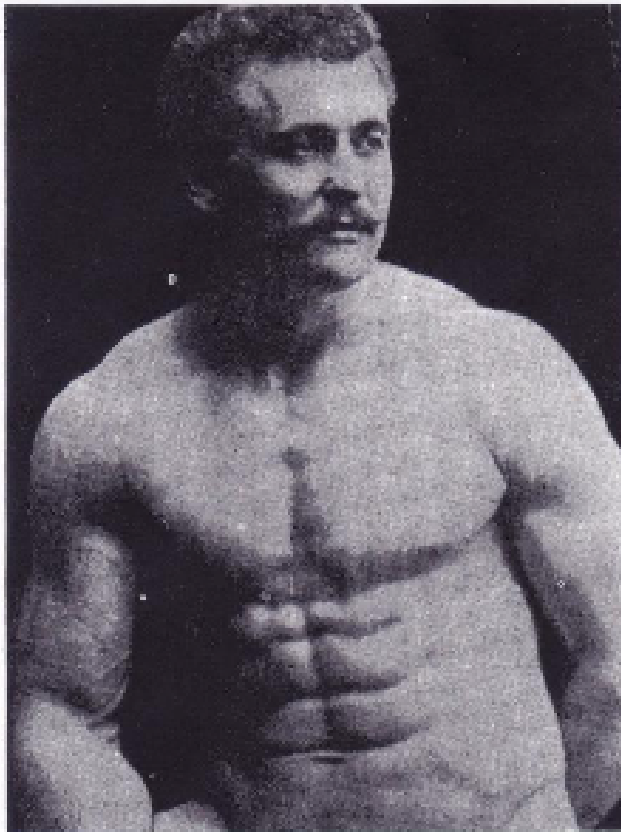


Photo of the famous plaster cast of Eugen Sandow in London's South Kensington Natural History Museum, taken by the author just after the Mr. Universe contest of 1948. See text and learn the true facts about Sandow's measurements. Some say they were smaller than claimed.

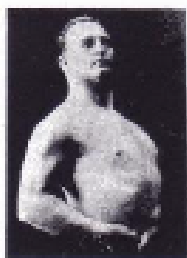


"No man has ever equalled him for physical beauty and colossal good looks" says author. Above photo was taken in Sandow's prime.



# memoirs

BY TROMP VAN DIGGELEN



■ When I first met the great Eugen Sandow I was very young, in fact only 11 years old. It so happened that I was really weak as a child and when I was nine years old I was laid low by double pneumonia and pleurisy for the THIRD time. At that period we lived in a very dusty little town called Johannesburg (it is now known the world over as "The City of Gold") and when I had recovered sufficiently to be sent away I

was taken to Bowdon in England to a special school for weak children. My mother left me there and returned to Johannesburg. So frail was I that I was examined each week by a doctor and my condition was cabled to Johannesburg to my parents!!! When I was 11 my chest was still in a miserable state and my whole physique was poor. My mother came to England and was shocked when she saw me.

Next morning she told me that she had made arrangements to take me to see Sandow. Having no knowledge of such things at that time I had no idea at all as to who or what Sandow was and imagined he was just another doctor. Well the interview still lingers in my memory and I can still remember how impressed I was with the photos of Sandow hanging on the walls. The thought of being strong

had never even entered my mind at that stage of my life, I was only too glad to be alive at all and when the English school-boys amused themselves by rubbing the weak Boer boy's nose in the snow I just had to "take it" for I had no knowledge of how to defend myself. Sandow advised one of his rubber wall-exercisers and I remember how he said that its use would soon make my poor body into a strong one. A year later I was as weak as ever for I did not like pulling those rubber strands and so I just left the whole idea alone until I, another year later, formulated by *own* ideas of Physical Culture with the result that I at the age of 13 was able to thrash many of the boys who had taken a delight in knocking me about when I was a weakling. When I was 14 my mother was so pleased with me that she decided to take me to the great man who had been my inspiration. Although I had never used the wall exerciser, Sandow was my ideal and I would stand and gaze at his photos in shop windows until I was absolutely fascinated. Sandow, of course, did not recognize us when we were shown in but when he got a clerk to look up his file on my case he was simply astounded. I was quite honest and told him that I had used my own ideas in regard to training. He said:—"I admire enterprise in such a young boy, I advise you to keep on as you have been doing and I want to see you now and then as I am interested." When I saw Sandow again a year (Continued on page 78)