursday, Oct. 15, 1959



Industrialist . .



. . Writer . .



. . Benefactor

Col. Springs Was Man Of Many Facets

## Won Fame In Many Fields

Air Ace.

Writer.

Creator of controversial advertising.

Industrialist.

Benefactor.

Col. Elliott White Springs was all of these — and more.

Col. Springs, who died today in a New York hospital, is probably best known as head of Springs Mills Inc. He took over leadership of the Springs organization in the 1930's and expanded it to the point where it grossed \$163,000,000 in the 1957-58 fiscal year.

However, being a leading industrialist was only one facet in the colorful life of Col. Springs.

As a pilot in France in World War I, he was credited with shooting down 11 enemy planes, ranking behind only Eddie Rickenbacker and Frank Luke as the United States' leading air ace.

As a writer, he produced nine novels and many short stories.

Springs turned his creative writing talents to the advertising campaign for his fabrics and his provocative copy and illustrations spread the brand name "Spring-maid" across the nation. In one sense, his advertising campaign was an attack on the advertising industry itself.

His irrepressible, tongue-in-cheek advertising was a satire belittling deodorant, cosmetic, lin-

gerie, perfume and many other advertisements.

The ads created a furore. Letters poured in by the stacks, some praising him for turning a 'spotlight on high pressure salesmanship and others denouncing him for taste and moral outlook.

The colonel's distaste for the conventional was manifest too in the general office he built at Fort Mill, S.C., for Springs Mills. The revolutionary design featured windows tilted downward to reduce glare — an idea he got from the dirigible Hindenburg — a massive conference table mechanized to disappear into the floor when not needed, push button controls for radio, TV and recording sets.

Springs' private railroad, the Lancaster and Chester, has more distinguished vice presidents than it did track. The line is 28.9 miles long and there are 30 vice presidents, including such personalities as stripper Gypsy Rose Lee and golfing immortal Bobby Jones.

During World War I, Springs served in France with the Royal Flying Corps. He became one of the first U.S. aces.

When he returned from the wars, Springs turned to fiction. He produced two novels about aviation, "War Birds," and "The Contact." He also was the author of several works on flying which were serialized in the 1920s by

Liberty Magazine.

But Springs' father, Col. Leroy Springs, persuaded him to give up fiction and come into the Springs textile operations, which was quite large even then.

Springs Mills now include seven plants, hiring 12,000 workers, none of them unionized.

In 1957-58, Springs Mills were described by Fortune magazine as first in profits, percentage-wise, among all textile producers in the nation, of which Springs Mills ranked seventh. The corporation was 248th in a list of the 500 largest corporations in the nation. Gross sales for that fiscal year amounted to \$163,000,000.

Springs Mills operates spinning plants at Chester, Fort Mill, Kershaw and Lancaster, S.C., and a finishing plant near Lancaster.

Springs was a non-conformist in textile circles. His plants were leaders in increasing salaries of workers and the organization constructed many projects, such as recreational facilities, devoted to the welfare of the workers.

A spokesman for Springs Mills said it had not been decided whether the mills will suspend operations because of the death.