

1876-1951

Camillus Digest

Our Village of Camillus	1
My First Winter in Camillus	7
I Remember When	9
Let's Play Mumblety-Peg	11
Camillus Goes to Congress	13
Wisdom of the Founder	14
Profit-Sharing Trust Keeps Growing	16
The Camillus Spirit	19
Production Patriots	21
To Market, to Market!	25
Sweet Are the Uses of Technology	28
American Ideals	32
Some Folks Say	33
The Adventure of a Library	34
Unforgettable Character	
THE STORY OF ADOLPH KASTOR	37
The First Lesson	<i>Inside Back Cover</i>

OCTOBER 1951

75 YEARS OF SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE



CAMILLUS DIGEST

OCTOBER 1951

Published by CAMILLUS CUTLERY COMPANY, Camillus, N. Y., on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the company by Adolph Kastor.

Edited by ALFRED LIEF. *Sketches by* ZOLA.

CAMILLUS CUTLERY COMPANY

ALFRED B. KASTOR, *Chairman of the Board*

RALPH H. TATE, *President*

WILLIAM D. WALLACE, *Executive Vice President*

STANLEY S. SMITH, *Vice President of Production*

JOSEPH P. LOWE, *Vice President of Purchasing*

W. DEAN WALLACE, *Vice President of Engineering*

SYLVAN GOTSHAL, *Secretary*

JOHN M. LEWIS, *Treasurer*

LEWIS A. PINKUSOHN, JR., *Assistant Secretary*

WALTER E. LANG, *Assistant Treasurer*

C. T. FULLER, JR., *Sales Manager*

CHARLES B. H. PARKER, *Advertising Manager*

Entire contents copyright 1951 by Camillus Cutlery Company

Printed in the U. S. A. by Columbia University Press

Typographic design by Melvin Loos

*The Indians Ran Away—
A Roman General Moved In*

Our Village of Camillus



THE INDIANS were here first. Onondagas—members of the Iroquois League—they were at peace with the Mohawks, Cayugas, Oneidas, and Senecas. With fixed villages along the valley, they farmed the rich earth, cultivated fruit orchards, and hunted. Very likely, Onondaga hunters stalked deer to the edge of the creek that still flows through this community.

When the American Revolution came, the Indians of Central New York took sides. They had been used to taking sides in the earlier struggles between the French and the British. Now they joined with British soldiers and Loyalists in making guerilla raids on the patriots. In the fierce fighting that followed, the patriotic American forces triumphed. The Indians, put to rout, fled to Canada to live with other Iroquois.

The region they vacated was soon designated as the Military Tract, set

aside by the state legislature for division among veterans of the Revolution, families of slain patriots, and other settlers. The size of the individual grant depended on the rank of the soldier, a captain being entitled to 300 acres.

In laying out this tract, the surveyor-general of the state marked off 25 townships in 1799 and sprinkled the names of ancient Roman generals on the map, according to his fancy. Hence such names as Marcellus, Manlius, Brutus, Junius, and Camillus.

Happily for us, Marcus Furius Camillus came down through history with a good reputation. *Plutarch's Lives* relates that he saved Rome from falling to the Gauls (in the third century B. C.) and did not abuse his office of "dictator," which he held at five different times. In the days of the Roman Republic, a dictator was the man chosen by the

senate in an emergency to serve as supreme general and chief magistrate. Plutarch thought well of him.

The settlers thought well of the township. They were not concerned with antiquity; they were striking out for a new life. The name Camillus had a pleasant sound but, more to the purpose, the rolling, wooded land was covered with loam and clay and invited the planting of wheat. In this series of hills and dales the newcomers made their clearings, built their houses, furrowed their soil.

Nature was kind also in providing the creek, for running water was a source of mechanical power. Winding through the town, it lay at this point nine miles distant from Onondaga Hollow and nine miles from Josiah Buck's farmstead. Inevitably the local folk called the stream Nine Mile Creek.

On the east bank they set up a saw mill and cut up the maple and oak timber. On the opposite bank a grist mill was built in 1806 by Squire David Munro, a local dignitary, with other enterprising men, to produce flour for the neighboring farmers.

Difficulties beset the farmers in marketing surplus produce. The roads were in poor shape to let loaded wagons pass, although in winter the wheat was drawn to Albany by sleigh. Squire Munro got busy. With his sons he constructed a harder road across the township, continuing the Genesee Turnpike, and as a return on their investment they collected tolls from the users.

Stage coaches rolled in from Buffalo and Albany, announcing their approach by a blast of the horn as the horses reached the top of the hill before their descent on Water Street, where the business life of the village was centered. By 1820 activity here was quite lively. A dam had been built south of the bridge that spanned the creek, thereby increasing the water power. More mills were erected. One of them made plaster from gypsum found in the locality; others ground grain or carded and spun wool from locally-raised sheep.

THE two sides of the creek north of the bridge presented a picture of thriving village industry such as existed all over rural America at this time. Business opportunities in Camillus attracted a number of outsiders, among them being Gaylord N. Sherwood, who came in 1826 to set himself up as a merchant. In the words of his memoirs, he "sold goods on the corner."

The demand for store goods grew with the advancing prosperity of Camillus. But progress did not come naturally; it was planned. A canal, diverting waters of the creek, was constructed parallel to it by the Nine Mile Creek Canal Association in 1832. Twenty feet wide, it had a mill-race two and a half miles long. And a few years later this became a feeder for the Erie Canal. The village was now an important shipping center, farmers from nearby towns bringing their produce here to be towed on "packets" to the world outside.

Storekeeper Sherwood was obliged to make as many as two trips a year to New York City to buy a stock of dry goods. The merchandise would arrive on the first barge in the spring and the last one in the fall. A horse-drawn railroad in 1838, extending from Syracuse, eight miles to the east, and as far as Auburn on the west, passed through Camillus; but the canal did most of the business. Some years later, the antiquated turnpike needing improvement, the Camillus & Syracuse Plank Road Company was formed, and wagons trundled over planks to the county seat.

After Camillus became an incorporated village in 1852, Mr. Sherwood won the honor of being elected its first president. The population had risen to 750. This heyday was brief, however. A combination of forces conspired to suppress further growth. Now steam railroads across the state outrivalled the canal. Wheat farmers faced the competition of large-scale producers on the Western prairies after the Civil War. And local industries declined as the factory system entrenched itself in cities.

A brave effort to keep step with the age of steam power had been made when Weston & Dill opened the Novelty Steam Mills in 1848. They selected the site between the creek and the feeder canal just north of the bridge. In a single building they installed one engine for flouring and another for sawing. The saw-mill operation was soon given up,

and the small engine used for this purpose was shifted to an annex of the flour mill to run a grain elevator. But the business lasted only a few years.

AFTER a period of idleness, the building was converted into a distillery in 1855. This new enterprise did not last long either, for reasons unknown. An attempt was made to reconvert it, but the Munro Flouring Mill on the creek retained such business as remained. Munro later sold out to Globe Mills, which in time gave way to Patterson & Sisson, who announced in 1883 the opening of the first complete roller mill in Central New York. Meanwhile the population had shrunk to less than 500.

Patterson & Sisson held on for some time, observing the changes that occurred on the site of the old Novelty. There, in the shadow of a large elm tree, a new industry was introduced, based on the supply of maple wood. It was a chair factory, three stories high, erected in 1886 by Pratt & Rowe, who gave employment to 40 hands.

Fire broke out and destroyed the chair factory. Edward D. Sherwood, Camillus-born son of Gaylord, decided to rebuild it in 1888, and with his own son John he did a flourishing business in chairs—until the end of the following year, when another fire swept it to the ground.

All through the latter era of industrial effort, the countryside was busy with hard-working farmers who had turned from wheat to bar-

ley, oats, tobacco, potatoes, and hay; to apple growing and dairying. The Auburn branch of the New York Central Railroad transported their crops. Much milk was shipped to Syracuse. Clover, grown on a limestone ridge, fostered a successful bee-keeping farm.

Country life in the 1890s had a gentle charm and neighborliness. Social life centered in the churches. Little traveling was done. The buggy was a symbol of the slow trot toward a world of change as season followed season and the children grew up, and many of them left home for the city in quest of work. Autumn brought yellow crowns to the maple trees along Main Street and strewed brown leaves on the walks.

With the coming of spring 1894, the villagers saw promise of a new help to the community. The roller mills had merely seven employees, and the only other industry was Keefer's Knitting Mills, a steam plant producing mittens and caps in small quantity. But now, on the

chair-factory site which had been empty more than five years, Charles E. Sherwood, another son of Gaylord, began to put up a building. It was to be a knife works.

Charles Sherwood had a brother-in-law, Denton E. Bingham, who was trained in the cutlery art of Sheffield, England, with recent experience in Connecticut. More craftsmen would be brought into Camillus, and Mr. Bingham would superintend the plant. By July the one-story frame building was ready for action. Freshly painted white, it stood behind the elm tree. Although the elm has since been removed to make way for the widening of the highway, the structure still stands.

In October, 1894, the knife works shipped out their first order—30 dozen pocketknives—to Hamilton & Mathews in Rochester, N. Y. No electricity was used in those days; the power was steam. Nor were there many machines. Cutlery of the old school was almost wholly hand work.



The knife factory and its 20 men did not prosper. The tariff rates of 1890, intended to stimulate domestic manufacture, were lowered in 1894. Camillus was unable to compete with the knives imported from Sheffield.

Mr. Sherwood agreed in 1896 to lease his plant to another Rochester customer, Robeson Cutlery Company, and to remain as manager. It was during this occupancy, in 1897, that the tariff on steel manufactures was raised to new protective heights. But Camillus did not long enjoy the benefits, for the next year Robeson moved over to Perry, N. Y., on that town's offer of a plant free of charge.

For a time the knife works in Camillus were closed. After reopening it, Mr. Sherwood continued—so he recorded—"with varying success." And this was doubly discouraging, for the American market was hungry for goods.

The leading cutlery importers of the country, Adolph Kastor & Bros., of New York, had placed some orders here but could not get as much merchandise as they desired. They contracted with Mr. Sherwood to lease the factory with a view to stepping up its production, and left him in charge. Adolph Kastor envisioned expansion and obtained the privilege of erecting additional buildings in the rear and raising the original building another story. Finally, in 1902, he bought out the business for spot cash.

From then on, history records steady growth.

The village saw a modern industrial enterprise take form, create employment, and contribute wealth to the community. By skillful management, introduction of machinery, and engineering, Camillus Cutlery Company was able to employ 200 persons by 1910 and turn out 75,248 dozen knives that year. The long-established sales organization of Adolph Kastor & Bros. marketed all that the factory could produce—and asked for more.

By practising the golden rule with its employees, the company developed a democratic, loyal body of workers. New manufacturing techniques increased the value of each worker's production and this in turn enabled the company to increase wages.

As the output of the cutlery grew, it gained importance in the economic life of the community. Most of the wage-earners of the village (present population 1,300) are employed at the factory, and most of the factory's personnel (total 450) are local people. Generations of the same family have belonged to the Camillus Cutlery family. Today many husbands and wives work here together. At 11.30 a.m. some of the women leave their work to go home and prepare a hot meal that will be ready for their husbands when the lunch-hour siren blows.

THERE ARE many "one-factory towns" in the United States, but the situation here is unique. Camillus

Cutlery Company, while it represents the only successful attempt to establish an industry here, is simply a citizen—a good citizen, mindful of its obligations and generous in its contributions to village improvement, fire protection, recreation facilities, the high school, and the library.

The village is governed by a board consisting of the mayor and two trustees. They serve for two years.

They make up the budget, subject to approval of the taxpayers at open meeting. Appraisal records are copied from the town records, furnishing the basis for assessments. The tax-raising powers of the board are closely restricted, so that most of the large appropriations must be approved at special elections.

Camillus has a tradition of democracy. Camillus is a reflection of the best that is in America.



America's Future Growth

THE GREAT AMERICA for which we long is unattainable unless individuality of communities becomes far more highly developed and becomes a common American phenomenon. For a century our growth has come through natural expansion and the increase of the functions of the federal government. The growth of the future—at least of the immediate future—must be in quality and spiritual value. And that can come only through concentrated, intensified strivings of smaller groups.

The field for special effort should now be the state, the city, the village—and each should be led to seek to excel in something peculiar to it. If ideals are developed locally, the national ones will come pretty near taking care of themselves.

Justice Louis D. Brandeis in *The Brandeis Guide to the Modern World* (Little, Brown & Co.), copyright 1941 by Alfred Lief

Where Were You the Winter of 1917-18?

My First Winter in Camillus

By William D. Wallace

I REMEMBER well the winter of 1917-18. Snow had fallen the day before Thanksgiving, and it didn't melt until April. In that era it was customary to jack up your car for the winter. Only sleighs and sleds moved over the state highway. You could snowshoe to the trolley car line about two miles south of the village, but you'd take a chance on freezing while waiting for the trolley's doubtful arrival.

To go shopping in the city required hours of travel. A New York Central train out of Camillus station, due at 10.30 a.m., usually arrived an hour or two late. A train was scheduled to leave Syracuse at 3.30 p.m. and another at 5.30 p.m., but you usually took the earlier one, which could fairly well be depended on to leave by 6 o'clock. Sometimes you thought you were on the later train but found it was the 3.30—leaving late, as usual.

I remember the local telephone service of that time with a great deal of appreciation. The switchboard, in the owner's home, was manned by a very reliable and well-informed lady. No matter if you couldn't reach your party by phone; a message given to her was as good as talking to your party direct.

Many people did not bother looking up numbers. They asked by name. As she always knew where everyone should be at a given time you would inquire, when the connection was made, where your party was talking from.

This "hello girl" gave the community a service which can never be replaced. In an emergency she would seek aid from neighbors, who would scurry out to golf courses, fishing camps, and places even more remote to reach those who were needed.

Many a humorist has described how party-line subscribers, listening

in on conversations, have turned private calls into social functions. I know this for a fact, that when a local woman phoned her physician one night for medical advice, the doctor answered: "Now if all you other ladies will get off the line, I'll tell Mrs. Blank what to do."

* * *

I remember the summer of 1922, when Camillus was headlined as having been washed off the map. On vacation at the time, for the fishing at Thousand Islands, I opened the Sunday paper and saw the startling story. A freak storm had hit this area. Tons of water had torn down our hills, forming ravines, washing out concrete drainage ditches, and

"BILL" WALLACE was born in Palatka, Florida, on Aug. 27, 1891, the son of Rev. W. S. and Susie (Dortch) Wallace. Graduated in civil engineering from Norwich University, Northfield, Vermont, he received his master's degree from Norwich in 1914 and worked for Consolidated Gas Co. in New York City as engineer of production. He came to Camillus on Nov. 1, 1917, as assistant manager of the factory; acting manager, 1921; manager, 1922. Vice president for many years, he was elected in 1950 as executive vice president in charge of production.—Married Miriam Hallett of Astoria, Long Island, in 1916. Children: William Dean Wallace, present engineer and vice president of C.C.C.; Robert B. Wallace, doctor of medicine; Sally Albrow Murray.

rolling boulders down into the village. Tons of silt covered our streets.

After putting in a telephone call, I was reassured that Camillus had suffered no real permanent damage and the factory had not been touched.

* * *

And I remember the spring of 1924, when Camillus was buried under a 40-inch snowstorm. No traffic moved over the railroad or highways for days. The village ran out of necessities.

M. J. O'Hara organized a group of shovelers and hired a plow from Syracuse. It took about 24 hours to open the main road. Every male employee of Camillus Cutlery Company reported for work with a shovel on his shoulder, and we opened up Main Street as far as the coal bins. Soon we had the factory wheels turning even though we weren't sure if there was enough to eat.



It Turned Out to Be Boloney

Genesee Street, Camillus, was once a plank road. Later it was paved with cobblestones. There was a time when it might even have had a trolley line like the one which ran through Tuscarora from Syracuse. Surveyors once came into town for this purpose and took their sights. Their survey ran through the butcher shop and right across the end of a bologna. They promptly sliced off the piece, took it away, and were never heard from again.

I Remember When

Recollections of Employees with Long Memories

The Merry Grind. In the old days the grinders came over from Germany. They wore wooden shoes, not only at work but also at bowling in the Club House. One day Moritz Meyer, who was then plant manager, found the whole crew of grinders there; they had escaped the factory grounds by taking a board off the fence. He could not persuade them back to work until he bought them a half-barrel of beer.

The work-week was 59 hours. Mondays were really blue. Small wonder that the hose which piped water into the grinding room water-barrel was seized upon to wash the cobwebs out of one's head. One Monday morning Gabor Nagy (now a foreman) picked up the hose, squirted another worker, and ran out of the room. The other fellow waited for him by the door, ready with a pail of water. As soon as the door opened, this injured party heaved to. Only it wasn't Nagy. It was Mr. Tillman, the factory superintendent, that walked in.

Speaking of horseplay, some of the grinding room boys once caught a cat. Everyone liked *haasenspeffer*, and so these Katzenjammer Kids made a stew of the cat and served it

up as *haasenspeffer*. They didn't let on until two days later. It was too late to do anything about it except to give the imps a good thrashing.

* * *

Gay Blades. One of the purposes of the Club House was to serve as a dormitory. For seven dollars a week a man got his room and board. (This was in 1910.) The place was a great social center, and when a dance was held there it was necessary to put props under the building to make it safe for the crowds that attended.

Costume balls and masquerades took place frequently. A fellow named Zimmerman, lover of pomp and circumstance, never failed to come onto the dance floor riding a horse.

Zimmerman was president of an exclusive 10-man club called the Rup-ti-up. When the treasurer's report was rendered, it would appear that there was not enough money left which Zimmerman could use to buy himself a drink. This was an honor due him—and it was still due. Out of respect for his office, members would call for Zimmerman at his house (at 2 or 3 a.m.) to convey him to a meeting. They wheeled him in state—in a wheelbarrow.

More Cut-Ups. The grinders did all the work on the blades by hand, after the hardening, and delivered them to the cutlers, who made the knives by matching the covers and scales and doing the straightening.

The cutlers used to send a boy to the Club House each morning and afternoon to fetch beer. Summertime lunches were another outlet for the men's high spirits. After the meal, those who had brought watermelons and those who had brought oranges divided into two groups, and at a given signal the missiles flew. Of course, the contest between watermelon rinds and orange peels was an unequal one, and sometimes an innocent bystander thought so too.

The cutlers had a sideline. As their windows faced the creek, they hung fishing poles outside. Sometimes they spotted a watersnake, and tried to spear it with files.

There was a day when Bill Wallace, Stanley Smith, and others fished in the canal for knives. A truck, bringing knives from an assembly plant that the company had in an old mill building on Elm St., backed up abruptly and dumped the load into the water. This fishing was done with rakes.

Social Items. Paul Grah used to have a boat on the canal and take folks for a ride—as many as 17 trusting passengers Harry Zust played infield on the baseball team Gus Kuepper was one of the boys who came in a minute late from a ball game after lunch. Moritz Meyer angrily sent them back to finish their game Paul Forgan did a handstand on the water tub (90 ft. elevation). This acrobat also bet that he would dive off the railing of the bridge into the canal (3 ft. deep), and he did it with his clothes on

Every time Sonny Bishop was caught sitting down, apparently asleep, he had a ready excuse: He was thinking, he said, and that was work too John Stanislav, Sr., used to stand on Nilo Miori's toes so that Nilo couldn't walk away while John was bawling him out. Nilo was just a kid then, getting 12 cents an hour, and thought he was worth 13 cents.

And not so long ago, the foremen's party at Eric Maus' Camp. Apparently Bill Wallace got the platter too full and the steaks were dumped into the lake. That's what a cutlery man calls tempered steak.



The Knife Is Mightier Than the Pen

DESCRIBING his work methods, Frank Yerby, the brilliant novelist who wrote *The Foxes of Harrow*, said: "It is my contention that a really great novel is made with a knife and not a pen. A novelist must have the intestinal fortitude to cut out even the most brilliant passage so long as it doesn't advance the story."

Let's Play Mumblety-Peg



OR do you call it mumblety-peg? It's an ancient game, and the name has experienced many changes since it first appeared in English literature in 1627 as *mumble the pegge*.

By any other name it's just as sweet, because the essential thing about this game is that it is played with a pocketknife. In some parts of Scotland, our learned friends tell us, it's even called *knife*. Once upon a time people played it with a fork. We're certainly glad that this undesirable way of life was abandoned.

A pocketknife is essential equipment for a growing boy, and one of the first things he does with it is to learn to play the game. As the late

Henry van Dyke, American poet and essayist, remarked when reminiscing about his own happy boyhood: "Those mysterious and irresistible forces which produce tops at one season, kites at another, and bind all boyish hearts to play mumble-the-peg at the due time more certainly than the stars are bound to their orbits."

The rules, nimbly picked up from older brothers and playmates, are followed scrupulously from one generation to another, just as the chant of a girl bouncing a ball on the sidewalk echoes the words her mother used to rattle off.

The chief thing is that each player takes turns in throwing the knife

"from a series of positions in such a way as to make the blade stick to the ground." All dictionaries and encyclopedias are agreed on this. The blade is said to stick if the handle is "two fingers" from the turf. We prefer the measurement mentioned in 1899 by *Young Folks Cyclopædia of Games and Sports*, in which each player is described as having a pocketknife and "any knife shall be judged to be in the ground when the handle of another knife can be held under it without touching it." Naturally, we have an eye for business.

Better still, *Games and Songs of American Children*, published in 1884, calls mumblety-peg "this game of boys and girls." (Italics ours.)

Now we come to the peg part. The player who fails to complete the series of positions pays the penalty of mumbling (a bit of Old English, meaning biting), or pulling out of the ground with his teeth, a peg which has been driven in by the others with three blows with the handle of a knife. Hard blows, of course.

The positions from which the knife is cast are numerous: from the back of the hand, from the palm—repeated with left hand—from the right fist, the left fist, from each finger of each hand, from head, from chin, from toe, knee, chest (Tony Chestnut), from each ear, with arms

crossed, and so on. You can play a short game or a long one with 22 positions, ending with O-U-T.

Different localities observe different flourishes and may vary the order of the throws. In some places picturesque terms are used. We like Pennies, Around the Horn, Shave the Barber, Lady Dives, and Johnny Jump the Fence.

It all adds up to mumblety-peg, whether Huckleberry Finn and his pals play it or characters in Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street*. The origin of the game goes back to the days before pocketknives, when the object thrown was a sharpened stick. But it's a good thing the pocketknife was invented!

How About a New One for Christmas?

"A boy is a magical creature," says Alan Beck, whose famous tribute *What Is a Boy?* was reprinted in THE READER'S DIGEST and re-echoed on the radio. "Nobody else can cram into one pocket a rusty knife, a half-eaten apple, three feet of string, an empty Bull Durham sack, two gumdrops, six cents, a slingshot, a chunk of unknown substance, and a genuine supersonic code ring with a secret compartment."

CAMILLUS GOES TO Congress

Extract from tariff hearings before U. S. Senate Committee on Finance, March 2, 1951. Testimony of Robert N. Kastor

The Chairman (Senator Walter F. George, of Georgia): You are leaving all these samples with us?

Mr. Kastor: I am.

The Chairman: For keeps?

Mr. Kastor: Why not, sir? I would like them discussed on the floor of the Senate.

The Chairman: They might think we were somewhat belligerent if we carried all these knives around.

Senator Eugene D. Millikin (of Colorado): Whatever happened to the barlow knife?

Mr. Kastor: We still make them, sir . . . I think that Senator George will know more about the barlow

pocketknife . . . Beck & Gregg Hardware Co. [Atlanta] sells them down South.

The Chairman: Oh, yes, I know about them . . . The last barlow that I had, I think, was made of tin.

Mr. Kastor: Then it could not have been ours. Beck & Gregg sell a lot of our barlows in your territory, Nos. 10 and 11. And I think, if you would ask Mr. Parker, the president of the company, he would tell you that we turn out a fine barlow knife.

The Chairman: Bob Parker?

Mr. Kastor: Yes.

The Chairman: Yes, sir; I know he would, but he sells them, you see.

ROBERT N. KASTOR, treasurer and sales manager of Camillus Cutlery Company from Jan. 1, 1941, to May 31, 1951, came into the business in the fall of 1913 after graduation from Harvard. Born in New York City on May 8, 1892, he acquired his preliminary education at Sachs Collegiate Institute and Phillips Academy. From Harvard he received a Bachelor of Arts degree *cum laude* in government, economics, and history, completing the regular four-year course in three years.

He continued with the company until the spring of 1917, served in the infantry during World War I, and was honorably discharged as a captain. Back on the job, from 1919 to 1929 he made buying trips abroad and annual selling trips to the Middle West and the South.

R. N. K.'s interest in finance led him to Wall Street. As a partner of a stock brokerage firm, he became a member of the New York Stock Exchange, retaining his seat (inactively) while performing his duties at C. C. C. in 1941-51. He is again active on the Exchange.

WISDOM OF THE FOUNDER

Culled from the family correspondence of Adolph Kastor

Business in general is neither a gold mine nor an oil well, but a steady grind of slow accumulation. It takes many years to develop business on a profitable basis.

* * *

When I say "steady grind" I simply mean close application to business affairs. My experience has proved that it is not necessary to start early in the morning and work late at night but to have a fixed moderate number of hours to attend to your business. In this way it will be a healthy proceeding without exhausting one's energies. I am against night work—always have been—and always was in favor of keeping all the holidays, whether national, state, or religious.

* * *

The main thing in business is to keep the running expenses down to a low ebb so that the merchandise offered need not carry too much overhead and expense. Thus it can be offered reasonably to the trade. The house that can do the business with the least expense is the one that will ultimately succeed better than its competitors.

* * *

It is always well to adopt a definite policy. Fair treatment of your customers will always be appreciated. A steadfast policy in the matter of prices will cause less trouble. Personally, I am in favor of list prices on all articles and in giving small trade the minimum discount and the large trade the maximum discount.

With reference to correspondence with the trade, if any disagreeable matters turn up, it is best not to answer the letter immediately but to wait for calmer moments, as you will then get the best result.

* * *

Put people you employ in the places for which they are fitted.

* * *

When you place responsibility on people they usually are careful to carry it.

* * *

I ascribe the success of the business to the general tendency of all those engaged in it to work in harmony to get results. Ours is no exception to the rule. Individually, there were often disagreements, but these were quickly forgotten and lost sight of by the larger problems to be solved—problems concerning the general welfare.

* * *

It is always best not to allow the interest rate to tempt one to invest in an enterprise or security, but to keep in mind the safety of the principal.

* * *

Never take seriously a man in business who blows about the credit he gets from manufacturers, merchants, or banks. It is not a solid footing.

* * *

In the nature of the world's evolution, the future belongs to the young. While we are here we can give them our advice, and that is all we can do. The sooner we put the responsibility where it belongs and the sooner we realize that the older element has to have men who will be trained up alongside them to help them do the work, the better for all concerned.

* * *

I feel confident that if we follow the dictates of our hearts as we have done for so many years, we surely cannot come out wrong.

*When It's Raining Violets
There'll Be a Cool Million*

THE PROFIT-SHARING TRUST KEEPS GROWING

It won't be long before calendars for 1953 are printed up. Time has a way of fleeting. When you get your copy of that calendar, put a red ring around May 31, for this date will mark the lapse of a year after the last payment into the Camillus Cutlery Company Employees' Profit-Sharing Trust Fund—and the beginning of the period when employees collect.

More than a million dollars has accumulated in this fund. That's a heap of saving. The money belongs jointly to the workers who have shared the effort to create the profits. And these men and women will share the money in proportion to the effort they made.

The fund is being held in trust for the participating employees by the trustee, Bank of the Manhattan Company, under the plan authorized by the United States Treasury Department. It is "untouchable" until the official hour, for it was intended for a rainy day.

The weather man can't predict how much rain will fall after May

31, 1953, or whether you will still be basking in the sunshine of happy days. But within the three months that follow, the trustee will write out checks for each participating Camillus worker according to the sum registered to his or her credit. This will be the start of 10 annual distributions. That's how the Treasury wanted it to be done. Otherwise, much of the money would have gone to that famous personality, the Collector of Internal Revenue, as taxes.

Here's how it started. We were in the midst of World War II. The government put a freeze on wages. The company wanted to grant wage increases, but as this was forbidden, the board of directors sought a way to provide extra money for the employees. A way seemed possible under the Internal Revenue Code—hedged in, however, by strict requirements.

After much careful planning and many conferences with Revenue officials—with the object of securing the greatest possible benefits for the employees—the details of the trust

were finally approved by the Treasury. It was one of the very first such profit-sharing trusts to win government approval and to begin functioning.

News that the Camillus workers' trust had been established came as a pleasant surprise on Armistice Day, 1944, when Alfred B. Kastor, chairman of the board, announced it at a gathering of the personnel between factory shifts. He informed the meeting that the directors had already paid into the fund a contribution of \$100,000 for the fiscal year ended May 31, 1943, and another of \$110,750 for the year ended May 31, 1944.

"It is a living instrument," he said. "I hope all of you will be the beneficiaries."

Mr. Kastor looked ahead to the completion of 10 years of substantial contributions.

"In formulating this trust, your company is carrying out the principle of the Golden Rule," he added. "In all humility, we have tried to follow this rule these many years in our dealings with you Camillus men and women."

For the third year the company contributed \$215,000.

Camillus Cutlery Company has been the sole contributor to the trust fund. This contrasts with the pension plans of many other companies, under which labor and management both shoulder the cost.

Year after year, additional sums were turned over to the trustee in safekeeping for the participating em-

ployees. The money was a percentage of the company's gross profits, fixed in accordance with Treasury regulations, and the profits resulted, of course, from the combined efforts of all departments. It was the daily work of the people in the executive, sales, engineering, production, and shipping divisions of the business, dovetailed and interlocked, that brought about these fruits.

As the years slid by, and as the volume of sales varied, and the control of costs was exercised, profits were sometimes greater, sometimes smaller. The ups and downs were reflected in the contributions of \$90,871 for 1946, \$260,272 for 1947, \$180,291 for 1948, \$60,966 for 1949, \$8,177 for 1950, and \$141,352 for 1951. We have a few months more to go before another fiscal year closes—time in which to strive with greater efficiency for greater profits and another healthy contribution to the fund.

The existing accumulation, invested and reinvested by the trustee, is accurately apportioned among the participating employees in the form of credits for each one. A credit is calculated in terms of his or her percentage of each year's total payroll. In other words, the figure reflects exactly the employee's portion of the effort exerted to produce the year's profits.

Simple arithmetic, simple logic, simple justice to all.

These credits, added up for 10 years, will determine the final division of the trust fund.

Meanwhile, in administering the fund, the trustee has already paid off credits and earnings on the credits to employees who reached the age of 65 and continued in the company's service. Such workers have also been collecting their subsequent annual shares without waiting for the cutting of the melon. This, too, is simple justice in recognition of advancing age.

The trustee has also paid off employees who have retired, and the heirs of deceased employees; and persons whose credits were \$300 or less (because of their short service) at the time their employment ended.

Payments made so far in these several categories have amounted to \$286,245.23. At this writing, the fund has a total balance of \$897,050.

The company's final contribution will be made with the closing of the

fiscal year in 1952. Then, under the terms of the trust, a year will elapse. Within 90 days after May 31, 1953, the trustee will begin to distribute the credits belonging to the employees.

IN THE first distribution, employees will collect one-tenth of their credits. In 1954, they will collect one-ninth of the balance of their credits. The next year, one-eighth; the next, one-seventh, and so on, until 1962, when all of the remainder in each one's account will be paid off, and the trust will cease.

Meanwhile, the fund is growing. Its principal and its earnings are carefully safeguarded under law. The assets are being held by the trustee for all the participating employees—for their sole benefit and enjoyment.

Unforgettable Gift

GEORGE GIBSON, Chicago paper manufacturer, rang the doorbell of the Calvary Episcopal Church parsonage in Conshohocken, Pa., and asked to see the rector. Gibson wanted to thank him for a box sent by members of the church 70 years ago to a nine-year-old boy. "I was that boy," he said. "In the box, among other things, was a new suit, a quarter, and a penknife."

—Associated Press Dispatch, Oct. 22, 1947

THE CAMILLUS SPIRIT

"Surely the hope of the world is liberalism in thought and action. Anything that tends to constrain the tenor of man's freedom of thought is subversive of cultural progress and enlightenment."—ALFRED B. KASTOR.

A MATURE philosophy of democracy marks the thinking of A. B. K. It is the man. In his private life and his business life, one code suffices for the head of this enterprise. Applied to relations with the members of the Camillus family, it means that their safety, their health, and their prosperity come first.

He has been on the job a long time. "I started to work on Oct. 1, 1906, and have been at it ever since. My first week's salary was five dollars." If you smile, he'll quickly tell you, "Five dollars went further in those days than it does now."

He was 17 years old then. Opened the office before 8 a.m.; ended the day at 6 p.m. Between those hours he learned a good deal about the cutlery importing business. And when the company undertook pocketknife

manufacturing, he grasped these intricacies too.

By 1912 A. B. K. had become a partner in Adolph Kastor & Bros. and treasurer of Camillus Cutlery Company. In April, 1918, he was on his way to France, a member of Company F, 308th Infantry, 77th Division. Two months later he was promoted to the rank of sergeant, and within four days his commanding officer sized him up as a good mess sergeant. He took part in the offensives in the Oise-Aisne and Meuse-Argonne sectors.

On receiving an honorable discharge in May, 1919, he resumed his life's work of helping to build up the company. In this period his energies, plans, and successes were interwoven with those of his father, who in 1927 relinquished active management of the business to him.

President of Camillus Cutlery Company the next year, A. B. K. was elected chairman of the board in 1944, when Adolph Kastor became chairman emeritus.

The year 1946 witnessed the presentation of gold service pins to 224 employees who had given from 10 to 40 or more years of their lives to the strengthening of the company that in turn provided their livelihood.

As Alfred B. Kastor completed 40 years' service, the board of directors noted the anniversary in this letter of appreciation:

"There are a number of businesses in the United States larger than Camillus; many, many are smaller. The statement may be made, however, that nowhere in this country is there a business organization which has a finer record for integrity, financial stability, progress, and personnel relations between executives and employees of the friendliest and highest order.

"These things do not happen automatically. They are always the result of thinking and leadership of one or more men and, in the case of Camillus, what might be called the 'Kastor tradition' is the heart and core of its success.

"This business was founded by your father. He it was who set the original standards. It is certain he would be proud to admit that in

carrying on where he left off, you have attained even a greater measure of accomplishment and meritorious achievement.

"Every executive and employee, every individual associated in any way with Camillus, can be proud of its fine war record; can be proud of the careful and constructive manner in which reconversion was accomplished; can be proud of the manner in which the company is now facing the postwar era.

"To you, on your fortieth anniversary of service to Camillus, the directors send their sincere congratulations and express the feeling that with you as the chief and leader, the ensuing years cannot help but be years of prosperity and further accomplishment."

Five years more have rolled on. The hopes and predictions have been realized.

Serving with A. B. K. for 40 years or more, are eight other men on the 1951 roster. With records of 30 to 40 years, there are 28 men and women. Seventy-six others have been with Camillus for 20 to 30 years, and in the 10-to-20-year bracket the number is 102.

Seventy-two percent of the personnel today have been here for at least five years. They like the Camillus spirit of democracy, and those folks who are relatively newcomers have caught it too.



Triumphs of World War II

PRODUCTION PATRIOTS



THE WAR WAS ON. The Marine Corps ordered a seven-inch fighting knife with a heavy butt and a threaded nut. Camillus Cutlery Company did not approve of the government specifications, and said so.

But we had our orders to proceed. The need was critical. Our first delivery of 18,000 passed inspection. And then something happened. One of these heavy knives fell on a concrete floor and the butt broke.

Alfred B. Kastor insisted that all fighting knives be returned to the factory before any could be shipped to the field for service.

Meanwhile our engineers had been working on a redesign. They came up with a stronger and more practical weapon, capable of digging a fox hole and even chopping kindling. They devised a new method of making the handle, with leather washers milled to fit the hand for a good grip.

The authorities gave our new design their O.K. Production was quickly resumed—sped up by origi-

nal methods of manufacture. New dies were designed so that the blade was blanked from narrower steel strips and many thousands of pounds of steel were saved. The company voluntarily reduced the price to the government.

★ ★ ★

ONE DAY Marine Private Fulmed, a resident of Syracuse on furlough, visited the front office and told how he and his comrades in close fighting on Saipan had made good use of Camillus knives fitted into their rifle barrels. Unwrapping a package, he showed his knife to the pleased audience as evidence that it was still in good condition. The handle had never loosened. It had never needed repair.

This was one of the 1,955,024 fighting and utility knives made by Camillus for the armed forces during World War II.

★ ★ ★

WE WERE called upon to make folding machetes for the Asiatic emergency kit supplied to the Army

Air Corps. Here again Camillus went beyond the original specifications and added operations of heat treatment to the lock.

"Tell Mr. Wallace that one of his knives saved my skin once."

This news came from Marine Captain John P. Salmon, a hero of Guadalcanal, in a letter to his father, whose electrical firm in Syracuse did work for our plant. The young captain and his men, charging the enemy at Mantaniku River, were counterattacked with swords and bayonets. What saved his life was a Camillus stiletto.

This weapon—another stranger to a pocketknife factory—was at first ordered as a duplicate of the British Commando knife. But we reproduced it with a much simpler construction, maintaining the exact balance and dimensions, and succeeded in reducing its cost by half.

★ ★ ★

SPEAKING of life-saving, the harrowing experience of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, adrift with his companions in the South Pacific, led to the adoption of our fishing knives (247,380 of them) as part of more ample equipment of life rafts. And the Maritime Commission and Merchant Marine adopted our sailor knife, with its single large sailor blade (698,020).

The greatest wartime production at Camillus, however, was in Army and Navy general utility pocketknives. They were indispensable

equipment for the man in uniform. For a year before Pearl Harbor, sensing the possibility of United States participation in the war, we prepared ourselves to help America prepare. We supplied the Navy with jack knives.

In the course of the war there was steady production on them, bringing the total to 1,711,012. Besides these, we furnished 2,564,220 four-blade Navy and Coast Guard knives including a screwdriver-caplifter and a can opener. And 38,146 Navy marlin spike knives.

All divisions of the Army kept demanding production. For the Engineers we made 3,282,988 tool knives containing a punch tool among others. The Signal Corps, along with the Navy and other forces, received 2,183,136 electricians' knives from us with lock screwdrivers. Three-blade utility knives for the Army Air Corps totaled 1,042,040.

The Quartermaster called for bread knives, butcher knives, paring knives, spatulas. We responded with 855,472 of these items.

★ ★ ★

IT TOOK a heap of manufacturing to produce this enormous output. It took planning, resourcefulness, loyalty—and good humor in those hectic years.

Forced schedules had to be met. Difficulties were faced in procuring supplies of raw materials, in charting production, breaking bottlenecks, and training new personnel. Ingenuity was exercised in undertaking

On the Fighting Front

RALPH H. TATE, president of the company since November, 1949, is a retired Regular Army Officer. He went overseas as a colonel early in World War II and returned as a brigadier general.

He spent 30 years in the Army, starting as a private in World War I at the age of 18. After the Armistice, too young to retain the lieutenantcy he had won, he went back to his home town of Owosso, Mich., to work for a sugar firm until 1920. Then he passed an examination for a commission in the Regular Army, becoming a second lieutenant.

For many years he was attached to the Chemical Warfare Service, stationed at Edgewood Arsenal, in Hawaii, and in the Philippines. In 1938 he was called to the War Department General Staff in Washington. Two years later he served as aide to Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy. Taking part in the 1942 invasion of North

Africa, he advanced into Italy with Gen. Mark Clark. He was chief of supply of the Fifth Army and later had charge of supplying the Fifteenth Army Group in Italy.

Brig. Gen. Tate won the Distinguished Service Medal twice and was also awarded the Legion of Merit. He holds the French Legion of Honor and Croix de Guerre with palm, and the medal of Commander of the British Empire, among other honors received from Allied governments.

Retiring from military service in 1947, Mr. Tate became vice president of United Distillers of America. He joined Camillus Cutlery Company in April, 1949, as a vice president and was subsequently elected president.

Married his home-town sweetheart, Marguerite L. Gaylord, in 1920. Children: Ralph H. Tate, Jr., Air Force major; Beverly Anne Bruce; Gaylord M. Tate, musical director.

★ ★ ★

new products and creating new techniques.

All knives had to be kept within the exceedingly close tolerances of the government's specifications. This meant building new dies and fixtures, new grinding machines. It required special skills. We set up an inspection system providing 100 percent inspection of every article.

As the war effort reached a peak early in 1945, the War Production Board declared that the military demands for knives were so high, and the shortage of manpower in the

knife industry so acute, that the number of knives available to cattlemen, fishermen, mechanics, carpenters, and other civilian users must be further limited. "Knives are vital equipment for bomber crews, ski troopers, sailors, and signalmen." The great offensive had begun.

Camillus made a perfect record on deliveries.

THE men and women on the job were industrial defenders of freedom. They backed up the 117 Camillus employees who had gone into the

armed forces and the millions of others in service whom they supplied with essential knives.

"It is the work of your hands that has given American soldiers from Alaska to Australia, from Britain to Buna, from the Solomons to Sicily, the knives they need for fighting."

The speaker was Lieut. Col. Roswell P. Rosengren, representing the Army and the Navy at a gathering of the Camillus family in their recreation hall on August 17, 1943. First he told them of his student days at Colgate, in the neighboring Chenango Valley, when he came to know Camillus Hill. "I then owned a pocketknife, since lost, which was the product of your skilled workers."

He was proud, now, "of the greater privilege of revisiting Camillus and the Camillus Cutlery Company on this momentous occasion."

The occasion was the honoring of the heroes of the production line in this village.

In presenting the Army-Navy "E" Award flag to the management and

employees of the company, Lieut. Col. Rosengren declared that this award was a recognition by "your government, the people of the United States, that you of Camillus Cutlery have been elected to receive this civilian Distinguished Service Cross for your service 'above and beyond the call of duty.'"

We were the first in the industry to win it and one of the few firms in the entire land so honored so early.

"E" stood for excellence. Spurred on to further accomplishment, our people won a star for their flag on March 4, 1944, and another on October 21 of that year, as symbols of continued excellence. And a third star was added on August 18, 1945, acknowledging the final exertion of effort to achieve victory.

This is our war story—in part. What is missing are the personal sacrifices, the individual strivings and satisfactions, which woven together form the fabric of American patriotism.



To Market, To Market!

THE HAFTER, who takes care that both ends of the knives are rounded, fine-glazed, and blended into the linings, might raise his eyebrows if someone told him he was a member of the company's sales department. But that's what he is, like the men in the front office who do direct selling.

Good appearance in a knife catches the customer's eye and helps make the sale. High quality put into blades and assembly gives assurance that the customer will stay satisfied. It is the work of all the departments, together, that builds the reputation of Camillus merchandise. In other words, when a cutler makes a knife "walk and talk," he is providing talking points for the salesman.

The fact is, in any manufacturing business every worker is a co-worker—on one and the same job. The job is to produce the best possible goods in competition for the sales volume needed to run the plant. Here price also enters and emphasizes the reason for operating with economy.

Actually the division of a company into departments is an artificial one. There is no separation. There are simply specialized tasks for each person, assigned individually as a matter of efficiency like positions on a baseball team.

Just as the manager of a team is part of it, so management and labor constitute a unit, and false distinctions are idle. We're all out to play the game—and win the game with a sales victory.

It takes basic thinking to plan how best to market your merchandise. The country's economic conditions, today and tomorrow, must be considered. Trends in consumer demand must be studied. In round-robin conferences of the executives, problems are analyzed and ideas are sparked.

Long before World War II ended, the planners thought of ways of switching from war production to civilian production without interruption of factory work. It was an exciting thing to watch them at these meetings; they enjoyed thinking. They had a program mapped out when the time came.

Indeed, the initial steps had already been taken to carry out the program, involving concentration on a shorter line to speed output to the peacetime market. A new catalog was ready three months after V-J Day.

This marked the beginning of a new merchandising policy. No longer was the sales objective merely to get the goods to the jobber. It went further. The jobber must be helped

in supplying the dealer, and the dealer must be helped in reaching the public.

Fundamental to this purpose was the decision to make the name Camillus more widely known. Sword Brand was dropped. Camillus Brand was adopted, and the hardware trade was made familiar with it through trade journal advertising.

For sales appeal and dealer convenience, a new style of packaging was introduced. Each knife was wrapped in a cellophane tube, instead of opaque paper, and thus became visible, avoiding excessive handling by the public and the possibility of tarnish and rust. Six knives of a given pattern were packed to the box. The box design was novel, with a cut-out window at one end of the top section revealing the imprint of the pattern number and picture (on the exposed end of the bottom section) of the knives in a particular box. Though box tops might be switched in the course of a transaction, this would cause no mixup in numbers, as the number remained with the knives.

The next dealer-aid devised to make selling easier was display cases for store counters. Handsome in design, of bleached oak, the case permitted the point-of-sale presentation of 24 knives in two rows against a bright red panel background, with a curved front of transparent plastic. Here was an array for the customer's choice: the large blade of each knife opened for his delight.

As an extra help in retailing—and a space saver—shelves in the back of the case held the dealer's stock of Camillus knives; there was room for 24 dozen. The customer simply indicated his heart's desire; the dealer easily found the box with the right pattern number; the merchandise was readily in the customer's hands.

Simplified selling at the retail level was thus instituted. But it was not all. People should walk into a hardware or sporting goods store and say, "Camillus."

To popularize the name with the public, a consumer advertising campaign was launched in 14 national magazines, acquainting the readers with the virtues of cutlery craftsmanship and instilling in them a longing for the possession of a fine Camillus knife.

These sales promotion plans would have missed fire, despite the keen thinking and expenditure of advertising money, if the individual operator in the factory did not believe in quality and in the personal benefits to be derived from maintaining standards. The skill was there. The will was there. The vision was encouraged.

Salesforce members addressed meetings of production employees to give them a preview of the campaign and a look-ahead to the establishment of a wider, more stable market for goods carrying the brand name of our factory, our town. These meetings stemmed from a desire on the part of the employees to be kept informed of the workings of the busi-

ness as a whole. The response of the men and women to the public's requirement of quality was quick. It sprang from the friendly understanding which is a rooted tradition in this valley.

How well the coordination worked was evidenced by the continuing large volume of sales, and specifically by a poll taken of hardware dealers by *Popular Mechanics Magazine*. Dealers in all sections of the country were asked to report on consumer preference. Replies from 1,005 dealers, compiled by the Statistical Tabulating Company of Chicago, showed that the pocketknife brand name most frequently requested of them by their patrons was Camillus. Twenty-three brands were listed. Camillus topped them all by receiving 33.8 percent of the vote—the public's vote.

While promotional efforts were in progress, another important step was taken. The company moved its sales office from New York to Camillus. In closing the 300-mile gap between sales and production, speedier service in filling orders was achieved. The departments became integrated. The company has now been able to supply jobbers immediately and to save them from accumulating inventory. Their turnover is quicker.

Now there is a "brain buster" committee of sales and factory executives who meet regularly to spur each other's imagination with any idea that may occur to them—ideas about

selling, manufacturing, personnel relations, or Camillus community welfare. Nobody is allowed to criticize; if an idea offered strikes somebody as crazy, he tries to think up an alternative. The alternatives pile up and something good may come out of them, such as new lines of merchandise.

From sessions of this kind came plans for merchandising a line of kitchen knives. The engineers had developed a method of molding nylon handles to stainless-steel blades; it assured sturdiness. But here were products that must win the fancy of housewives, and the modern merchandiser knows that women insist on good styling in the things they buy. The final design of the kitchen knives was not adopted until it gained the pre-tested approval of many women. As a result, it won the Fashion Academy Award for distinctive beauty—a good selling point, by the way.

As a supplementary line, "Kitchen Pride," having the same design, was put into production with Tenite handles and chrome-plated carbon steel blades. Similarly, a lower-priced "Camco" line of pocketknives supplemented the Camillus brand.

A well-knit organization, this company centers its thoughts on steady sales for steady employment. And the principle also works in reverse. The factory delivers the goods. The finished knife is really Camillus' best advertisement.

Sweet Are the Uses OF TECHNOLOGY

BACK IN 1914 the average weekly wage in this plant was \$13.78 for a 60-hour week. Today the Camillus worker earns that much in a single day. True, the cost of living has risen 154 percent (U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). But the jump from 23 cents an hour to the present average of \$1.68 for male personnel is a hike of more than 630 percent.

How was this made possible?

First, let us ask another question: What exactly is the difference between the man behind a plow and the man in a tractor seat?

We congratulate ourselves on living in a modern age, take the improvement for granted, and overlook the meaning of the change. The elimination of waste. That's the secret.

When time-consuming hand labor in the making of each part of a pocketknife gave way to machines and electric power, the cost of producing knives declined. Each cutlery worker was now able to produce more work of greater value, and thereby he increased his own value.

Less waste. Lower costs. Lower

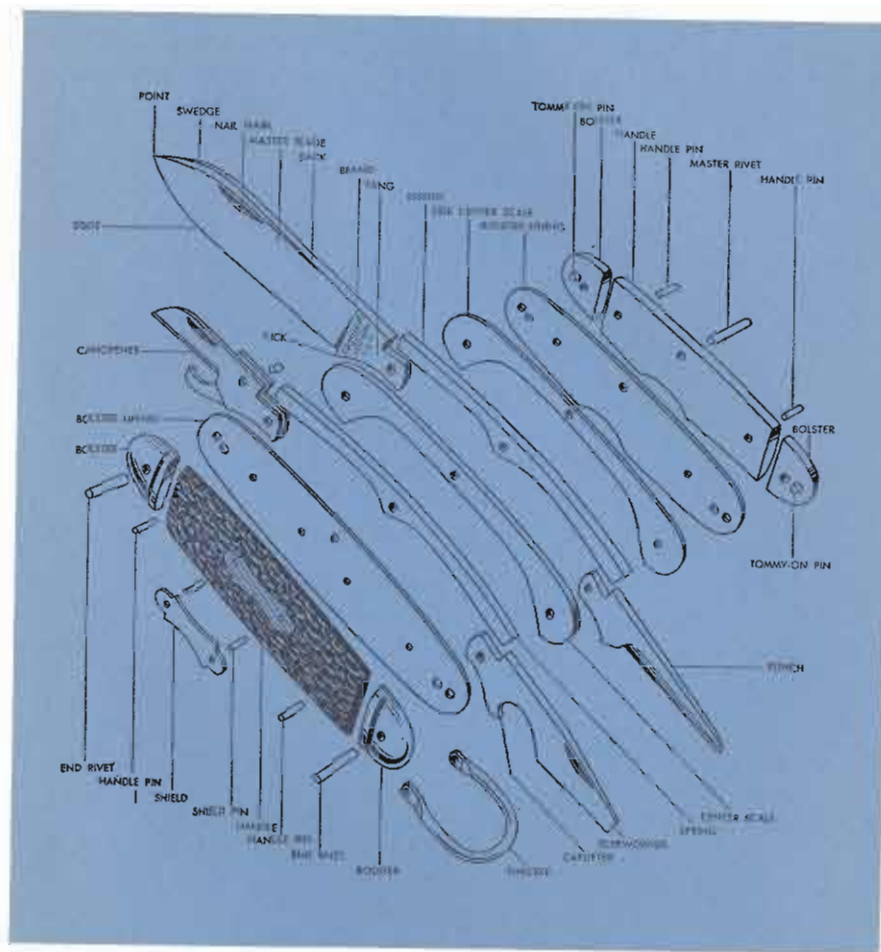
price. By these steps sales are won and profits gained. This is the road to steady employment and high wages. Thus we count the blessings of technical advance.

THE fight against waste never ends because we keep reaching for higher goals. Yesterday's machinery and methods, which seemed so miraculous in improving upon past performances, are studied for further correction. Engineers—and the operators themselves, through the suggestion box—come up with better ways of doing the job.

Camillus makes its own dies, builds its own machines, and furnishes these tools to the workers as the technical means of attaining greater production with greater precision. Our company pioneered mass production in the pocketknife industry. Larger markets were captured for our goods.

Standardized parts, speedily made, in seconds instead of hours, permitted accurate assembly and cut down the finishing operations.

During the war the government required knives to be manufactured



THE PARTS OF A POCKETKNIFE

with closer tolerances. We changed our method of making dies, rebuilt many of the automatic grinding machines and installed new ones. The experience acquired in achieving these tolerances—which were not too strict to be practical—imbed-

ded itself in the structure of our organization for future use. We manufactured our own gauges to test each part before government inspection and in this way forestalled rejects.

When the engineering department was enlarged at the end of the

war, Manager Wallace remarked at a plant meeting, "Over a period of time this should make life much easier for you and for me."

Within the next year the company spent \$50,000 for machine tools and \$30,000 more to make the factory more modern and cleaner. A larger tool room was constructed, with wood-block flooring, and an experimental department came into being to study individual operations for new techniques and to develop and build special machines to heighten efficiency.

The task of the engineers does not stop with machinery. They must strive to create better working conditions. They provide easier workplace arrangements, revise the layout of a room to cut out excessive handling, re-route the flow of material and speed it from one department to another.

The matching room became crowded. Workers didn't have enough space to move around in it. An addition was built, extending over the new tool room, and the people were enabled to produce work of better quality.

Fluorescent lighting was put in everywhere.

"Good working conditions," Mr. Wallace said, "pay the biggest dividend. Usually workers are blamed when it really is management that is at fault."

Water for the grinding room formerly was pumped up from the creek. It was icy—and smelly. To provide a sufficient supply of city

water, a 10,000-gallon tank was installed, wide enough to permit sediment to sink, and the water was used over and over. In circulating, it acquired room temperature. No more complaints.

More steam was needed. To make way for a new huge boiler, the wall of the boiler room was extended as far as the wall of the canal. By means of this equipment the coal bill was reduced. Savings in overhead are another way to widen the margin of profit and create more money for the profit-sharing fund.

The engineers designed and built new matching machines. Each woman operator now multiplied her work by four. A trimming machine was devised whereby virtually no hafting needed to be done; the mechanism feeds a magazine and shaves handles with a minimum of scrap. A hydraulic grinding machine was built, with stationary wheel, against which the work was moved.

Another new device, automatic, made bolster nails, two at a time. Another automatic machine made clevises. A new method was devised for affixing shields.

Hydraulic machines have replaced belting. Pneumatic fixtures and jigs have been installed.

In the constant search to lessen the great number of operations required to produce a single knife, the engineers have succeeded with:

1. A tagging machine that trims while it tags the handle.
2. A machine that combines grinding and glazing.

3. A machine that glazes both sides of a blade at once.
4. A tumbling device for tipped knives.
5. Advance work on bolsters to avoid repetition of operations.
6. The elimination of counter-sinking.
7. A machine that assembles the knife closed, eliminating pin-nipping.
8. Methods of bonding parts in place of riveting.
9. A machine that polishes curved surfaces.

BEFORE the war, all knives were completely cleaned by hand operations. Camillus fashioned a degreaser which took out the binder and washed the knives thoroughly, after which they were dipped in oil, drained, and wiped. But later a better way was found. In the new Camillus cleaner, knives are placed on a conveyor and move into a saline and caustic bath, then into a spraying box, and after four minutes they emerge not only clean but rust-proof.

Saving space is another way to cut costs. Formerly long strips of steel were fed into the press that blanked out blades with multi-step dies. Stacks of strips occupied much valuable space. Now the steel comes coiled up in large reels, which are in addition easier to handle. Each reel allows four hours' continuous, automatic feeding, and one operator can keep an eye on two blanking machines at once.

Nobody enjoying the present standard of living would want to turn his back on technology and turn back the clock to the time when blade steel was hammered out on an anvil and shaped by muscle in a long, exhausting day. Nobody wants to work for the pittance which is all that an antiquated system can give.

Gone are the days of guesswork in heat treating. Modern pyrometers determine the proper degree of hardness and resilience. And the blades that take a keen edge on the grinding machine hold their edge.

Mechanical accuracy spells less handwork and more mass-produced quality. Why is quality important? Because quality is the thing that commands price and satisfies a customer.

Tool makers, millwrights, setup men, machinists, and supervisors must furnish high-quality tools to enable piece-work operators to turn out high-quality goods. Each week's payroll is carefully studied to see whether earnings are up to normal. If they are below average, in any department, that's a signal that something is wrong there. An investigation is made. Is poor work going into that department? Poor tools? Poor material?

THERE is an additional way of shooting trouble. Inspection stations in each department watch the goods flowing through the shop. They test samples. They take batches. It's a spot check. A flaw means rejection. If a higher percentage of rejects oc-

curs than their statistical tables allow, the flow is interrupted and the goods are 100 percent inspected. Then, at the end of the week, the engineers get together and review the rejection record. It tells them

where to look for the cause of error. This is the scientific approach. Technologists call it quality control. It's the modern magic wand for securing satisfied customers, stable employment, and high wages.

AMERICAN IDEALS

By LOUIS D. BRANDEIS

Associate Justice, Supreme Court of the United States, 1916-1939

There is in most Americans some spark of idealism which can be fanned into a flame.

* * *

I believe that Americans are the most idealistic people in the world, and that nothing better can be done than to suggest to our businessmen a high ideal toward which they may work.

* * *

What are American ideals? They are the development of the individual for his own and the common good; the development of the individual through liberty, and the attainment of the common good through democracy and social justice.

* * *

Our form of government, as well as humanity, compels us to strive for the individual man. Under universal suffrage every voter is a part ruler of the state. Unless the rulers have, in the main, education and character, and are free men, our great experiment in democracy must fail.

* * *

It devolves upon the state, therefore, to fit its rulers for their task. It must provide not only facilities for development but the opportunity of using them. It must not only provide opportunity, it must stimulate the desire to avail of it. Thus we are compelled to insist upon the observance of what we somewhat vaguely term "the American standard of living."

*Sometimes It's Good to Know
What Others Think About Us*

Some Folks Say

Extracts from reviews of the book *Camillus: The Story of an American Small Business* (Columbia University Press, 1944)

BUSINESS WEEK: "It is not possible to put the finger on any one factor that has been chiefly responsible for the survival and growth of this small-town small business. Resourceful engineering, progressive production methods, modern equipment, shrewd selection of products, aggressive marketing, enlightened human relations, keen sense of social responsibility—each of these has had its part.

"But all this merely adds up to good management. And the answer may well be that if small business is to succeed, it needs big men to run it.

"The smaller the business, the sounder the management it must have. And in this case, soundness may be indicated by the fact that during the depression of the thirties, this small business carried on throughout, until in 1935 it found itself producing 30 percent of the industry's total. By that time its employment not only had returned to normal but now and then touched a record high."

WILLARD CHEVALIER (*April 29, 1944*)

BARRON'S WEEKLY: "Camillus Cutlery Company has been instrumental in changing the technique of knife manufacture from a laborious handicraft system to a smoothly efficient machine operation. The introduction of modern methods enabled Camillus to produce knives of an even finer quality than before.

"The relationship between the townspeople—labor—and the Kastor family—management—has always been an excellent one. During the depression a high rate of employment was maintained and there was little need for relief agencies. The company has confined its interest in the employees to giving them the highest wages in the industry, as well as safeguarding them from accident and illness."

FREDERICK C. MILES (*July 3, 1944*)

* * *

PAUL G. HOFFMAN (Chairman, The Ford Foundation): "It is only by reading the history of companies such as yours that the phrase 'the American Way of Life' takes on real meaning."

(*A letter to Alfred B. Kastor*)

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 48

*Village Folk Got Together,
Lit the Lamp of Learning*

The Adventure of a Library



Books came out of homes in the village and went into the library. This was the beginning of a collection that has been serving the community since 1918.

At the start, the library occupied a room over a plumbing store. The rent was \$6 a month. There was no heat in winter; too much in summer.

The story of the development of Camillus Library is one of those typical American tales of unselfish individual devotion and community cooperation, originating with a school teacher of the fourth grade, K. Belle Hackford, who was moved by the children's need for more books.

Miss Hackford took action. She canvassed the village with the help of Betsy Smith and Grace Robinson, and they gathered up gifts totaling 287 books.

Great oaks from little acorns grow. Wasn't this the maxim that the good ladies believed in? They had planted

the seed. Now they must prepare to nourish a tree of knowledge.

On March 22, 1918, they had called a public meeting and expressed their hopes for creating a world of books within the village—a world to which everyone might have free access, for enjoyment, for mental stimulation, and spiritual growth.

At this meeting the Camillus Library Association was formed, M. Fenn being elected president, P. A. Munro treasurer, and E. Wheaton, secretary. The first board of trustees consisted of William D. Wallace, Mrs. Mary E. Maxwell, Grace Robinson, and Mr. Dalgaard. Miss Hackford was appointed librarian.

This was the period of the First World War and the postwar recession. For the library movement it was a time of slow growth. Miss Hackford left Camillus in 1920. In May of that year Mrs. Maxwell took up the position of librarian, and by the fall of 1921 the Regents of the

University of the State of New York extended recognition in the form of a provisional charter.

Here was a bright sign of progress. With the turn of the year the library was ready to move into street-level quarters, the store on Genesee Street now occupied by Powers Meat Market. School boys carried the books downstairs and used their own handcars for transportation. By means of rummage sales, food sales, and dinners, enough money was raised to buy three oak tables and a desk from Auburn Prison and 18 chairs from the Mottville chair factory.

Two years later the library enthusiasts discovered that their project was still without physical roots. The books were moved into the old Cook home which stood on the site of the present Sherwood Drug Store. Homeless again at the end of the next year, the library was invited by the volunteer firemen to share temporarily the quarters they occupied in an old building behind the Kemper Garage. With each of these moves the school boys swung into action and carted the literary treasures.

The State Regents granted a permanent charter early in 1926. A new era began.

In the minds of the library's friends the idea of a building fund was budding. They thought of the Presbyterian Church on Main Street, which had long been closed. If this structure could be bought and remodeled . . .

A legacy of \$2,000, left by Miss Van Alostine, was the nucleus of the building fund. To this was added \$1,000.18, the receipts from a field day. A bazaar, held in the Camillus Cutlery Company's new office building, yielded another \$1,000.

The church was purchased from the Presbytery for \$3,000. It needed extensive repairs and rearrangement. A committee, headed by Mr. Wallace, undertook public subscriptions and succeeded in raising \$15,000.

Now the work of making the library attractive, serviceable, and comfortable began. Leaded windows were put in, a new heating plant was built, a fireplace installed. And an addition was constructed.

In September, 1927, the library opened the inviting door of its beautiful new home. Mrs. Maxwell, the librarian (as she has been to this day), happily conducted visitors to the shelves.

There was a mortgage, and the customary effort to lift a mortgage. This was finally accomplished in 1943, when Alfred B. Kastor paid off the \$899.05 balance. Mr. Kastor's most recent contribution was a check for \$500 on the ninety-fifth anniversary of his father's birth.

Through the years, the library has proved a cultural center of the village, not only as an adjunct of the school and high school, but as a treasure house for all the community and the surrounding farm folk.

In a rating of libraries of comparable size and service in this state, the New York State Library made a sur-

vey for the years 1930-1939. Camillus Library rated 87.35 percent the first year but went over the 100 percent mark in the following years, reaching 118.79 percent in the final year of that study.

The list of borrowers has kept growing. Circulation figures have advanced—not always steadily, it must be said, but this is true of the record of most libraries. The circulation in 1950 was 7,425, with 557 borrowers registered. At present the library has a total of 7,138 active books on the shelves.

Blessed with many faithful helpers from the start, Camillus Library has been truly a cooperative public effort. "Practically every person with

free time," says Mrs. Maxwell, "has assisted during the hours in which the library was open."

Mrs. Hyland continued as a trustee until she died in 1950. Mrs. Marion Stone was secretary of the trustees for 12 years; she has had charge of the library one evening a week for 15 years. Mrs. William D. Wallace has served as president of the trustees since January, 1933, and all during this period she has given an afternoon a week.

"The whole town has shown great interest in its library and has been wholeheartedly in back of every worthy proposal to make it more useful in the lives of our citizens," Mrs. Maxwell reports.

A Pocket with a Silver Lining

GILBERT K. CHESTERTON, the English writer, once confessed that he had picked a pocket—his own. He was alone in a railway carriage on a long journey with nothing to do. "I suddenly remembered my pockets. I was carrying about with me an unknown treasury."

As he fished up each item, he composed a mental essay about it, and thus he passed the time.

"The next thing I took out was my pocketknife. A pocketknife, I need hardly say, would require a thick book of moral meditations all to itself.

"A knife typifies one of the most primary of those practical origins upon which, as upon low, thick pillars, all our human civilization reposes. Metals, the mystery of the thing called iron and of the thing called steel, led me off into a kind of dream. . . . I heard all the hammers on all the anvils of the earth. . . .

"The knife is only a short sword; and the pocketknife is a secret sword. I opened it and looked at that brilliant and terrible tongue which we call a blade; and I thought that perhaps it was the symbol of the oldest of the needs of man."

Reprinted by permission of Dodd, Mead & Company from *Tremendous Trifles* by G. K. Chesterton, copyright 1909, 1936, by Frances Chesterton

Unforgettable Character . . .



THE STORY OF
ADOLPH KASTOR

THE STORY OF

ADOLPH KASTOR



Down in the sub-cellar of the building at 42 Warren Street, New York, on a summer day in 1870, a 14-year-old boy took care of cow chains and shelf hardware for the firm of Bodenheimer, Meyer & Co., wholesalers and importers. Soon after getting this job he was promoted to the first basement, where his work was to lay out the day's orders.

This was the beginning of the business career of Adolph Kastor—the foundation of a life in the cutlery business and the foreshadowing of an industry in the Village of Camillus, N. Y.

At the start he had a good angel in the person of Uncle Aaron, who had persuaded the boy's parents to let him leave the ancestral home in Germany. The town of Wattenheim, in the fertile region of the Rhine, had known Kastors for more than a century. Adolph's father, landowner and farmer, was also an energetic businessman who dealt in cattle and whose standing in the community was evidenced by his election to the common council consecutively for

thirty years. (A public square was later named for him.) Adolph, one of his nine children, was born on April 14, 1856.

When Adolph was about eight years old a great event in the boy's life, in the family's life, and in Wattenheim at large, was the homecoming of his father's brother, Aaron, who had left more than 20 years before, settled down in Natchez, Miss., and made a fortune in business. He came laden with rich presents. There were subsequent visits of this American uncle, and the glamor did not wear off.

Adolph was ten when he was sent to board at a private commercial school in a town six miles away. Classes started at 7 a.m., with outdoor exercise, and continued until 4 p.m. After a while Adolph persuaded his father to let him walk to school and back each day.

"I arose at five in the morning, took a light breakfast, and started off. I had no companions but the healthful morning air, the rising sun, the ever-blooming fields, the chirping of birds, and the growing crops.

This did much to inspire a poetic feeling within me. With my school bag on my back, I was a happy boy."

This was a recollection of years of growth in which he was a leader of his classes and, in summertime, a helping hand to his father but not so useful as his older brother Nathan. In the summer of 1870, Uncle Aaron arrived again in the course of a cutlery buying trip for the New York firm of Bodenheimer, Meyer & Co., in which he was a partner, covering England and Belgium. Uncle Aaron stirred the family's imagination with a picture of prospects in America for Adolph. The boy was eager, the father reluctant, and the mother moist-eyed as she packed the clothes.

As Uncle Aaron had already departed, the father accompanied the boy on the way to the French border. *"We stayed at Mannheim one night and I didn't stop crying all night. I cried until my father left me."* He reached Paris on July 12 and went sightseeing in a four-wheeler to the Louvre, the Jardins des Plantes, the boulevards, and the Arc de Triomphe.

"I doubt if anyone can imagine the feelings of a country boy fresh out of school, where he had learned of the big cities and their wonders, seeing them as they were. Every minute was spent in sightseeing, and I longed for more and more."

The night train to Le Havre was crowded with French soldiers. There was tension in France over relations with Prussia. For three days he

awaited the arrival of the German steamer *Cimbria* from Hamburg. Newspapers were full of mobilization news; the Prussian ambassador's passport was returned to him.

Adolph boarded ship on July 16. When they were one day out at sea, the Franco-Prussian War broke out. It was his good luck that the *Cimbria* was the last German vessel to leave a French port.

For four miserable days of seasickness the boy believed he would never cross the ocean again and never see his dear ones at home. But the rest of the journey was fun, and with his friendly nature he made the acquaintance of fellow passengers. When the ship arrived at Hoboken, N. J., on July 27, Uncle Aaron met him at the dock and took him at once to the store on Warren Street—and to work. This was the firm's busy season of the year.

A home was made for Adolph with the family of one of the company's young clerks, Morris Denzer, far uptown on East 55th Street. He felt passionately grateful to Morris's warm-hearted mother. In this gay and numerous household a boy could not be lonesome. Many visitors rang the doorbell and pitched into the conversation and laughter, especially on Sunday nights. But other nights found Adolph studiously at school, learning English and French, literature and oratory. Classes at evening high school on East 13th Street ended at nine o'clock; often he would dash over to the Academy of Music to listen to opera, the price of

admission being reduced to fifty cents at that hour. Thus he passed the first year, paying all his own expenses.

"Not having my parents here to advise me, I followed a straight path and acquired as much knowledge as possible with my modest income."

At the place of business the stock clerks and packers formed a "coffee ring," to eat lunch inside and thereby save time and money. Each week the chores of setting table, boiling coffee, and buying sandwiches and pie were rotated. The boys shared and shared alike.

Business was thriving in 1872. Imports of padlocks, currycombs, saws, mechanics' tools, files, hoes, corn-mills, trace and log chains, and the cutlery and guns bought by Uncle Aaron, were sold mainly to the Southern trade; the three partners in the firm were all Southerners. Expansion of trade led to removal to a five-story building at 109 Duane Street, and here Adolph was placed in charge of guns. Holding a position of trust, he carried the keys to the store.

Soon he was managing the cutlery department. *"At this time I was fairly well acquainted with the lines of goods we carried. I had learned the value of merchandise and the handling of customers, and often ran to the bank with bills of lading. I knew the business in all its branches."* Cutlery was what he liked best.

It was a hectic, one-season business. Keen competition beset them.

The spurt enjoyed in '72 proved not to be a harbinger of greater growth but to pass as a comet. For a commercial panic seized the country in 1873, and from this time the volume of sales kept declining. Henry Bodenheim died that year, and the remaining partners operated as Meyer & Kastor.

As if the cup of sorrow were not already full, tragedy stalked in an epidemic of typhoid fever in New York the same year. It struck the Denzer home and carried away Morris and one of his sisters. This was not a rose-colored world.

Adolph continued on his course of self-improvement, attending Cooper Union, reading German classics in his spare time, and joining the Boys' & Girls' Literary Society. The society met weekly and debated earnestly. This experience gave him more skill in self-expression and accustomed him to public speaking. He enjoyed bowling, so he joined a bowling club. Walking and rowing exhilarated him; he kept fit.

IN CONTRAST to his youthful energy, his confidence, and his budding maturity, the firm that employed him was withering. In the fall of 1875 it failed. Credit shattered, it lingered on, trying to collect what was due, filling what orders it could, and paying off the creditors. The final payment was made in September, 1876. Adolph was out of a job. But he went into business for himself at once.

II

UNDER the trade name of Ad. Kastor, this twenty-year-old started out on October 1, 1876, with a small stock of merchandise as a hardware wholesaler, occupying the same store as before. The landlord let him remain at a rental of \$50 a month. Adolph had the help of his older brother Nathan, whom Uncle Aaron had brought over from Germany three years before to serve as a stock clerk. And their uncle was in the background with some financial aid.

Capital was meager, turnover small, and margins very close. The boys worked hard. Nathan, however, saw no grand future developing from such piddling operations, and in his restlessness he quit to go into another line as a salesman. With a pleasing personality and the quality of a good mixer he should have gone far; but he went far only geographically, for in his unsettled state he merely drifted, winding up in Santa Fe, N. M.

On the other hand, Adolph held a strong conviction that the business would grow if it specialized—made itself known for its specialty—unlike the old firm, which had stood for "nothing in particular" and therefore exerted little trade appeal. He wanted the name of Kastor to represent cutlery.

In 1878 Uncle Aaron obtained a letter of credit from Lazard Frères, bankers, and went abroad to buy cutlery for his nephew. The next year Adolph, feeling well qualified,

and having acquired citizenship, went to England himself with a letter of credit from the banking firm of Hallgarten & Co.

"My experience in Sheffield was the beginning of a great business development. My limited capital caused me to be very careful with my purchases. I dealt only with the small makers so as to buy goods at the right prices."

After arranging with a warehouse in Sheffield to pack the knives he bought, and ship them as needed, Adolph took in the sights of London for a few days. He visited Westminster Abbey, the British Museum, the Tower, the art galleries, and the parks. And then, by way of Flushing, Holland, he traveled on to Wattenheim for a family reunion.

Nine years had passed. Nine years of events to talk over, cry over, laugh over. He was tired, under a strain, and dissatisfied; but to his younger brothers, Sigmund and August, he had the stature of a hero.

"I was not elated by any success or progress. I felt that I had worked hard for a living, led a clean life, and my efforts had not been profitably rewarded. However, I was happy in the thought of seeing my father, mother, sisters, and brothers, and was determined to do better on my return."

An annual trip to Sheffield seemed essential to the welfare of his small concern. It was on the trip in 1881, again visiting his family, that he laid out his plans for expansion, involv-

ing a switch from selling retailers to selling wholesalers. For this purpose he borrowed money from his father and other relatives in Germany. Nathan, also home on a visit, agreed to return with him and be a traveling salesman. And Adolph took Sigmund, aged 15, to New York to teach him the business.

Another momentous decision was made two years later. Adolph resolved to disengage himself from Uncle Aaron's financial interest; paid him back in full to be free to work out repayments to the relatives abroad. *"From then on it simply meant saving every penny in business expenses and personal outlays. We drifted along, but we were determined to succeed."*

One of those chance meetings that shape a career occurred in 1883. Adolph encountered a German manufacturer of pocketknives who was on his way back from Cuba with a set of samples of medium-priced and cheaper goods. This man offered to supply him at cost. Promptly buying the samples, Adolph set out on a tour of out-of-town jobbers, and in St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, and Louisville he took fair-sized orders on these knives. In this easy way the scope of importing was enlarged.

Adolph Kastor had put off marriage until he could afford it. The lively intelligence of Wilhelmina Denzer, a sister of Morris, had captured him when she was still in pig-tails. As she blossomed into womanhood and finished her training at Normal College, he knew and she

knew that they would wait for each other. For six years she taught in New York City schools while he wrestled with the universal problem of gaining a foothold on security. At last, in the spring of 1884, they were married (Adolph 28, Wilhelmina 26), and off to Europe they went on a honeymoon.

With bolstered self-confidence Adolph Kastor conferred with new sources of supply in Sheffield and made encouraging arrangements. For other grades of merchandise he journeyed to the German cutlery center of Solingen, in the Rhine valley, and there made other strong business connections.

The prospective birth of the Kastors' first child a year later led the considerate expectant father to suggest that Nathan go on the European buying trip in his stead; and, to cover the Southern territory, he engaged Harry K. Zust, a spirited man who was to remain in the Kastor employ for sixty years.

Nathan, in Solingen, set up an office to facilitate purchasing. In 1886 he cabled that the situation, as he measured it, required him to stay there permanently if they were to entrench themselves in the German trade. Adolph consented. His brother-in-law, Solomon Denzer, came into the firm temporarily as a special partner, and with this additional capital the business acquired greater size.

The arrival of 17-year-old August, the youngest brother, made the picture complete. Adolph Kastor &

Bros. was in full flower in 1888, and for many years thereafter a harmonious combination and division of labor prevailed. Sig and Gus visited smaller cities and sold goods from stock. Adolph, besides managing the business in New York, covered larger cities and took import orders. Nathan, abroad, handled the buying and nimbly sought out quality.

As the business prospered, Adolph moved his wife and daughter Edna from an apartment to a rented small house in a quiet, charming section of the city known as Harlem. Later they occupied a house in the neighborhood of Columbia University, anticipating the need of more room for a larger family. Here their sons were born: Alfred Bernard, on June 21, 1889, and Robert Nathan, in 1892. Their last child, Helen, was born in 1894 in their own house at 14 West 70th Street, and here the children grew up.

Outside the home, and outside the business, national events were forging destinies. The election of a Democratic President, Grover Cleveland, had given mistaken promise of lower import duties. With the return of a Republican administration, in fact, the McKinley Tariff was enacted, raising rates and encouraging a few Sheffield-trained cutlers to set up shop in New England and Middle Atlantic states. Now, with the second election of Cleveland, Adolph Kastor foresaw a low tariff and arranged with bankers for a \$100,000 loan.

But he was able to swing greater

imports without touching a dollar of this money. Tariff reductions were effected in 1894, and Nathan's fortunate position—he was now conducting a cutlery factory in Ohligs, near Solingen—enabled A. K. & B. to be abundantly supplied. Adolph Kastor had also made other provisions. He had offered to purchase enough goods from his biggest German competitor to keep that manufacturer's plant going at capacity, on condition that the latter abstain from direct marketing in the United States. The manufacturer agreed, but somehow he let his factory run down and failed to fulfill the contract. The competitor thus removed himself from the field.

Another factor that increased the Kastors' importance in the trade was Adolph's astuteness in getting his German sources to forego tradition and modify their knife patterns in accordance with American tastes. He showed them what they should do.

Calling one day on a wholesaler whom he had not previously sold, he presented his samples and his sales talk. That gentleman listened, then said, "You are a very good talker, but we cannot buy from you." Adolph rolled up his samples and made this parting shot: "Mr. Rouss, in the past you got along very well in business without buying from Adolph Kastor & Bros. and, thank the Lord, Adolph Kastor & Bros. got along very well without selling you." A week later, Mr. Rouss sent for him and gave him a \$45,000 order.

Adolph Kastor had not intended

to abandon that jobber as a prospect. His motto was perseverance: if you failed to sell a man one year, you did not give up trying. He built his business brick on brick, never expecting overnight miracles; and the bricks were cemented with square dealing.

As the tower of strength kept rising, large orders were obtained by virtue of ability to deliver the goods and maintain quality; and because of confident, persuasive salesmanship based on this high standard. The company was the nation's largest importers of pocketknives.

But a political change occurred. In the McKinley Administration the Dingley Bill was passed, bringing the duty on knives—specific and ad valorem rates combined—to 98.52 percent.

The situation was plain. The great demand was for medium-grade merchandise, the new duties made such imports too costly, and what little domestic manufacturing capacity existed could not satisfy the company's vast market. The Kastors needed goods. They decided to make them.

III

In Camillus, N. Y., a village eight miles outside Syracuse, a small, white-painted frame building stood by a creek. It was the knife works. Started in 1894—the wrong year for such a venture—it was shut down in 1898, reopened in 1900, and run haltingly with 20 cutlers who made individual parts for individual pocketknives in the Sheffield manner of

handwork. Tariff protection could wave no wand of production over these craftsmen so long as they operated in this way.

Adolph Kastor was familiar with the American industrial formula: high wages plus machines equals large output and low prices. He was familiar also with the Solingen technique, which applied the principles of mechanization to the forging and stamping of knife parts.

He went up to Camillus in 1902 and offered \$15,000 cash for the works. The owners promptly accepted.

This was the beginning of a modern factory in Camillus. Kastor capital provided machinery and equipment. Kastor management supplemented the cutlers with forgers and grinders. Camillus Cutlery Company was organized by Adolph Kastor & Bros. as a domestic source of supply.

As the years passed, the factory grew—new buildings, greater production—more employees, more machines, greater production. By 1910 the 200 people on the payroll were producing more than 75,000 dozen knives a year. Nor did this wholly satisfy the parent company's needs. The lowest-priced lines still came over the tariff walls from Germany, and there was still a market for some of the Sheffield product.

Adolph Kastor did not believe in planning too far ahead. Unforeseen events always had a careless way of upsetting applecarts. He held no illusions about the cutlery business; it

would never become a major industry, but on its own scale of importance it could continue to prosper by close attention and specialization. He let the factory expand judiciously and imposed the watchwords of precision work, dependable quality.

His son Alfred had entered the business in 1906 and quickly grasped its essentials. In the close father-and-son relationship, wisdom was readily absorbed. The fundamentals of salesmanship were mastered, and on the road Alfred learned the value of his father's integrity in the esteem that the trade held for Adolph Kastor.

The passage of time brought changes. Nathan dropped out of the firm but continued to supply it. Sigmund retired in 1912 and Alfred became a full partner, serving also as treasurer of Camillus Cutlery Company. The next year the younger son, Robert, joined the ranks and gave promise of developing his outgoing personality in sales and execu-

tive capacities. Then came the war in Europe.

On the day war was declared in the summer of 1914, Adolph Kastor was vacationing at Lake Champlain, N.Y. He hurried to New York, to his office on Duane Street, to learn what shipments were en route from Sheffield. Then he taxied down to Wall Street to the Atlantic Mutual Insurance Company, to cover these and subsequent weekly shipments with war-risk insurance against the U-boat menace. Many insurance companies were declining to assume marine war risks.

Later in the day, when he again climbed the five flights of the Duane Street building, where Alfred and other associates were waiting for him, he reached the top of the stairs with a victorious smile.

Within a few days the pound sterling shot up from \$4.80 to \$7. The Kastors bought pounds at this price to meet their obligations to British



firms. By liquidating current invoices they retained their reputation for prompt payment.

In excellent financial condition, the firm stepped up production from 98,000 dozen in 1914 to 116,000 dozen in 1917 as imports from Germany ceased and the United States and Allied governments ordered navy and army knives and surgical scalpels.

Alfred and Robert entered the armed forces. But before Alfred donned khaki he went in quest of a mechanical engineer who might understudy the plant manager and cope with the engineering requirements of future manufacturing. William D. Wallace was the man he engaged; the man who directed the factory in the years to come.

During the anxious war period Adolph Kastor, now in his 60s, kept his hand at the helm. He saw to it that standards were not relaxed and customers were treated with fairness. For physical fitness he exercised regularly and went rowing or golfing.

The return to peace brought a brief postwar national recession, but the upcurve of prosperity soon swung high. The helmsman took stock of himself. He had increased his sons' interest in the firm and was satisfied with their performance. Writing to his brother Nathan in 1921, he gave an intimation of his prospective withdrawal.

"I must say that my ambition of accumulation has to some extent waned, and the only reason that I am

still in the game is that I like to feel I am able to do for those around us as much as possible.

"The actual work I have passed over to others, and while I am informed of all things going on, I will not allow myself to get into the run again, where I must be on the spot at a certain time or forced to attend to things. In other words, a man must feel, when he goes away, that he is well, and he must feel the same way when he is in business."

He was confident that Alfred, after having learned the business from the ground up, had "acquired a full knowledge of how to carry on." Yet he felt that this "very conscientious young man" was undertaking too many tasks to execute by himself.

"I feel that he should do more directing than actual work."

But Alfred B. Kastor was not content with being an administrator. He planned, and he followed through. In 1927 he introduced the technique of mass production into the pocket-knife industry. He simplified the line of patterns. The value of the output of each worker greatly increased.

In 1928 Adolph and August retired. The partnership of Adolph Kastor & Bros. was dissolved. The older generation had gracefully stepped out. With the reorganization of the business, Camillus Cutlery Company took over its assets, and the Kastor firm name appeared thereafter as a corporation, to act as selling agents for Camillus.

Alfred B. Kastor was now the

active head of the enterprise. With his brother Robert and Bill Wallace he carried out the basic principles of the founder. Through the difficult depression years of the 1930s the business was kept sound, progressive, preeminent, and humane. They knew that a factory was more than an engineering problem; it was an experience in the golden rule of human relations. And this pleased the founding father.

People who saw the distinguished-looking man in his later years were impressed with how neatly he fitted the phrase "a gentleman of the old school." His courtliness and patience, his alertness and quick wit, his interest in music, the arts, and all the graces of living, made him, as ever, a man it was pleasant to meet.

As chairman of the board of Camillus Cutlery Company during World War II, he took pride in his factory's tremendous production for the armed services. Camillus was an arsenal of democracy. This gave him a sense of personal participation in the vital defense of the land of his adoption, the land he loved.

There came a day in his ninetieth year when his children would no longer receive letters signed "Your loving Pa."

On February 6, 1946, Mr. Wallace posted a notice on the bulletin board:

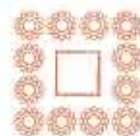
"Today a great man of the past has departed, but in his absence we have before us an institution which he founded. This institution was based on square dealing between seller and buyer, and between worker and owner.

"The principles of Mr. Adolph Kastor can never die, and those who knew him and loved him will always carry these forward as rules of conduct."

This determination was reiterated by Alfred B. Kastor in a talk to employees:

"My father's business life was characterized by his belief in peace . . . a peaceful conduct of business relations, not only among the employees but also with customers, sources of supply, financial concerns and banks, and the government.

"This business has been carried on along the lines that my father and his brothers established, and it is our function, in view of the fact that those lines were successful over a period of years, to continue the policies and the methods that he established and that he found worked."



SOME FOLKS SAY

Continued from page 33

SYRACUSE HERALD AMERICAN: "In 1902 Adolph Kastor bought the factory which then employed 20 workmen. He bought it in order to assure a supply of medium-priced knives which the new tariff laws had made it impractical to import. When his son, Alfred B. Kastor, took over the operation of the company, he fostered mass production and standardization of parts, making it possible to maintain a market and a high level of employment throughout the depression."

(April 16, 1944)

* * *

HARDWARE AGE: "A very interesting history of the business . . . Northern New York State is a queer mixture of Indian and classical names. Hardware store clerks therefore can work in a little early American history in selling pocketknives. Nothing like having a knife with a pedigree."

SAUNDERS NORVELL (Dec. 18, 1947)

* * *

MINNEAPOLIS DAILY TIMES: "The author has taken Camillus Cutlery Company as an example of service, not only to the public which buys its products, but also to the ideal of democracy. The implications of his story are that the strength of America lies in the health and vigor of local enterprise and community self-help."

(April 22, 1944)

SPRINGFIELD (MASS.) REPUBLICAN: "What these men accomplished is essentially the history of thousands of other successful businesses. Whether they have ultimately expanded into great corporations or have remained relatively small does not affect the fundamental truth so strikingly illustrated by the experience of Camillus. The essential thing is that such companies were originally conceived, and have been continuously managed, by resourceful individuals of unquestioned integrity who have been encouraged, rather than fettered in their efforts, by the liberty to engage in free enterprise according to American ideals."

"Collectively these enterprises, through their direct business transactions and indirectly through their influence in their respective communities, have contributed much toward the development of America. The significant thing about this book is that it strikingly brings out this fact by citing an actual example of a firm which has evidently contributed its mite to this end, rather than by depending for its argument on theory and generalizations."

PHILLIPS N. CASE (June 7, 1944)

* * *

HARTFORD COURANT: "As a result of the social relations the Kastor management has installed, the benevolent hand of paternalism of any kind has rarely touched the village, and this book tells the story of how that desirable result has been obtained."

(May 21, 1944)

*A Father Writes His Son
Forty-one Years Ago*

The First Lesson

A letter from Adolph Kastor to Alfred B. Kastor

Now, as far as selling goods is concerned, or good salesmanship, the first thing necessary is PATIENCE! If you have that, why everything else will follow—orders as well as the good will of the customer.

The main thing in a salesman is the ability to be a good listener; pay attention to all the buyer may have to say and then, when he is through, blow your own horn about your own goods. To infuse confidence in a man a salesman has got to impress the buyer with the fact that he knows what he is talking about, even if slight misstatements creep in to the recitation, and then of course, if they do creep in, you have to stick to them.

Now, this may not be strictly in line with the teachings of the Bible-class, but selling merchandise means an exchange of goods for money WITH A PROFIT and you have to enhance the value of your merchandise in order to get the customer to see the deal in the same way you do. This is not such a great hardship, especially where we are the producers of the goods and stand for something.

A man must, of course, know what he is talking about in offering merchandise, but don't volunteer all this information at once—always reserve something to be used to combat an argument from the other side.

These little points which I give you today cannot be picked up in a day! It is like a game of cards in which only experience will show you the tricks, but I am positive you will get accustomed to it after a while and furthermore, it needs no special degree of smartness to be a good salesman—if you have something to sell which has merit, the article usually speaks for itself. It is only then a question of the proper presentation, and if the customer has confidence in you personally, and in your story, why, the bill is virtually sold.

So much for the first lesson.

