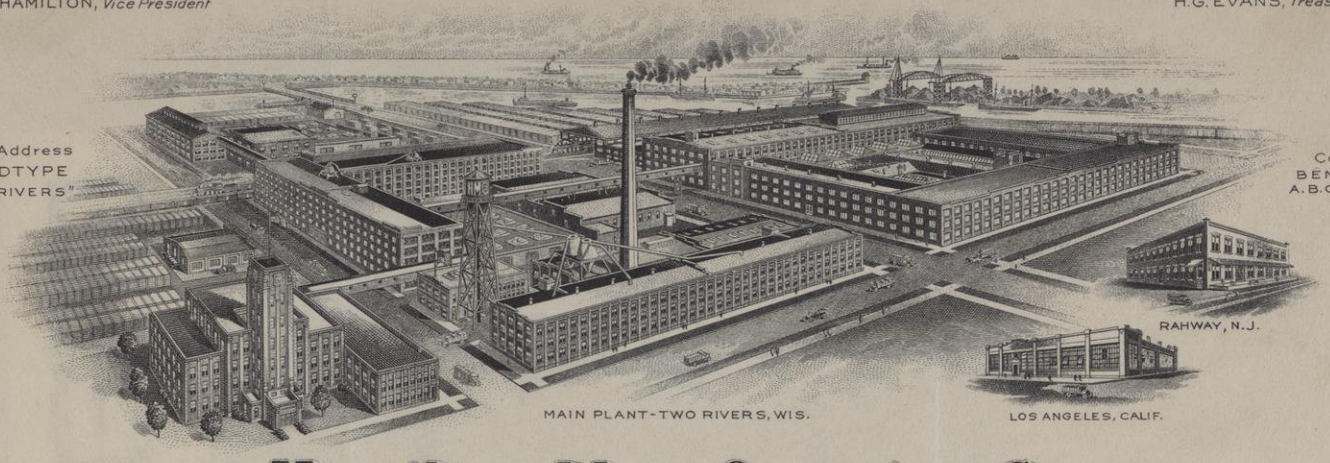
J.E. Hamilton. 1932

J. E. HAMILTON

Silver Buckle Press



Hamilton Manufacturing Co.

WOOD - Professional Furniture - STEEL

Two Rivers, Wis.
July 25, 1934

Colonel Howard Green
2025 North Lake Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

My dear Colonel:

I am just in receipt of your little note in regard to the book I spoke to you about. I mailed it to you yesterday, and I hope that you will enjoy looking it over. I think the book is very well gotten up, considering the subject matter. You know it is hard to "make a whistle out of a pig's tail."

I want to thank you very much for your kindness and patience in going over our affairs. I am sure that your advice will be very helpful.

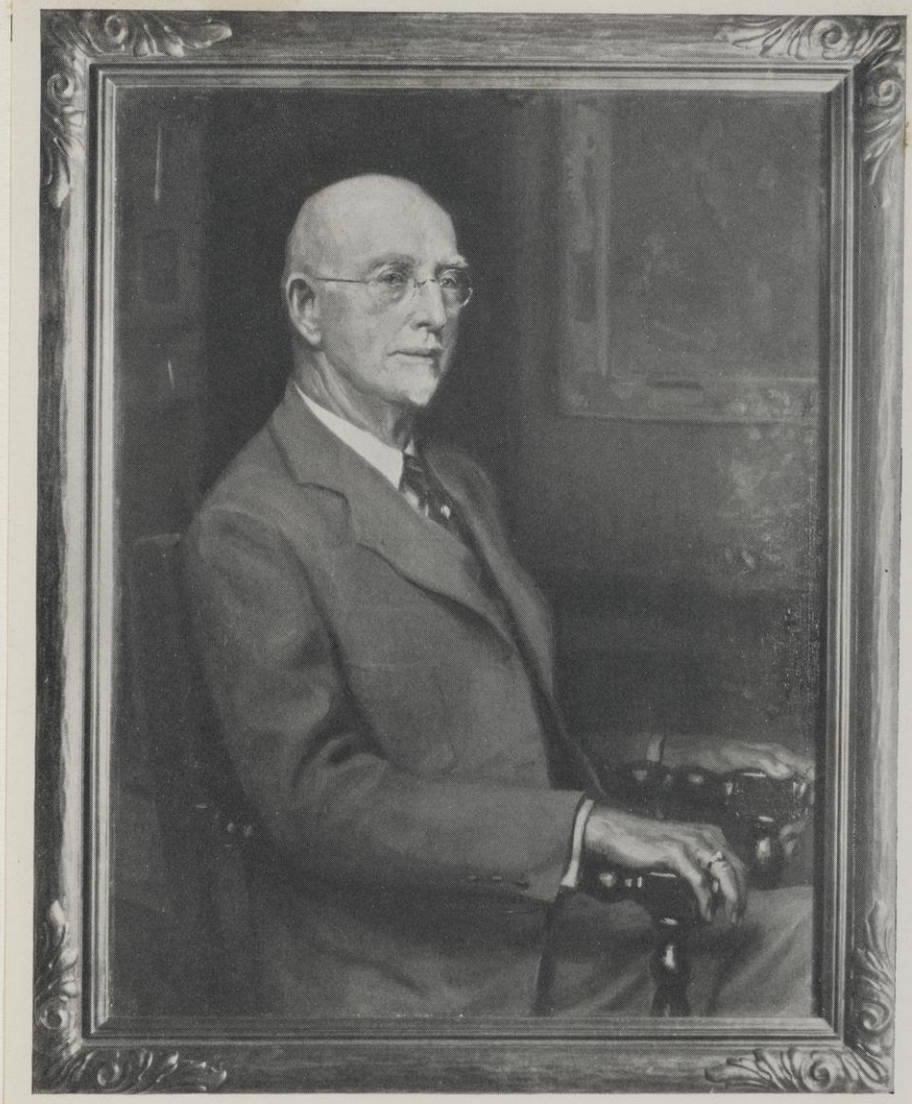
I am leaving for Pasadena tomorrow morning.

With kindest regards, I remain

Yours sincerely,

J E Hamilton

Howard Greene



J. E. Hamilton

J. E. HAMILTON

By MARK RHEA BYERS

TWO RIVERS, WISCONSIN
1932

TO AN understanding student of men, women and events, whose useful life is reflected on most of the pages of this book:

MRS. ETTA SHOVE HAMILTON

J. E. HAMILTON

FOREWORD

THIS book is the story of a man and his town.

● In that dualism, perhaps, it comes to be somewhat different than the ordinary account of the life of a successful industrialist. The author is conscious that his record of the business career of J. E. Hamilton is full of gaps and omissions, which will doubtless exasperate readers seeking to trace, step by step, the stages of successful business development. In a work of this limited scope it has, however, been impossible to set down minute details even had it been desirable.

● Certainly the half-century of active business, during which a penniless, fatherless country boy became a nationally recognized leader of his industry, is a story worth telling in all its details. But along with this business development there went a personal and social development which, to the author, seems to be the richer vein. In some respects it is nearly unique: the career of a "small towner" who built a village into a city as an incidental accompaniment to plugging at his own personal job—the story of a machine-age industrialist of more than average vision and ability, who preserved his small-town interests and outlook, and cherished a civic patriotism more closely the higher became his outlook over the peaks of industrial achievement.

● Most self-made men who become wealthy and powerful grow away from their beginnings. There seems to be an affinity

between the arrogant civilization of the American metropolitan cities and the men of individualistic conquest who start in the ranks and drive their way up. The city calls them for concrete material reasons, perhaps, but also because of some secret spiritual attraction. It is a common-place that the "typical New Yorker" is a man from a small town who came to New York to speed and further his fortunes.

● J. E. Hamilton was not made on the usual pattern. His success in developing from the smallest beginnings an industry which brought the world to his Wisconsin village, far from the ordinary market for his goods, is sufficient evidence that Mr. Hamilton lacked neither intelligence nor ability to meet the ablest of his generation on even terms. He remained a "small towner" for the very simple reason that he liked it. Two Rivers, his birthplace, was naturally as much an object of his affectionate ambition as his own business. This fundamental local patriotism is, in the view of the author, the key to understanding this complex, able and vivid character. Out of his setting J. E. Hamilton becomes incomprehensible. In Two Rivers he is as naturally at home, as thoroughly a part of the local scene, as "Picnic Hill".

● It is this point of view which the writer has endeavored to impress upon the following pages. In a sense they are intended as a study of the American individualist in the small town which is so important and so neglected a factor of the American social scene.

● Let it be admitted that this is not a critical biography. Frankly, the author's admiration for Mr Hamilton as a man, a citizen and a business man precluded such an approach. As a resident of Two Rivers it was impossible for him to miss the Hamilton impress upon the community, or to fail to appreciate the potent force it has been for advancement and improvement. Perhaps Two Rivers would have grown in population and wealth by the mere attraction of the Hamilton enterprises, without any effort or interest on the part of Mr. Hamilton. But the direction of this growth, and the numerous unusual social developments which have accompanied it, are so fre-

quently traceable to Mr. Hamilton's influence and that of the men associated with him that it cannot be ignored. It is as a conditioning factor in making a town that this Hamilton leadership is worth analysis. And the verdict must be that on the whole it has been good leadership, of the intimate sort increasingly disappearing in a day of centralized, long-distance government by bureaucracy. The study of its source, motives, background and operation is rewarding.

● The preparation of the book, involving frequent and intimate contact with Mr. Hamilton, has been an enjoyable undertaking. The reader is the loser in that it has not been possible to convey to him the frequent flashes of keen comment, satiric wit and incisive philosophy which have illuminated and enlivened the meetings between subject and author. Shrewd, poised and perceptive, alert to every current influence and mellow in his appraisal of the stream of life as it flowed past, J. E. Hamilton's personality made these conferences memorable. He had read much in the Book of Life, and in his eightieth year was the master of a ripened and tolerant wisdom which was nevertheless anything but valetudinarian. The enthusiasm, drive and determination which marked his active career was hardly abated by his retirement or by his years. J. E. Hamilton was not old at eighty, neither in his brisk and wiry body, nor in his direct, inquiring mind. He was as good for a round of sound golf, a hard day's shoot in a duck-marsh, or a close-drawn bout of argument on a point of practical economics, as most men half his years.

● J. E. Hamilton was, as this record shows, in the direct line of the pioneers. Where his forefathers shoved back the wilderness, he pushed forward into the unknown regions of the machine-age—equally a pioneer. To delve into his memories, and reconstruct with him the picture of his early struggles and the upward course of his fortunes; to see how, intentionally and otherwise, he drew his native community along with him—sometimes against its will—has been to receive an indelible impression of something peculiarly American, something earnest, striving, impatient and wholly courageous.

● The book is but a pale and inadequate reflection of the man—but its preparation has been altogether a delight. If through it the reader can catch a glimpse, now and then, of the essential spirit of this pioneer and citizen, it will have served its purpose.

MARK RHEA BYERS

Two Rivers, Wisconsin.

February 8, 1932.

First Factory — Erected 1881

CHAPTER I

IT IS not strange that the favorite quotation of J. E. Hamilton, the subject of this history, should be that familiar passage of Emerson's concerning the man who builds a better mouse trap and finds the world beating a path to his door. The quotation is literally an epitome of his own life and business career, among the most notable of his generation in Wisconsin certainly, and perhaps in the whole of that great northern mid-west which, in J. E. Hamilton's boyhood, was just beginning to emerge from the ocean of trees which covered it as thoroughly as the glaciers of an earlier age.

● J. E. Hamilton's personal and business beginnings were literally, like those of Emerson's mouse-trap maker, in the woods; it was in a tiny fishing and lumbering village on the shore of Lake Michigan that he grew to manhood, and laid the foundations of a business that had nation-wide importance before he had passed middle age. It is still a small country town, although it is the home of two giant industries which

sprang from the seed planted by the most far-seeing and vigorous of its sons. And it has been, among this man's competitors and colleagues, as much a mystery why he chose to develop his expanding operations in the backwoods town of his birth as it was that he, or anyone, should have been able to thrust continually forward to new business conquests from a base so obscurely located, so far from the centers of the industry with which he was so intimately connected.

● To understand this phase of the picturesque story of J. E. Hamilton one must give due weight to a certain sentimental factor in his character, a place-affection for his birthplace that appears as an ever-recurring motive in the story of his life. Two Rivers, Wisconsin, is a part of the Hamilton achievement; in a certain typically American sense as much the creation of his mind and hands as the two great industries which he founded in its limits. Two Rivers has not always appreciated its benefactor; during his most active years, when he found time to play the part of active citizenship as well as of business executive, he had some battles with the village pettiness which, comic in retrospect, were nevertheless epic encounters in their day. At the period of this writing there is little of that spirit remaining; a newer generation with a somewhat wider outlook has begun to take pride in the achievements of a man whom their fathers, his contemporaries, thought it their duty to oppose in most of his community undertakings. Perhaps the J. E. Hamilton of the present day,

who has outlived most of his contemporaries into a serene and vigorous age, and who long ago turned over the active management of his concerns to younger hands, has become something of a living local legend; perhaps the passing of his generation, either from this world or into the more peaceful shades of later life has left fewer who "knew him when" to feel the challenge of his forceful character.

● At any rate, there is no understanding of J. E. Hamilton's life work without a background of the roaring and colorful life of Two Rivers in the days when he was a barefooted tike mingling with the French Canadian fishermen and lumberjacks, the hard-headed down-east Yankees, and the slovenly native Indians who made up the population of the little town in the pines at the confluence of the Neshotah and Mishicot Rivers on the west bank of Lake Michigan. The rivers and the pines were the reason for the existence of Two Rivers from its earliest days to the period when, like many other American communities, it passed under the sway of modern industrialism. Mr. Hamilton's maternal grandfather, a New York State Yankee with down-east heritage and traditions, may stand as the type figure of that earlier Two Rivers which was the earliest Hamilton environment, as much as his grandson may be taken as the symbol and essential factor in the later Two Rivers of the industrial age.

● "Deacon Smith" left his impression on Two Rivers, and it still lingers, fresh and strong, beneath the larger material

imprint of his grandson. His picture, hanging in the private office of J. E. Hamilton, illuminates the many legends of his prowess which cling to his memory. It is the face of an imperious and dominant man, apparently in the sixties, with heavy brows hanging over piercing eyes, and with an iron chin that thrusts itself forward like a wedge. A gash of a tight-lipped mouth is closed firmly between deeply-carved lines. A granite face, expressive of the cool courage which permitted him to perform, in the absence of doctors in his primitive community, the occasional operations of surgery and dentistry which were required—minus anaesthetics or any but the rudest appliances.

● His procedure was rough but effective. Did a man complain of toothache, he came to the Deacon's office and a couple of stout woodsmen pinned him to the floor while the Deacon adjusted his pair of old-fashioned turnkeys, put a knee on the burly chest, and performed the extraction. It was not painless dentistry, but it was effective. In Two Rivers they still tell how the Deacon, following a sawmill accident which brooked no delay, managed the amputation of an arm and saved a life.

● Hezekiah Huntington Smith—how perfectly the name embraces the legend of Deacon Smith's character—was the kingpin of Two Rivers' beginnings. There had been a village of sorts there in the pines even before the white man came, for the rivers and the abundant forest which overlay the peninsula over the rolling hills to the horizon made a favorite hunting

ground for the Indians. The location is mentioned in the records of the earliest French explorers, and the descendants of their coureurs des bois were the first white settlers of the locality. There were fish in the rivers, ducks in the marshes, pigeons in the woods, deer and partridge in abundance, for Indians and the Indian-like French woodsmen who hunted and trapped, traded with the natives, and gradually came to rely on the inexhaustible shoals of fish which abounded in Lake Michigan. To this day Two Rivers is the largest fishing port on the great lakes, and the descendants of the first French-Canadian settlers still drive their motor-tugs over the courses to the nets, miles offshore, which their great-grandfathers covered in clumsy home-built sailing "mackinaws". French, in the Canadian patois, is still a language much spoken, and the older east side of Two Rivers, beyond the harbor, where existed the first tiny settlement, is full of French names—Gagnon, Gauthier, Belonger, LaFond, LeClair.

● The modern history of Two Rivers, and so the history of J. E. Hamilton, begins with the year 1847, when Deacon Smith brought his family to the little settlement in the pines from Youngstown, New York, where he had been operating a sawmill which was not a successful business venture, because of the increasing scarcity of timber and the pressure of the competing lumber beginning to come east as the axe was laid to the Wisconsin and Michigan forests.

● The deacon purchased a small sawmill which had been

running in Two Rivers since 1836, and had been built by Judge John Lawe and Robert M. Eberts, both of Green Bay. In the fashion of the day, the new mill-owner also opened a general store to supply necessaries to his lumbermen and mill hands, and to Indians, fishermen and other residents of the locality, including the few settlers who were beginning the agricultural onslaught on the primeval forest.

● The sawmill had not far to go for material when Deacon Smith took it over. Two Rivers itself lay in a small clearing in the big woods. It was a fine stand of pine that covered that part of Wisconsin when the lumbermen first attacked it. Fine white "cork pine" it was, for the most part, ranked as closely as could be for miles. Through it ran the two rivers, which provided summer-long easy transportation for the logs cut along their banks during the winter. As the years went on the logging camps moved farther and farther back into the woods, but eventually most of the pine in the section between the lake shore at Two Rivers and the foot of Green Bay came down the Neshotah and the Mishicot, and was turned into merchantable timber in the sawmills of Two Rivers. It went out into the markets from the piers built into the lake near by the junction of the two rivers.

● Among the other enterprises of Deacon Smith, who ran the sawmill and the lumber camps, pre-empted many acres of timber, and was the local magnate in most lines as well as impromptu surgeon and clergyman for the community—for

the Deacon was as religious as his New England ancestry made natural—was a small drug store which occupied a corner of the general store. It was an important and necessary service to a frontier community, and the Deacon provided a competent druggist to take charge of it. He was Henry Carter Hamilton, who was to become the husband of the deacon's daughter, Diantha Smith, and the father of J. E. Hamilton. It was in 1848, the year following Deacon Smith's arrival in Two Rivers, that the elder Hamilton came to take charge of the drug store, and met his future wife.

● It is interesting to record the ancestry of J. E. Hamilton. His maternal grandfather, the Deacon, was a descendant in the sixth generation of Simon Huntington, born in Norwich, England, who came with that party of Norfolk men and women who established Norwich, Connecticut, in 1633—Puritans of the clearest water. That old Simon Huntington never reached the new land of religious freedom. He died of smallpox aboard the emigrant ship, and was buried at sea just before they made their landfall. His son, Simon, was born in England in 1629, and was four years of age when he landed, fatherless, in the new world. He lived to become one of the founders of the new Norwich, a leader in church and state, and his son, also Simon, was the grandfather of Major David Huntington, Connecticut revolutionary soldier, who later was authorized by the Continental Congress to set up the first arms plant of the colonial government. The story goes that Major David Huntington

was the first man in America to make a gun, when he began to produce muskets for Washington's troops. He was a cousin of that Samuel Huntington who was a signer of the Declaration, and President of the Continental Congress from 1779 to 1781.

● Deacon Hezekiah Huntington Smith married Diantha Haile, of the Vermont family of that name, and his daughter Diantha became the wife of Henry Carter Hamilton.

● Henry Carter Hamilton was descended on the side of his mother, Marie Underhill Dann, from John Underhill, a Puritan soldier who had seen service in the Netherlands, and who was the third captain of the Boston colony's militia, succeeding Winthrop and Coddington, who married a widow, daughter-in-law of Governor Winthrop of the colony. Henry Carter Hamilton's mother was the daughter of Sarah Underhill, who married Captain Selleck Dann of the British army after the latter cast in his lot with the new United States following the Revolution.

● On his father's side, Henry Carter Hamilton was of Scotch Irish extraction, grandson of George Hamilton of Tyrone County, Ireland, who lost his wife at sea on the voyage to America, and married Sarah Geddes, cousin of the originator and chief engineer of the Erie Canal, of an Ulster family which came to America in 1752.

● Thus J. E. Hamilton is equally of Puritan Yankee and North of Ireland blood—both of them strains noted for steadfastness, courage, energy and determination—the foundation

stock of the pioneers of America. It was also the stock that showed the way to later comers in the assault upon the primeval Wisconsin forest.

● And it was to a typical pioneer, frontier town that Deacon Smith's daughter returned at the age of 18, after having received an education in what is now Downer College, in Milwaukee. There were no schools in the village, which had only a few hundred inhabitants, mostly lumbermen, fishermen and a few Indians, and Miss Smith was not long in starting a private school in a log cabin which then stood on what is now the principal corner of the town. It was not long that she remained a teacher, however, for her acquaintance with the young druggist who had been brought to the city by the Deacon quickly ripened into a romance, and they were married in the Deacon's home on December 23, 1849.

House on Washington Street, Two Rivers, near the West Twin River, where J. E. Hamilton was born. Photographed in 1932

CHAPTER II

JAMES EDWARD HAMILTON came into the world on May 19, 1852, in a little frame cottage that was still standing on the main street of Two Rivers in 1932. It was an amusing environment for a small boy. The home is not far from the river bank, just above the harbor, and when "J. E." first became aware of his surroundings the river was a fascinating attraction. It was full of logs that had come down the river from the lumber camps, and were awaiting the attention of the screaming saws of the mill which stood on the bank. Picturesque lumbermen filled the streets and plied their trade with cant-hook, chain and axe along the banks or in precarious footing on the rafts that came down the river. As Deacon Smith's grandson, the young Hamilton was a privileged character among the rough men, and he early learned to "run logs" with the best of the village boys. It was a rather risky sport that gave his mother a good deal of worry, the point of which was to run along and across the logs floating inside the booms at the mill. It took a quick eye and

a nimble foot to dance from log to log, without a wetting. One had to learn to take light fast steps on the smaller logs, and how to survey and choose the most feasible route in a split second in full career. Then there were rides on the puffing little tug "Black Maria" which bunted the rafts down the rivers, and the crews of the lumber schooners to watch as they came and went along the busy, timber-piled wharfs.

● A picturesque note in the village life was the frequent presence of the Indians who lived in considerable numbers around the village. Mr. Hamilton recalled that his earliest impression of them, and one often repeated, was a dance conducted in the main street of the town. The drummer would squat in the dust and the shuffling circle would form around him, while the whites looked on curiously from doorways and store platforms. Now and then a begging Indian would walk unceremoniously into the house and ask for whatever he saw.

● It was a country full of game, and young Ed, as he was then called, developed his skill with rod and gun at an early age, learning then a love of the outdoors that lasted all his life. His muzzle-loading shot gun brought down hundreds of ducks from the great flocks that lay upon the rivers in fall and spring migrations, and there was rich hunting among the pines when the great passenger pigeon flights came along. On what is now the populous east side of Two Rivers was a stand of timber, not yet axed, which was a nesting place for the pigeons in the thousands, and squabs were a familiar article of local diet.

● But, interested as he was in the usual sports of a small boy, the chief interest that the young Hamilton found in his native village was concentrated about the puffing engines and screaming saws of the sawmill. There had also been established by this time two other woodworking industries in Two Rivers, which claimed the budding mechanical interest of the youngster.

● In 1856, the firm of Aldrich, Smith & Co., seeking added outlets for its products, induced some New England men—William Honey, Thomas Burns and Charles Jennison, to come to the village and set up a chair factory. This was the beginning of the New England Manufacturing Company, which for many years remained a leading industry of the town. A year later a pail factory was organized and built by a concern known as the H. C. Hamilton & Co. Aldrich, Smith & Co.—the Deacon and his partner—were the major stockholders, and the Deacon's son-in-law and William H. Metcalf, a brother-in-law of Mr. Hamilton who came from Lockport, New York, were the other members of the concern.

● H. C. Hamilton had by this time dropped out of his father-in-law's drug store, and had been for some time operating a general store in a partnership known as Henderson & Hamilton. This venture was not a success, and was discontinued upon the formation of the pail factory.

● The elder Hamilton's connection with the pail factory was also to prove not permanent. He had become interested in

politics, and about the time that the pail factory was completed in 1857 he was elected to the state legislature. This was not in line with the wishes of Deacon Smith, who held that a business man had no time for politics, and shortly thereafter Mr. Hamilton's connection with the factory was severed.

● This rupture in the Hamilton business relationships in Two Rivers led to the removal of the family, when "J. E." was eight years old, to the little town of Waucousta—now known as Greenbush—14 miles southeast of Fond du Lac. Here Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Metcalf, his brother-in-law, started a combination grist mill and sawmill, together with a general store—J. U. Hamilton, a brother, furnished the capital and this firm was called J. U. Hamilton & Co.—but the venture had only been under way two years when the Civil War broke out, and H. C. Hamilton became First Lieutenant and Quartermaster of the 21st Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, and the family moved back to Two Rivers.

● Fifty years after this brief interlude J. E. Hamilton drove back to Waucousta, and brought back from the ruins of his father's mill a rusted stencil-plate with the legend "High Grade Flour manufactured by J. U. Hamilton & Co.," which still remains among his souvenirs. And on that same return he was able to find and show his wife the souvenir of a vividly-remembered spanking administered by his father when the youngster had tried out a new Christmas axe on the corner of the house—the mark of the axe was still there to remind him

of the only whipping he ever received from his father.

● While the father was in the Union Army, Mrs. Hamilton returned to Two Rivers, to be near her parents, and it was to Two Rivers that word came of Lieutenant Hamilton's death. He died at Nashville, Tennessee, on April 4, 1864, leaving his young widow with four small children, the oldest J. E. Hamilton, a boy of twelve.

● It was decided, in the family conclaves which followed word of H. C. Hamilton's death, that it would be wiser to remove the family back east to Lockport, where Mr. Hamilton's two brothers were living, and where the opportunities for schooling for the children would be better than could be found in the lumber village in the woods.

● It was a rather downcast family group that traveled back to New York State that fall of '64, through a country worried and intent upon the closing months of the war between the states. Its breadwinner was gone, its possessions of the slenderest, and the oldest boy was yet too small to be of much assistance to his mother, while the demands upon her time and strength of the two-year-old Henry Hamilton made it impossible for her to add much to the family resources. Nevertheless, Mrs. Hamilton saw to it that young Edward should continue his education, and for two years she found means to keep him in the Lockport Union High School.

● Those two years were the last of Mr. Hamilton's formal education. At the end of the second school year it had become

imperative, if the family were to get along, that he should begin to earn what he could. Yet by the time he had reached fourteen there had been planted in Mr. Hamilton's character the desire and ambition for knowledge. Though never later to enter school or class, he became an eager student under his mother's direction, acquiring reading habits which remained throughout his life. Few business men become better informed, or conversant with a wider range of subjects, than J. E. Hamilton.

CHAPTER III

THE duties of a breadwinner for his mother and the three smaller children fell upon the shoulders of J. E. Hamilton at the age of 14. The two Hamilton uncles in Lockport found that the support of their brother's widow and her family was a burden which would be appreciably lightened by the earnings of the young Edward, and he entered the workaday world in 1866, at first as a carrier-boy for the Lockport Daily Journal. The wage of a newsboy, however, was insufficient, and in a short time the youngster got a full-time job—at fifty cents a day—as water-boy serving the crew of a stone quarry. This job shortly was succeeded by one that if no more lucrative, was at least less arduous—that of cash boy in a dry goods store. Young Hamilton remained a cash-boy, at three dollars a week, for the next two years.

● In the meantime Mrs. Hamilton had been growing anxious for her own people, and for a life more congenial than that of a pensioner in the family of her late husband's brothers. Lockport seemed to offer no great prospects for her eldest

son, and back in Wisconsin there would be opportunities to which his grandfather's position as a substantial citizen and business man could open the door. So, in 1868, the widow retraced her journey with her brood, and Edward again entered into the frontier environment of Two Rivers.

● He was then just turned seventeen, a vigorous and wiry youth, somewhat less than middle-sized, but compact and well-knit. His fondness for mechanics, it might be noted, had already demonstrated itself. He was "handy" with tools, and a notable whittler. The younger children were kept supplied with kites, windmills, and water-wheels which actually "went" by his industrious jack-knife, and Mr. Hamilton, half a century later, was still able to recall his pleasure at securing as his first job in the old home-town, a post as tender of a clothes-pin lathe. The job was given him at the instance of his grandfather, Deacon Smith, who was a considerable stockholder in the pail and tub factory of Mann Brothers, active Jewish business men who had come to the city and taken over control of the factory which Deacon Smith and others, including young Hamilton's father, had started.

● The clothes-pin lathe was a delight to the youngster. It was a semi-automatic machine, operated at a rather high rate of production when one had acquired the motion-routine. In conversation with the writer fifty-two years later, Mr. Hamilton illustrated the routine with easy facility. It was his first intimate contact with machinery, and he was de-

lighted. He rapidly became an efficient lathe-hand, and even at the low price rate of 20 cents a barrel made what was considered pretty good wages for the time. Eight barrels a day was regarded as a good day's work on the lathe, Mr. Hamilton recalled.

● The youth continued as a lathe-hand for some two years, turning in his earnings to the family purse, but his interests were by no means confined to his routine job. His interest in machinery, to remain a vital hobby for the rest of his days, made him a volunteer helper around the engine room of the pail factory, and he acquired a good working knowledge of steam engines and their care and operation, which lay at the root of much of his subsequent development.

● There is still extant in Two Rivers a tale of this period which may have some bearing upon the subsequent history of J. E. Hamilton. It is the story of a mammoth kite, the largest anybody ever heard of, which the young mill-hand constructed. It was very much of a kite, this master-piece. It stood twelve feet high, built of sticks an inch and a half wide and three-quarters of an inch thick. It carried a tail fifty feet long or more, and it was flown with small clothesline, on the lake beach. It was an event in Two Rivers when that kite took the air, taxing the strength of a man to hold it, and when Ed Hamilton topped it off by attaching a lantern to the kite and sending it aloft at night, admiration reached its peak. It was large scale fun, the fun of a boy seventeen who was

doing a man's work; hindsight fifty-odd years later can perhaps discover in the kite the working of a mind that naturally tended to do things in the biggest way possible.

● After two years at the clothespin lathe—and of keen observation around the power plant of the pail and tub factory—young Hamilton became a full-fledged engineer. One of the Lockport uncles, Horace W. Hamilton, came to Two Rivers and believed he saw a field in the growing village for a brick yard, which he accordingly started upon a site near the lake front, now occupied by a coal dock. That was in 1872, and the proprietor's nephew was invited to use his mechanical knowledge in the operation of the stationary steam engine which motivated the brick-making machinery. For two years or thereabouts the brick yard continued, in but a languishing way, and finally it was discontinued, leaving its engineer jobless, but unwilling to return to the pail factory if some other livelihood might be found. So it came about that J. E. Hamilton went into business for himself, using his brick yard engine as the power plant and the brick yard engine room as his business premises. The business was the manufacture of wall-brackets and other odds and ends of furniture that might be constructed or ornamented with the scroll-saw work which was in vogue at that time. It proved to be something less than successful, there being small market for scroll-sawed what-nots and bric-a-brac after the first few months had glutted the local consuming power. But it was not labor lost,

for the wood-working knowledge so gained was more or less directly responsible for the Hamilton venture into the manufacture of wood-type in which his career was ultimately launched.

● The scroll-sawed furniture business was closed out after a few months had exhausted its possibilities and its owner's small capital, and he found work again as an engineer—a pile-driver engineer on the government work on the Sturgeon Bay Canal. That was in 1873, and young Hamilton had just reached his majority.

● It appears that the young man was a pretty good pile-driver engineer, for the summer following his work on the Sturgeon Bay Canal found him running the pile-driver for the Twin River Point lighthouse, marking the dangerous shoals off that formerly much-feared point on the Wisconsin shore. And the following season young Hamilton was employed by Knapp & Gillen, Racine construction contractors, as pile-driver for the breakwater of the school for Girls at Kenosha, Wisconsin. Incidentally, some thirty years later, when the Hamilton company was building a dock alongside its plant on the Two Rivers harbor front, and no pile-driver engineer was immediately available, the president of the company recalled his youthful skill, rigged up the necessary apparatus from material available around the plant, and himself drove the piles for the dock.

● There followed a return to the wood-working factories of

Two Rivers, this time as piece-work contractor in the chair factory. It was under a system now obsolete, but then in general use, in which the manufacture of various parts was farmed out to responsible contractors who employed their own workmen in the factory. Ed Hamilton had a crew of five and six men, making chair parts, and did well enough, according to local standards, at the job, his income averaging around $60 a month.

● The humdrum routine of the chair factory, however, palled after the more exciting adventurous life with the rough construction crews of the previous summers, and when the Black Hills gold rush fever struck Two Rivers in 1876 it found an easy victim in J. E. Hamilton. He was an eager listener to the tales of "gold from the grass roots down" which were spun by James Scott, a former Two Rivers resident who had been to the gold fields and had returned with nuggets to show and great tales to tell. All winter long little else but the quick and easy fortunes to be made by men able to face hardships and dangers in the Indian-infested west was discussed among the young men of the village, and when April, 1877, opened the roads for travel it found a party of twelve venturesome gold-seekers, including young Hamilton, packed and ready for the journey.

CHAPTER IV

THE later Hamilton always regarded his brief experience as a gold-seeker as the hinge upon which his life turned — the crossroads at which, by a lesson of inexorable experience, he was turned back into the familiar if less glamorous ways of the "home town."

● "After I came back from the Black Hills," he told the writer, "I was cured of the idea that the only chance for a young fellow was to get away from Two Rivers. I was cured of the idea of looking for easy money, of winning by a stroke of luck instead of by hard work and patience. The day I returned, broke and tired out, I told my mother that I was going to settle down at home and see what lay under my nose. It was valuable experience, but it was valuable only as experience—and as a warning."

● James Scott, who led Ed Hamilton and the rest of a dozen Two Rivers youths on the Odyssey to the Black Hills, was a former Two Rivers resident who had more or less happened to be in the first rush of the gold-seekers to the Deadwood strike.

He had secured a claim along the creek since so famous in verse and story, and had worked it out in the preceding summer, returning with a few thousands of dollars, a stirring story of life in the west, and a few nuggets from his placer mine to prove his story. All the winter of 1876-77 he was a center of interest to the village youth at the old Lake House, the tavern which was the club of the community, with his stories of the exciting life and sudden riches of the Black Hills. He was frank enough about the dangers and hardships of the Deadwood life. He told the boys who hung on his words—thereby inflaming their eagerness only the more—that it was a hard life and that there was no more than a chance of fortune. But his nuggets of virgin gold were more emphatic than his tales of bad men and Indians, and when he announced his return in the spring of 1877 and offered to conduct any of his audience who meant to go to the Black Hills in spite of danger and difficulty, he speedily had a band of adventurers.

● It was no small undertaking for young Hamilton to get his outfit ready and pull up stakes. He was not yet 25, and inured to family responsibilities, when the chance came to go with the Scott party to the west. He had a job in the chair factory, but most of his earnings had gone to the support of his mother and his younger brothers and sister, who were just beginning to shoulder their share of the burden. Many and anxious were the conferences in the Hamilton home between the young man and his mother while the trip was planned.

● Mrs. Hamilton never opposed the venture. She had faith in the capacity of the son who had been her mainstay since his early teens, and when he declared his intention of going west her thought was of how to secure the necessary means rather than to keep him with her. Eventually the problem was solved by borrowing $200 on the home at Nineteenth and Washington Streets—still standing in 1932—which Deacon Smith had built for his daughter's family. David Nottage, an English toolmaker in the pail factory, made the loan and took a mortgage on the place as security.

● Great was the indignation of Deacon Smith when he learned that his daughter had mortgaged the home he gave her to finance her son's adventure into the Black Hills. "Fooling away her home!" was his angry comment; but Mrs. Hamilton was undisturbed. "Ed will pay it back," she assured her father, "and he wanted to go."

● It is of record that Ed did pay it back, some six or seven years later. He was then embarked upon the Hamilton Manufacturing Company, and remarkably short of cash because of the way in which his income was being plowed back into extensions and development. David Nottage, who was by that time building machinery for the new plant, received his satisfaction of mortgage in the form of $200 in stock in his young employer's company, and lived to see it multiply a hundred fold in value.

● So Ed Hamilton was with the argonauts of '77 who set out

for adventure and riches in the Black Hills. They traveled by rail to Milwaukee, Chicago and eventually to Cheyenne, Wyoming, where they were to take the stage coach into Deadwood. At Cheyenne they had their first taste of the rough life they were to encounter.

● The group of tenderfoots was gathered in front of the rude hotel in Cheyenne the evening of their arrival, feeling "pretty brash" as Mr. Hamilton recalled a generation later, with the new freedom of the plains and their own daring and importance. A man came out of a gambling house across the street and began to walk away. Another came out of a similar establishment on the hotel side, spied the other across the street and drew a revolver. The other drew also, and in a split second the guns were barking while the dismayed Two Riverites "scattered for cover," as Mr. Hamilton said.

● One of the combatants crumpled into a heap in the middle of the street. His opponent put up his gun and walked away, while by-standers gathered up the dead man and carried him into the hotel and up-stairs to his wife. The Wisconsin group re-assembled, white-faced and shaken, a good deal less cocky than they had been a few minutes before.

● When they left for Deadwood in the stage next morning they were a smaller group. Three of the original starters had followed the lead of a young German of the party who had insisted that such places were best escaped as quickly as possible, and had set his face for home at sight of the tragedy.

The rest, however, damped as their ardor was by the convincing evidence of the dangers of frontier life, were for Deadwood and the gold diggings. They had come to see life in the Black Hills, and they were not to be turned back without a taste of it.

● So, packed like sardines in a Concord coach, each with a Sharps rifle across his knee for possible highwaymen or Indians, they made the 300 mile trip into Deadwood. It was the year after the Custer massacre on the Little Bighorn, and the Sioux war parties were abroad, the driver of the coach pointing out numerous fresh trails of Indian bands to his passengers as the six-horse teams galloped from station to station along the trail. They were unmolested, however, either by Indians or renegade whites, and reached Deadwood in schedule time.

● One of the passengers in the coach which bore young Hamilton, incidentally was the famous Calamity Jane, whom Mr. Hamilton recalled as a loud-swearing, smoking, and tobacco-chewing woman of hard and weathered features, who was almost incredible to the group of young men from the softer communities of the east.

● The coach which followed them the day after their arrival in Deadwood was set upon by highwaymen, the driver and several passengers being killed. The Two Rivers contingent, still at a loose end in the brawling mining camp, went down to the stage station and saw the bodies brought in, their clothing pierced with buck-shot wounds.

● The Two Rivers party quickly found that it was not so easy as it looked to become gold-miners. The diggings along the gulch where gold had been discovered were pre-empted for miles, and it was almost inevitable death, especially for the inexperienced, to venture into the hills back from the camp to look for virgin fields. The placer-mines in the creek bed were about panned out, and the quartz-mining in the original veins in the hills was just beginning. But that required capital and experience which the tenderfoot did not possess, and the Wisconsinites were forced to go to work with pick-and-shovel, at $5 a day, digging a sluiceway for some placer operations that earlier comers were developing.

● It was not long before the drudgery, the impossibility of actually engaging in the quest for gold, the hard life and the constant danger had cured the Two Rivers men of the gold fever. Those who had the money were not long in turning back toward civilization. Ed Hamilton was one of those who had first to earn his way out. So for four months he worked with pick and shovel for his getaway stake, living in the meanwhile in a cabin with others of his fellows up the gulch near Gayville. They slept on straw in pole bunks, and ate mostly beans—at 25 cents a pound—which they cooked themselves over an open fire. For amusement, after their days of digging, they wandered into the roaring single street of Deadwood, watching its gambling, drinking, shooting career. They learned to be wary of the ugly, drunken bad man with his ever-ready guns

low on the hip for a quick draw. They became expert in seeking cover when voices rose and guns barked. They saw sudden death in many violent guises, vice in the raw—and longed for the village on the lake.

● Eventually those who were left had their stakes, and started out of the hills for Fort Pierre on the Missouri River. They had come in with bright hopes, riding a coach in style. They went out with a mule train, trudging the weary miles on foot and sleeping in their blankets under the wagons at night. On the way, Mr. Hamilton recalled, they passed mule trains coming in, accompanied by singing, shouting tenderfoot adventurers eager for the mining camp and the gold-hunt, who jeered them for quitters while the veterans smiled at their enthusiasm, so soon to be dashed.

● At Fort Pierre there was a ten-day wait for the river steamboat, and a quiet journey around the bends of the Missouri to Yankton, where the party broke up. Those who could went straight home. Young Hamilton, loth to return empty-handed, had written home before he left Deadwood, and had had 200 old-fashioned clothes-bars sent by the chair factory to Yankton, which he hoped to peddle and so defray his expenses en route.

● The clothes-bars sold for $2, but the trade was not brisk. After exhausting the market in Yankton, he packed up his remaining stock and took it to Dubuque on his way home. When the clothes-bars were gone traveling and living expenses had eaten up the proceeds, and there was barely money left to

see the adventurer home. He came back, unannounced, empty-handed, on a steamboat from Milwaukee, and recalled years later that nothing he had seen on his travels looked so good to him as the long piers of Two Rivers jutting out into the lake with their piled lumber, and the raw little village in the pines in the early summer of 1877.

● "So you're back, Ed," was his mother's greeting. And the disappointed gold-seeker replied:

● "Yes, I'm back; and back to stay. If there's anything in the old town I'm going to get it out of her."

● And the next day Ed Hamilton was back in the chair factory, at his old job, with his 200 unpaid-for clothes-bars to work out, and a $200 mortgage to pay off as souvenirs of the gold-hunt. He never thereafter could be induced—though many tried—to sever his destiny from Two Rivers.

CHAPTER V

ALWAYS in considering the course of any noteworthy career the point of departure, the spring-board which cast the hero of the tale into the flood-tide which led on to fortune, in the Shakespearian phrase, is a focal point of interest. It is seldom that a career of any sort is planned, at least with any definition of detail. The potential statesman, business man, poet or author usually does not know exactly where he is going, or just what he means to do, before he starts. Sometimes he may have a general and rather vague direction in his head; more often than not he happens upon something that, working out, sets his intelligence and determination along a certain line which, because it has once proven feasible, he continues to follow. Often enough there are false starts, repeated beginnings, a certain amount of time and effort wasted in fumbling about for the handle by which life may be grasped.

● It is so in the case of J. E. Hamilton. In a rather disconnected and indecisive way his years from seventeen, when

he went to work as a lathe hand, until twenty-seven, when the Hamilton Manufacturing Company was launched as a one-man business, without even any particular name or compact field marked out, were preparation and schooling for what followed in the next fifty years. But they were not consciously so while Mr. Hamilton was living them. His factory experience taught him factory methods, the handling of workmen, the uses and possibilities of machinery. The brickyard and pile-driver experience added intimate and practical knowledge of engines; the abortive scroll-saw, what-not and bric-a-brac shop was a lesson in the importance of markets, and perhaps a training in the organization of new forms and designs for the uses of wood-working machinery. The Black Hills administered a sink-or-swim course in independence and self-reliance, and cooled the youthful wanderlust which J. E. Hamilton shared with the generality of healthy young men. In ten years of apprenticeship to life Mr. Hamilton had learned a good deal of what he might be able to do, and quite as important, had acquired some knowledge of what not to do.

● He had acquired, among other things, a pretty definite idea—common enough in his youth and today—that he wanted to "go into business for himself." Like most other aggressive and ambitious young men, he had perceived that any considerable success was not to be made on wage or salary. But he hadn't hit upon his field; restless but irresolute, he was waiting for the "hunch," the inspiration that might point out

the way to his energy and ambition.

● And at this period in his life there came one of those trivial incidents which make such good reading in the biographies of men of achievement, because of their seeming inconsequence in the face of the paramount importance which they assume in the perspective of later years. Mr. Hamilton's particular incident was the outgrowth, in a sense, of the wall bracket and what-not business which had languished and died in the little engine room of the defunct brickyard. That had not been a success, but it had informed all the village that young Hamilton was handy with his scroll-saw, and could turn out almost any sort of woodwork that one had a mind to ask of him.

● He was back at his old job in the chair factory, receiving with as much good nature as was reasonable the raillery of his friends who had not been to the Black Hills and were therefore in ideal position to comment upon those who had returned thence empty-handed, when opportunity presented herself in the guise of the local editor and job office proprietor, William F. Nash, publisher of the Two Rivers Chronicle, and a power in Wisconsin circles of the democratic party.

● Mr. Nash had bitten off a job of printing which was a little more than his somewhat primitive country shop could chew. He had agreed to deliver some large posters for a dance to be held in the village, and found when he came to set up the job that he had not the display type necessary for work of this character. There was no time left in which to send an order

through the slow channels of the printers' supply business of those days, when all type came from the East. As a last resort he turned to young Hamilton, who might be able to make some sort of makeshift type with his woodworking tools.

● And so about November 1, 1880, came about J. E. Hamilton's introduction to the needs of the printing trade, and his debut in the field of wood-type manufacture. When Mr. Nash had explained his needs, and they had together reasoned out by rule-of-thumb what might passably satisfy them, young Hamilton sketched out on paper a crude outline of the words "Grand Ball at Turner Hall," in more or less Gothic capitals, received the approval of his design from Mr. Nash, and went to work on the foot-power scroll-saw which stood in a little workroom in his mother's cottage.

● Transferring the design to a thin piece of hardwood, he sawed the outlines, mounted the result on a block of softer wood, sand-papered and polished the top to a printing finish, and planed the under side of the block to approximately "type high." The resultant piece of work was what is known as a logotype—a single block with the entire legend in one piece. It was in outline—the letters incised, to print as white in a black ground. The logotype was unearthed a generation later in the accumulated rubbish of the Chronicle office, incidentally, and entered Mr. Hamilton's collection of souvenirs in exchange for a font of Hamilton wood type, which by that time was standard material in the cases of printers all over

the world. It was still a usable piece of printing material.

● The emergency logotype surprised Mr. Nash and its maker by printing remarkably well. It was perfectly true, well finished, and went on the press with a minimum of make-ready. Mr. Nash commended it, and young Hamilton, who had been thinking and asking questions about wood type from the time he completed the job, began to trace letters in the ornamental wood type styles of the day and to saw them out methodically after working hours in his home workshop.

● Mr. Nash, who was watching the experiments with interest, was so well pleased with the first logotype, and with other faces that young Hamilton cut in the next week or two and submitted for his inspection, that he ordered four or five fonts of display type. Mr. Hamilton offered them at a figure much below the cost of type purchased through the regular channels of the trade, and they printed as effectively as any others, Mr. Nash found.

● When several fonts of these letters had been thus sawed out, mounted and finished, the experimenter dispatched one to his brother, George Dann Hamilton, who had but recently embarked upon a newspaper career at the little town of Detroit, Minnesota. With them went a letter describing the Nash incident, and requesting a verdict on the printing qualities of the type.

● "I had an idea from the first," Mr. Hamilton said some fifty-odd years later, "that this was the thing I had been

looking for. I remember telling my mother that I believed I had found something I could do and could sell. I know I kept plugging at the saw, making type faces and experimenting with various kinds of wood, ways of mounting them, and of getting a good printing surface. I can't say I had any great conception of the possibilities. But I was convinced by Mr. Nash's posters that I could make type that would print, and the more I inquired the more I became convinced that there was a field for such type."

● Henry Hamilton, who was then working for George D. Hamilton at Detroit, returned a letter shortly containing a good report of his brother's type. More to the point, he gave some information about the possible means of marketing it, and enclosed, as a gift in return for his brother's font of type, a package of labels reading "This is a sample of Hollywood Type. If you are interested, write J. E. Hamilton, Two Rivers, Wisconsin, for further particulars." He suggested that these labels be affixed to types cut by his brother, and sent to newspapers in Wisconsin and adjoining states, as a feeler to test out the market.

● Hollywood Type, the trade name by which the Hamilton type was first introduced, referred to the wood which was the material Mr. Hamilton had found most suitable for his first experiments. It worked easily, without splitting, was clear and close-grained, and took a fine finish which gave a good printing surface. For some years it was holly wood which was

used exclusively in the Hamilton type shop, and for years the process of sawing the letters out of thin pieces of this wood, for gluing to a solid base of cheaper wood, which young Hamilton originated in his complete lack of knowledge of wood-type manufacture, was the process by which his product was turned out. Much later, Mr. Hamilton discovered that the standard method of routing the letters from a solid block of end-wood was a more efficient process, but much Hollywood Type turned out by his individual process was sold and is still in use in print shops through the middle west, for it was durable and carefully made.

● The first order received for Hollywood Type by the anxious manufacturer, after he had acted on his brother's suggestion, came from the Green Bay Gazette, located in a town some forty miles from Two Rivers. It amounted to $2.50. A few days later there came an order from Chippewa Falls, where a Mr. Cunningham was running a paper and needed some display type. This was a magnificent piece of business, amounting to $12.00 and young Hamilton immediately threw up his job in the chair factory. He was at last in business for himself.

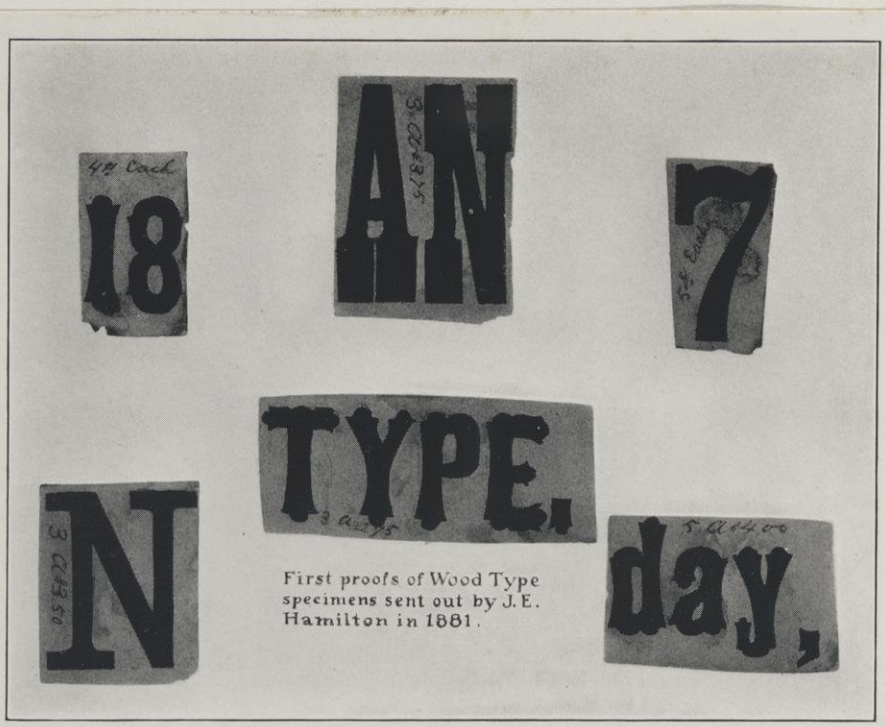
● In the fall of 1880 young Ed Hamilton, who had just thrown up his job in the chair factory to launch the precarious craft of an unknown business venture in the waters of the printing industry, of which he knew nothing, would probably have seemed not unlike the run of the young mill-hands of the lumber village who were his contemporaries. He was 28

years old, rather under middle height, but wiry and agile. He was an able baseball player, taking a keen delight in this new game of strength and skill which was invading the backwoods. He was a keen hunter, a better-than-average shot, a patient and tireless worker, but vigorously full of fun and a leader in the rough horse-play or hardly more subtle practical jokes which were the humor of the place and time.

● He does not appear in the available records of the day, nor in the memory of his contemporaries, as having been particularly marked for eminence among his fellows. He must have had a certain well-earned knowledge of the world of men, and certainly he had learned in the school of hard knocks how to "hold up his end." He was a skilled mechanic, intensely interested in the possibilities of power machinery which was quickening the simple frontier world with the first stirrings of the industrial age. As a contractor-worker in the chair factory he had taken his first lessons in the management of men, and he rated in Two Rivers as one of its able younger citizens—a dependable worker, a man of ambition.

● Two Rivers was then twenty years past the days when it had been predominantly Yankee in blood and outlook. To its admixture of French Canadian lumberjacks and fishermen, had come a growing population of Germans and Bohemians who were moving in among the stumps left by the lumbermen to grub farms out of the land that had but lately been the big woods. Perhaps to the older folk young Ed Hamilton seemed

to be stepping a little past the rather rigid boundaries of the New England outlook which had lost its grip on the village. It is not of record that the puritanism of Deacon Smith, was very strongly reflected in his grandson. And the conservatives, who in their own youth had set out from Massachusetts and New York State to trade hard living for a chance at fortune in the Wisconsin woods, were nevertheless inclined to shake their heads a little at the touch of adventurousness which kept young Hamilton from settling down; which sent him up and down the lake shore with rough construction crews, and off to the Black Hills looking for the pot of gold at the rainbow's foot.



First proofs of Wood Type specimens sent out by J. E. Hamilton in 1881.

CHAPTER VI

LOOKING back over the vista of fifty years toward this period of beginning, Mr. Hamilton told the writer in 1930, with a chuckle, that in 1880 he did "two things that caused the neighbors to shake their heads." He got married and quit his job in the factory to go into business for himself.

● It is probable that there was more than an accidental connection in time between these two pivotal events in the dawning career of J. E. Hamilton. Certainly it is true that Mrs. Hamilton played a considerable and important part in the development of the business which her husband launched just after their marriage on August 5, 1880. In the first difficult years in which it was feeling its way along, she was as much in and of the business as was her young husband. She was bookkeeper, cashier, chief aide and counsellor. Mr. Hamilton learned to look to her for a shrewd and tolerant estimate of the men with whom he dealt, to sharpen his judgment upon hers, to draw heavily upon her intelligence and in-

stinctive balance in the formulation of policies. In those early years she ran home, nursery and office simultaneously and successfully, while her husband was not less versatile as general executive, shop superintendent and sales-force.

● A rather remarkable woman, Mrs. Etta Shove Hamilton. Her ancestry had the same Yankee origins as that of her husband, and like him she was a native of the Wisconsin lakeshore. She was born in Manitowoc, a short seven miles from Two Rivers, but in her girlhood her family removed to Appleton, and she did not meet Mr. Hamilton until a few days after his return from the Black Hills. Miss Shove was the "new teacher," then, and a personage in the little village. She was something of a curiosity in Two Rivers, as a college-bred woman. Mr. Hamilton met her on July 4, 1877, at the home of his grandfather, the redoubtable Deacon Smith, where she was visiting, to get acquainted preparatory to assuming her position as teacher of the village school in the fall. According to contemporary standards, Miss Shove was something of a bluestocking. She was a student at Lawrence College, in Appleton, and was preparing to make her own way as a teacher. She did, in fact, teach for three years, one in Two Rivers and two in the public schools of Appleton. But she was also a lovely, light-hearted and level-headed girl. It is perhaps worth noting that she did not remain long a guest of Deacon Smith; the stiff, somewhat grim atmosphere of that rigid household proved too repressive, and she made an excuse to

find other lodgings during the school term.

● But it was at Deacon Smith's that she and Ed Hamilton first met, when the young gold-seeker called upon his grandparents to pay his respects and give an account of himself after his return from the Black Hills. The young man found himself something less awed by the accomplishments of the visitor, perhaps, than he had expected. The charming young lady was also a good fellow, with a delightful capacity for gayety and an understanding of young ambitions. From that day Ed Hamilton was the new teacher's escort—and vague ambitions for accomplishment began to take on definite shape and determined purpose.

● No observant guest at the golden wedding celebration of Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton in 1930 could fail to understand why Mr. Hamilton has always insisted upon the importance of his wife's contribution to his own outstanding business achievement. Erect, vigorous and vital at seventy-one, she gave the impression of a magnetic and incisive personality. She was a grandmother of experienced years, but none would have dared to call her an old lady—especially after watching her, confident and accurate, upon the golf course, or listening to her informed and perspicuous comment upon men and affairs. Keen, quick and gay, there was a twinkling youth in her eyes that gave a hint of the exhaustless wells of energy, high spirits and courage that she brought to the support of her young husband in the difficult days when money was scarce and

business difficulties threatened to swamp the ambitions they held for their joint enterprise. It became easy to see why she had been the confidante of successive "younger generations" in Two Rivers.

● Miss Shove and young Hamilton were married at Appleton, August 5, 1880, at the home of her mother, Mrs. Lavancia Shove, and returned to Two Rivers to the home of Mr. Hamilton's mother, in one room of which he had the little workshop in which was hatched the germ of the idea which became the Hamilton Manufacturing Company. She was twenty-one; he was twenty-eight. The bridegroom was then still an employee of the chair factory, as foreman under the system then in use by which capable and reliable men made contracts for certain specified production at an agreed price, employing their own crews to turn out the work with the company's facilities.

● But Ed Hamilton was not satisfied with his job as a contracting foreman. Its rewards and prospects were in keeping neither with his hopes for his bride nor himself—and it was not long before there was an additional urgent reason why the young family should look for wider fields.

● So the soil was ready for the seed of the idea which was casually tossed into it by the village newspaperman, when he came inquiring for a bit of scroll-saw work that would print. Those were rather excited and breathless days in which, after his work at the chair factory, the young husband vanished

into his little shop and industriously pedalled at his little scroll-saw, or carefully glued and clamped his sample types, to carry out his brother's suggestion of a mail try-out campaign among Wisconsin printers. There was a brief period of suspense when the samples were sent out, and then mounting hopes as the first orders began to come in. The $12.00 order from Cunningham, of Chippewa Falls, was all that was needed to swing the balance; the young mechanic saw success immediately ahead of him—and that day he quit his job in the chair factory.

● Ed Hamilton knew he could make type, for he had sawed and glued four or five fonts for W. F. Nash of the Chronicle in the interim from his first essay on the Turner Hall poster, and they were in daily use in the print shop. The somewhat slim evidence of his first orders was, however, all that he had to go upon as "market information" when he threw up his job and went into business as a manufacturer of wood type. Today, such precipitation would be regarded as hazardous; it was so regarded by most of the young man's friends back in 1880. But there were certain conditions that made it less so than it seemed—conditions that were implicit in the situation of all the middle west at that time.

● The middle western states were just then at the beginning of their substantial industrial growth. The stagnation of the depression which lasted from 1873 to 1877 had just begun to merge into a period of confidence and development. New enterprises were springing up everywhere, and the long Ameri-

can distances which separated the mid-western states from the more highly developed manufactures of the eastern states presented alert and capable men on the ground with golden opportunities in a wide variety. All over Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin, small businesses were being fledged to minister to the needs of a community which was finding itself unwilling to wait for months while eastern manufacturers filled their orders in the leisurely fashion and through the slow channels of contemporary communications.

● The J. E. Hamilton Hollywood Type Company was one of these new and active businesses, with all the vigor of youth in its one-man management and operating force. Its share of the opportunity of the eighties was particularly good, for it happened that wood type in 1880 was made almost entirely in the east. Wisconsin was the leading state in the nation at the time in the production of wood and wood products, but wood type was not among its manufactures. Wisconsin pine was fine for building, for shingles and pails and tubs; its hardwoods were excellent for furniture and veneers. But type must have an extremely close-grained, hard surface, capable of taking a very fine natural finish. Wisconsin rock maple filled all these requirements. When later hollywood type was abandoned and the more durable endwood type, cut from a solid block of maple was substituted, the field was open because no one had yet seen the market possibilities in the newly-opening territory, and in making the type where orders could

be promptly filled and rapid service rendered to the user.

● Not that J. E. Hamilton found it all plain sailing. There was plenty for him to learn in the hard school of experience. He could make his Hollywood Type to satisfy the most critical printer, and for a time the marketing system suggested by his brother, Henry Hamilton, brought in business enough to keep the scroll-saw humming. Indeed, it was shortly necessary to engage a boy to assist the proprietor. The difficulties were rather on the management side. Ed Hamilton was a capable mechanic and workman, with plenty of resource and experience in woodworking, machine design, and other production problems. He had only the most limited business experience.

● The first bookkeeping system of the new concern was a series of dates, names and figures scrawled on the wall alongside the bench in the shop. There, as he opened his orders, Mr. Hamilton set down the name of the customer, details of the order, and the date demanded for delivery. But he soon realized that this system, or absence of system, would not do. So Hamilton and his young bride bought themselves a treatise on bookkeeping, and all the winter of 1880-81 they studied the intricacies of double-entry, with laboratory practice in setting up and keeping in balance the books of their own concern.

● For the first year or so Mrs. Hamilton was the bookkeeper and cashier of the company, as well as wife and mother. Little Grace Hamilton was born August 18, 1881, when the new business was not yet a year old, and the type shop became her

nursery when, a month or so after her arrival, her mother returned to her bookkeeper's desk.

● Mr. Hamilton recalls that he hardly knew how even to ship his first orders for type. He had to get the help of the railroad and express agent in filling out the necessary papers for a C. O. D. shipment. All but the simplest details of business were mysteries of a strange world to the hopeful young manufacturer, and he was often sorely puzzled as he worked things out for himself with the aid and counsel of his wife.

● Yet the business did go and prosper, with the driving force of two youthful ambitions behind it. Days in shop and office were followed by nights spent in correspondence, or on the young man's part in working at the creation of new type faces to add to the line. Mr. Hamilton made frequent trips to Milwaukee to obtain proofs of different type faces, and designed several original faces himself, in the flamboyant, curlicued style which was then in vogue. There was some fearful and wonderful type in use in the eighties.

CHAPTER VII

AS WITH most businesses which are started largely on an idea and abundant energy, it was not long before a need was felt for more capital than Ed Hamilton's slender savings. Hollywood Type was catching on, because it was good type, was sold considerably lower than comparable type could be furnished from the east, and because the little manufacturing concern made a point of prompt service. But printers of that day were not inclined to pay their bills with equal promptness—were, indeed, notoriously poor pay. And new features were constantly being added to the line, as young Hamilton strove to improve it and make it more attractive. All of this took money—investment which was not immediately returning with a profit in its teeth. So the young manufacturer began to cast about for the urgently needed addition to his capital.

● It was about a year after the sale of the first order of type that Mr. Hamilton, on one of his rather frequent trips to Milwaukee in search of orders and new ideas that would appeal

to printers, ran across an acquaintance he had made in Two Rivers, one Henry Katz. Mr. Katz was a friend of the Mann Brothers, principal owners of the Two Rivers chair and pail factory where Hamilton had been employed before he launched his own business bark. The suitcase the young man carried was full of wood type samples, and their maker was soon displaying its contents, with enthusiastic details of his methods and the prospects of his business. Mr. Katz listened with interest, said little, but a few weeks later dropped into Two Rivers to visit the Manns, and to make inquiries about the Hamilton enterprise. He visited the little shop, met Mrs. Hamilton, asked questions discreetly about Mr. Hamilton, and before he left proposed that his son, Maximilian Katz, come into the concern as a partner.

● Ed Hamilton was not keen on a partner, but it was obvious that more capital was a vital necessity if the opportunities for expansion were to be grasped. The upshot of the negotiations was that Max Katz purchased a half interest for $1,600 and the firm name was changed to Hamilton & Katz, the new arrangement going into effect on November 1, 1881.

● Mr. Hamilton felt, with what must be conceded to be justice, that he had done fairly well in his first year as an independent business man. He had launched and kept afloat a business which had weathered its first trials in good shape. He had done about $1,200 in gross business, netting him enough for a living according to the modest standards of the day

and place. And he had finished the year by the sale of half of what he had created, for $1,600.

● It had not been an easy year, although Mr. Hamilton half a century later looked back upon it as one of the happiest periods of his life. It was a year of incessant work, not a little worry, and a great deal of intensive study and thinking. In it Mr. Hamilton had improvised a method of making wood type with tools not designed for the purpose, which would equal in printing quality that of standard manufacturers in the east. He had turned out this type in some quantity, mainly by his own labor, and had been his own designer and salesman. He had been largely aided by Mrs. Hamilton, who kept the books and put up the packages, which her husband carried to the express office on his back. Perhaps neither of them had ever worked so hard before—but they finished the year with strengthened courage and confidence. Every month had seen a widening demand for Hollywood Type, there was money on hand to discount bills and pay for experiments to improve the line. The future looked bright.

● The infusion of new capital into the business in 1881 proved to be the vitalizing factor that its founder had felt it would be. The wider scope afforded was immediately reflected in increased business. In 1882 the gross sales jumped a thousand per cent—from the $1,200 of the first year to $12,000. Hamilton & Katz type was becoming familiar in the printing trade.

● Immediately after the formation of the partnership with

Max Katz, part of the additional capital brought into the concern was used in the construction of a small factory. It wasn't a pretentious establishment, by any standards, as may be judged by its cost—$760. It was, in fact, a good, stout barn as far as details of its construction went, with one corner of the lower floor partitioned off for an office. But it was adequate to the needs of the concern, as far as they could then be foreseen. And it was a delight to Ed Hamilton, master woodworking mechanic, engineer and pile-driver in his various past experience. It gave him an opportunity to exercise that mechanical ingenuity which, quite as much as his business acumen, was constant in his nature.

● It is surprising to reflect that some of the machinery that operated in that first small factory of "Hamilton & Katz, makers of Hollywood Type," was still in use a half-century later—machinery designed and built by Ed Hamilton from his own designs and largely with his own hands. The problems of woodworking machinery were familiar to him from boyhood, and his year's experience with the peculiar demands of type manufacture had taught him exactly what he wanted. Back of it all was the germ of the typically American idea of quantity production. Years later Mr. Hamilton made the assertion that his success was based not so much on financial or selling ability as on the development of efficiency in the manufacturing processes. Cutting the corners in operations, designing machines which would turn out type in quantity as rapidly or

more quickly than possible in single units—for years this was Mr. Hamilton's preoccupation. He was more manufacturer than business man, most of the time—although his Yankee blood was not wasted when it came to driving a bargain, at that.

● Into this plant the Hamilton concern was moved in toto from the one-room shop in the Hamilton home, which was still the "factory" up to the time the new place was built. It is recorded in the legends of Two Rivers that the Hamilton plant was moved on this occasion on a goat-wagon, borrowed from a neighbor. The goat pulled the load, while Ed Hamilton walked alongside and steadied the top-heavy pile of small items of foot-power machinery, patterns and stencils, the office books and what-not.

● What could be used of the old equipment was salvaged. It was not much. Then and there was inaugurated a policy which has been rigidly adhered to since by the Hamilton Company—a policy of scrapping outdated machinery as soon as anything could be had which would do the work better, quicker and more cheaply. The one-room shop had been a foot-power plant; the new factory had graduated to the dignity of a steam-engine and pulley-driven machinery. It need not be added, perhaps, that it was a proud young man who walked beside the goat-wagon to the new, fresh-painted frame factory building.

● For the first two years in the new plant only wood type was made. Printing plants were springing up everywhere, as

villages became small towns and demanded their local organs of pride and mediums of advertisement. There were plenty of orders for Hamilton & Katz in equipping these new shops, and in adding to the cases of fancy display type without which no print shop was complete in the eighties. Steadily the line was broadened with new faces. Mr. Hamilton was insatiable in his hunt for new styles of type; he always had something new to offer the trade. And he insisted on prompt service. When his handful of employes quit for the day, "J. E." himself stayed on to finish up the orders, pack them up and get them to the express office.

● In touch with the printers as he could not help being, Mr. Hamilton was not slow to realize that this type shop, which was simply a specialized woodworking plant, could at very little added expense produce other articles made of wood which found a place in every print shop. Reglet and what printers call "furniture"—blocks of hard wood cut to printer's measure, for spacing out forms—were almost automatically added to the line. Then came a display chart with movable letters, for advertising purposes, which found a market among merchants in general, outside of the printing industry.

● In the meantime, the energetic and keen-visioned young man at the head of the concern was hatching a new idea, the idea which was to be his distinctive contribution to the advance of the printing industry. As he went about the country, visiting printing offices and learning their methods and re-

quirements, the idea came back again and again, with ever strengthening force. He talked of it to his partner, who was the office-man of the company, and he was forever lecturing about it to Mrs. Hamilton, upon whom, as an admiring, intelligent and well informed counsellor, he depended for a critical audience for his new ideas.

● This idea, reduced to its simplest terms, was that printing shops were dirty, disorderly places which would be much the better for being tidied up by means of well-built furniture, designed to meet the needs of their work. So stated, it does not appear exactly a revolutionary idea. But to one who can recall what print shops were, before the Hamilton Company designed the first items of its line of printers' furniture, and set a new standard of order and labor-saving design, it will be apparent that Mr. Hamilton was incubating the germ of a most substantial improvement in the industry.

● This meant, however, a considerable addition to the facilities of Hamilton & Katz, now a well-established, sound concern. The first factory was by now fully occupied with the demand for wood type, reglet, form furniture, "shooting sticks" and kindred items. It was several years more before the opportunity presented itself by which Mr. Hamilton's idea could be tried out.

● It came about, indirectly, through the retirement of Mr. Katz from the firm in 1887. Having a business opportunity elsewhere, Mr. Katz sold his half interest in Hamilton & Katz

to William Baker, of Springfield, Illinois. Mr. Baker was interested in Two Rivers through his membership in the firm of Hintze & Baker, who owned a sash-and-door factory in the town. It had not been a prosperous venture, and the factory was closed at the time that Mr. Baker purchased the Katz interest in the Hamilton Company. Mr. Baker was never active in the Hamilton Company.

● For sometime Mr. Hamilton had had his eye on the sash-and-door factory, as a plant which offered room and equipment in which to put into effect his ideas. As the factory was not a productive asset, when he entered the company with the purchase of the Katz interest, Mr. Baker was glad to see it pass into the hands of the firm, and the Hamilton Company soon bought the sash-and-door plant, and so came to the site of its present large quarters. The sash-and-door factory has long disappeared, giving place to square blocks of brick, steel and concrete, but its picture hangs on the wall of the company offices, as the birthplace of the famous line which has made the name "Hamilton" synonymous with printing office furniture all over the world.

● The machinery of the sash-and-door plant was well-adapted to the first steps in the Hamilton program of expanding to include a line of printers' furniture, and soon the company was able to catalog a full line of such furniture as was in use in those days. By present standards it was limited and crude. It consisted principally of open case stands and square leg

imposing tables. The former were skeleton racks with slanted tops above, on which the upper and lower cases of type were conveniently disposed under the compositor's hand, and with slides below on which type cases not in use were slid out of the way. The square-leg imposing table was the "stone," a heavy, level slab of marble or slate set into the top of a frame, on which to make up forms for the press. Both of these familiar pieces of every composing room have disappeared today from all but the most antiquated shops, giving way to solid steel imposing tables with slides and compartments below, and to dust-proof case-stands of wood or steel.

● "The cabinet as we know it today," Mr. Hamilton told the writer as they looked over the old catalog, "was a luxury—the thing a prosperous printer dreamed of but had little hope of ever acquiring. All racks were open, and cases a catch-all for dirt and debris of all sorts."

● So they were, as every man who served his time as "devil" in any old-fashioned shop can well remember. Who can forget the job of blowing out the cases with a hand-bellows, in a cloud of grime and dust which filled nose and eyes while he alternately sneezed and wept!

● The Hamilton Company was not alone in manufacturing this simple line of furniture. It was a staple, and there were a number of manufacturers; type foundries and dealers in printers' supplies in many cases manufactured their own wood furniture, as a necessary piece of service to their customers.

● Mr. Hamilton had long perceived that there was a large field for development of this neglected necessity, if all the small manufacturers in this line could be replaced by one comprehensive concern. As it was, no manufacturer had enough business on such furniture to warrant specializing, and the stands and tables were turned out without much imagination as to design or fitness for the printers' use, and with no opportunity to cut costs by quantity manufacture.

● Mr. Hamilton knew, by his own experience with wood type and other items he was already manufacturing, that it would be possible to design special machinery for producing these things in quantity, that sales costs could be reduced and savings made in many other ways could sufficient volume be attained. He discussed the matter—not for the first time—with various type founders and dealers in printers' supplies, and his proposal to furnish such goods in needed quantities at conspicuously lower costs was welcomed.

● It meant, of course, a considerable investment in new equipment, and his partner, Mr. Baker, was averse to the idea from the start. Mr. Baker was a man of means, who held his interest in the Hamilton Company as an investment from which he had been receiving very satisfactory returns. He did not want to plow back the profits into the Hamilton expansion program and wait for what to him seemed problematical dividends on the new idea. As the result of this difference in policy, Mr. Baker finally offered Mr. Hamilton his interest,

under formal option to purchase.

● J. E. Hamilton eagerly seized the opportunity to secure a free hand for his ideas and enterprise, and the Hamilton Manufacturing Company made its appearance. In Mr. Hamilton's own words:

● "I engaged Mr. L. J. Nash, attorney of the firm of Nash & Nash, of Manitowoc, to draw up the necessary incorporation papers. Mr. Nash became interested in the possibilities of the business, and took a substantial block of the stock. The Hamilton Manufacturing Company was incorporated January 1, 1889, as a Wisconsin corporation, with an authorized capital of $50,000.00 and a paid-in capital of $30,000.00. I turned in all my assets, together with the Baker interests which I had acquired, for all of which I received substantially fifty per cent of the stock."

● The original incorporators were James E. Hamilton, William D. Richards, Walter C. Luse and Henry P. Hamilton. The first stock-book of the company shows the following shareholders:

James E. Hamilton	131 shares
Walter C. Luse	17 shares
H. P. Hamilton	18½ shares
W. C. Clarke	19½ shares
William Richards	86½ shares
L. J. Nash	27½ shares

● Shortly after the company was incorporated Charles E.

Spindler and E. G. Nash, a brother and law-partner of L. J. Nash, became stockholders, and there were no changes in stock ownership for many years.

● Incidentally, the two Nash brothers who came into the company at this time, were brothers of William F. Nash, editor of the Two Rivers Chronicle, whose emergency request for a piece of wood type had launched J. E. Hamilton on his business career.

● It is appropriate to digress at this point to mention the close relationship between J. E. Hamilton and Lyman J. Nash, by the new organization of the Hamilton Company its secretary, a considerable stockholder and its chief legal adviser. It was a relationship that lasted for close upon a half-century, ending only with the death of Mr. Nash in his eighty-third year in 1930, and one that had profound influence upon the development of the upper lake shore region of Wisconsin.

● Mr. Nash and Mr. Hamilton had had business relations covering five years when the Hamilton Company was organized. Mr. Nash, an attorney with a substantial practice in Manitowoc, had first come into contact with the enterprising manufacturer of the neighboring village of Two Rivers in 1885, when he was engaged as counsel in a lawsuit. Later he drew the legal papers covering the various stages of the Hamilton enterprise before its final incorporation, and he had thus an opportunity to become more than casually familiar with the character and progress of the business, while he and

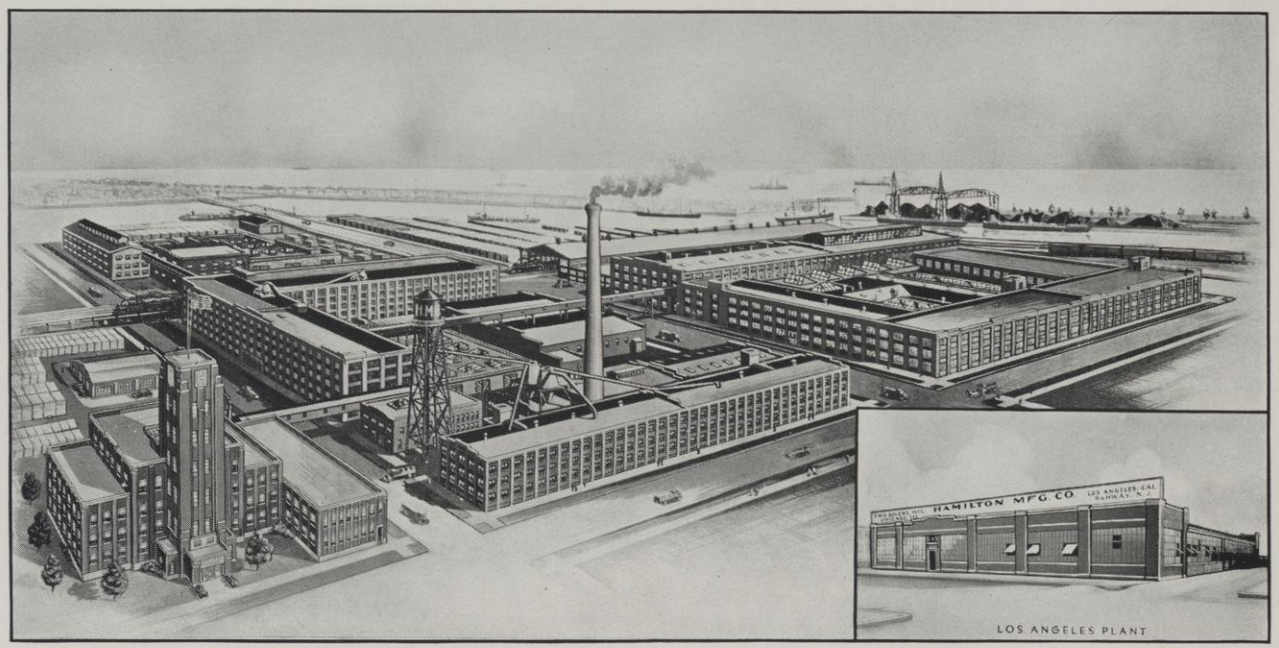
Mr. Hamilton from frequent contacts and discussion discovered a mutual esteem and respect. He was entirely conversant with Mr. Hamilton's plans for future expansion, and heartily in accord with them and appreciative of their possibilities when the new company was organized in 1885. By this time he had formed such an estimate of the manufacturer's business ability and foresight that he subscribed substantially to the original capital, as well as accepting office in the company.

● Mr. Nash remained secretary of the company for thirty-two years, until January 1, 1920, when the then highly successful company was reorganized, and all of the original stockholders, including Mr. Hamilton, disposed of their interests to a group of younger men who had been executives of the company under the older management—George S. Hamilton, son of the founder, H. C. Gowran, Thomas W. Suddard and Harry Rowley.

● In 1930, shortly after Mr. Nash's death, Mr. Hamilton wrote the following appreciation of his friend:

● "My association with Mr. Nash, not only as my legal adviser, but for his advice and encouragement in all matters connected with the business, was most valuable. What knowledge I have acquired of business law I owe to my association with him. He was a clear thinker and his judgment was unusually sound. His idea of business ethics was of the highest quality. Mr. Nash and I were more than business

associates; we were friends in all that the term implies. It is not saying too much when I say that Mr. Nash was an inspiration to me, and my association with him had a great influence on my life and my life's work."



Bird's-eye View of Hamilton Manufacturing Company

CHAPTER VIII

BACKED by stockholders and directors who had confidence in his plans for future growth, with a more adequate capitalization upon which to base his expansion plans, and with a business and reputation in the industry which was constantly increasing, Mr. Hamilton was not long in embarking upon the realization of his plans for assembling, by combination of small concerns in the field, one substantial company which could command a sufficient diversity of markets and volume of business to weather any predictable business storm and take full advantage of the economies of mass production. The Hamilton Manufacturing Company did well from the day of its incorporation in 1889, and by 1891 was financially in a position to launch the expansion program long in contemplation.

● The first company purchased was the William H. Page Wood Type Company, of Norwich, Connecticut, one of the oldest eastern houses in the industry, and one that brought a strongly established reputation and a large clientele to the new

alliance. The business of several other smaller makers of printers' equipment passed into the hands of the Hamilton Company more or less informally in the next few years, as many of the type founders and dealers who had been making their own furniture, and finding it a profitless side-line, discontinued it and replaced it with the rapidly growing line of Hamilton equipment. They found the Hamilton Company offered them a reliable source of supply, and a line of furniture in most cases more carefully designed and built than they could turn out themselves—in addition to which the savings possible in the mass production methods worked out by the Hamilton Company produced equipment at prices impossible to more laborious and antiquated methods.

● Mr. Hamilton's mechanical aptitude and Yankee invention was at its best in the design and building of the special machinery with which this reduction of costs was achieved. Although now the head of a business of considerable size, employing some two hundred men and turning out products of an annual value of some $500,000—his dearest interest still lay in his machine shop. It was to this outgrowth of his back-room workshop that Mr. Hamilton looked for the weapons in his assault upon the new markets he was regularly opening up, and it was the machine shop that for some years received the closest attention of the head of the company.

● Unable to find machines upon the regular market which would carry out his ideas, he used the machine shop as the

laboratory in which he worked these ideas out to practical conclusions. Thence issued in a steady stream a succession of devices which, duplicated and reduplicated on the floors of the plant, began to turn out cases, stands and racks, cabinets and galley-banks with a rapidity, precision and at a cost that his competitors found unbelievable. It is merely writing history to say that in about a decade from the time the Hamilton Manufacturing Company was formed and obtained a free hand to work out its founder's ideas, it had practically eliminated competition—and that without any more spectacular employment of the financial devices of "big business" than the purchase, from time to time, of a competitor weary of the losing struggle. It is of record that the Hamilton Company drove no competing plant to the wall or took any unfair advantage. It paid well for the additions to its business that came from the good will of manufacturers who had sold out, and in some cases endeavored, against better judgment, to keep their plants running for the benefit of the communities where they were established. Eventually, however, it was found economically advisable to center all manufacturing operations in Two Rivers, a policy adhered to until 1929, when a branch plant was opened on the Pacific Coast.

● A major change in the policy of the company, which up to this time had dealt direct with printers and had appointed a few well-known supply houses agents for its line, came in 1893 with the organization of the American Type Founders Com-

pany, a veritable giant of the printing industry, which united practically all the leading type founders and dealers in printing material. Most of the Hamilton line was then being sold direct to printers, but when the new concern was launched, offering one gateway to the entire market throughout the country, the Hamilton Company decided to abandon the direct sales policy and to handle its goods only through the American Type Founders and other dealers. This plan resulted in a greater volume of sales and substantial savings, both to the company and to the printers, as goods were stocked by dealers at strategic points, and orders could be filled much more promptly and at smaller freight charges. The policy worked so satisfactorily that it was maintained thereafter as other lines were added to the printers' equipment made by the Hamilton Company.

● The period around the turn of the century was one of great activity and progress in the Hamilton Company. Its expanding business was continually pressing against the limits of production possible to the plant, and a constant series of building operations was in progress, which in turn opened the possibilities of new lines of manufacture. In 1901 the facilities which were adapted for the manufacture of fine printers' furniture were turned, through the activities of H. C. Gowran, to the manufacture of dental cabinets. The story is told elsewhere, in an account of the long connection of Mr. Gowran with the company, during which he moved from bookkeeper

to general manager. Here it is sufficient to say that even as it had become the leader in the printers' goods field, the Hamilton Company through its subsidiary, the American Cabinet Company, rapidly became one of the foremost manufacturers of equipment for the dental profession. This phase of the business was steadily advanced, and in 1932 was enlarged to include a new line of physicians' office furniture of the most modern and scientific type.

● In a similar way, drafting room furniture was added to the Hamilton Company's products, and many advances in the design of drafting tables, print storage cabinets, etc., were created in the Hamilton plant and eagerly received by the profession.

● In 1912 a major change in the Hamilton line was made to keep pace with modern developments. This was the launching of steel furniture to replace the older designs in wood. It was in connection with this development that Thomas W. Suddard, for many years one of the executives of the company, was brought to Two Rivers. The Hamilton Company pioneered the development of steel printers' furniture. Dissatisfied with the first products turned out by imported "experts" trained in the manufacture of steel filing equipment, the company launched out upon its own developments, and met the special problems by creating its own sturdy designs. These, for their durability, neatness, compactness and strength won rapid recognition, and before long the company was forced into a

series of expansions in its original steel plant. Eventually, steel printers' furniture took a long lead over the original wood lines, but by this time the dental and drafting room furniture lines had grown to the point where, with the considerable wood-working still required for certain printers' items, they kept the wood plant of the company humming busily. Another development that added a new line to the Hamilton Company was the rapid rise of radio, and the Hamilton wood plant was turned to the manufacture of attractive cabinets for a dozen or more of the leading makes of sets. It might be added that, years later, in 1931 and 1932, the Hamilton Company also shared in the development of another new scientific product for the American market, when it began to make cabinets for home refrigeration machines as this new field was opened.

● In 1917 and 1918 the Hamilton Company took its place on the industrial firing line in the world war, and found itself pitchforked into a field wholly new: the manufacture of airplane fuselages. Called into the field late, after many other manufacturers had been set to work on the problem, the Hamilton Company was, nevertheless, the first to complete a fuselage which would pass all of the government's rigid specifications for fighting machines, and was immediately put under pressure to supply the fuselages in quantity. Military officers and government inspectors swarmed into Two Rivers, and the great plant was launched into mass production on a vast scale, only to have the entire project brought to a halt

by the abrupt ending of the war with the Armistice of 1918. At that time, the plant's capacity had been stimulated to a production of 40 fuselages per day.

● It is a commentary on the business methods and policies of the Hamilton Company that its contract with the government was settled and all details cleaned up within sixty days after the Armistice. In view of other long-drawn-out negotiations which in many cases lagged for years, sometimes with scandalous evidences of profiteering, between the government and munition makers, the Hamilton Company's experience sufficiently attests the faithfulness with which the company, through the airplane interlude, adhered to the policy laid down by its founder when the work started—that the Hamilton Company did not want a penny of extra profit from the government's war necessities. Time studied cost, plus a peace time profit, was all the company asked of the government, and with such an attitude the settlement of details when peace came was easy and rapid.

● The Hamilton Company was one of that small company of manufacturers in Wisconsin which early became concerned for the welfare and well-being of its employees, pioneering in the field of employee relations as it had done in its manufacturing. A scheme of insured workmen's compensation worked out by the company was so liberal that when the state compensation act was promulgated the Hamilton Company actually found itself saving money under the state law.

Insurance, largely carried by the company, was early adopted for all regular employees, a nursing service, reaching to the homes of workers as well as to the shop, was set up with a trained nurse in charge, and shop committees were formed by which the company consulted with its men on problems of administrative policy as well as shop conditions, the men electing the committee members to represent them. Safety work has always been stressed, and the Hamilton plant's record for accidents is at record low figures in all departments.

● In addition to these things, the Hamilton Company adopted a plan of granting every employee a week's vacation with pay, put on an annual "Hamilton Night" festival in which most of the town joined as well as the company's employees and their families, and developed from accidental beginnings a famous band. The Hamilton Band was launched when the employees were given a day off to attend the Manitowoc County Fair. Somebody felt the need of music, and a few employees were found who could toot horns. These were hastily mustered into a "hobo band" to lead the parade, and thereafter kept together, with the financial aid of the company, as the nucleus of a band. A little later L. F. Lueck, band director of the high school, was engaged as its leader, and under his training the band rapidly won recognition as one of the best industrial musical organizations in the state, regularly being engaged to play for the Milwaukee State Fair and other public occasions. It won a number of prizes, and was main-

tained for years at a strength of some forty pieces. One of its regular functions was a series of weekly band concerts in Central Park at Two Rivers every summer.

CHAPTER IX

WHILE J. E. Hamilton's principal business interest, from 1880 until his retirement in 1919, was the company which bore his name, his eventful and busy life was well crowded with a diversity of active interests in other lines. Perhaps the most interesting story of this sort concerns Mr. Hamilton's part in the creation of the Aluminum Goods Mfg. Co., one of the major factors in the American aluminum industry, which was the development of a germ incubated in a corner of his printing equipment factory, and with which Mr. Hamilton had a life-long official connection, having been for a generation chairman of its board.

● The neighboring city of Manitowoc calls itself "The Aluminum City," but it is part of the record that the great industry whence its title is derived got its start in Two Rivers, under the aegis of the same shrewd intelligence which made Two Rivers the center of the printing equipment industry while it was yet a village. The story has its beginning just after the Chicago world's fair which opened in 1892; and

its central figure is a long, rangy and raw-boned inventor, Joseph Koenig, who had filled in a period in an adventurous life as the selling agent for German aluminum combs at the world's fair exhibit.

● Mr. Koenig, who reaped the reward of pioneering in a new industry by a substantial fortune, was an unusual and interesting type. He had something of a reputation for eccentricity among his friends, but he was a man of great mechanical genius and more than a little business ability, with a keen and well-trained intelligence. In his later years he developed his passion for mechanical experiment, which bore fruit in a number of valuable patents, and until his death in November, 1929, his chief interest was his laboratory, where all sorts of mechanical investigations were conducted by his own hand. He had been in early life a teacher, had studied law, and had made and lost a fortune in western land speculations before his experience at the world's fair which ushered in his career as a pioneer aluminum manufacturer.

● This may pass for an inadequate sketch of the man who was introduced, with his idea, to Mr. Hamilton in 1895. He was brought by an employee of the Hamilton plant, who told Mr. Hamilton that a relative of his would like to come to Two Rivers and start the manufacture of aluminum combs. Mr. Hamilton was rather vague in his impression of the project, but invited the man to have his relative come and talk it over, and a month or so later Mr. Koenig walked into the Hamilton

office and introduced himself.

● His idea, in brief, based upon his experience at the Chicago fair, was that aluminum combs could be made and sold cheaper in this country than they could be imported from Germany, which was then the leading, if not the only, producer of aluminum novelties.

● Mr. Koenig's new project interested Mr. Hamilton, who was always interested in new things. He questioned his visitor closely, and finally concluded him to be a man of ability with a well-developed knowledge of mechanics.

● "I asked him", said Mr. Hamilton, "how he proposed to start his enterprise, and if he had any capital. He said he had only $300, but all he wanted was a small room to work in and enough power to operate his machines. I took him out in the factory and showed him a space about 20 feet square, with a shaft overhead from which he could take his power. I told him he could have the use of the space and power without charge, and to go ahead with his experimenting, and see what he could do."

● Such was the unpretentious beginning of the Aluminum Goods Mfg. Co., whose product and trademark were within a few years to become known the world over.

● J. E. Hamilton watched with keen interest the work of his new protege, and joined in many consultations over the manufacturing problems which developed. Metal working was not familiar ground, but mechanics of any sort always fascinated

the Hamilton mind, and he was keen about the new problems. For example, it had been Mr. Koenig's idea at first to rig up a gang of saws which would saw out the teeth of an aluminum comb with one cut. But when the machine was completed it was found that the gang engendered too much heat, so that the metal smoked and warped. Mr. Hamilton contributed the suggestion that Mr. Koenig find a way to cut one tooth at a time, with an automatic feed that would advance the comb a proper distance before the next cut. Mr. Koenig seized on this idea and worked out a drum arrangement with slots which would hold a hundred combs at a time, the drum being revolved against the saw, and then moved forward into position for the next cut after each revolution. This gave time to allow the metal to cool between cuts, and also provided for production in such quantities, with only one man to tend the machine, that the cost of each individual comb was reduced, in Mr. Hamilton's phrase, "almost to nothing."

● With this and other machinery, the product of his inventive mind, Mr. Koenig, with the help of a devoted wife and later with a few employees, worked along for something over a year, making combs, pin trays, hairpins, picture frames and other novelties of aluminum. His manufactures and sales gradually increased to the point where more capital became necessary to carry on the growing business, by this time bulging out of the space available in the Hamilton plant. So a company was incorporated, Mr. Koenig taking half of the

stock, which was to be paid for out of earnings, and J. E. Hamilton and his brother, Henry P. Hamilton, taking the other half, in return for which they put up the needed cash.

● The volume of business increased slowly but steadily, as new lines were added and processes improved, and the plant room required was obtained by taking over the old type-factory belonging to the Hamilton Company. This was the first building erected by Hamilton & Katz, abandoned when the Hamilton Company moved to its final location. It was sold to the Aluminum Manufacturing Co. for $3,000.

● In a few years the concern was having a volume of $125,000 annually, and showing a substantial profit. But in the meantime its success had attracted others to the new field it was developing. The Aluminum Novelty Company was formed in Manitowoc, chiefly by the Vits interests which have played a large part in the subsequent history of the industry, and the New Jersey Aluminum Co., of Jersey City, N. J., also came into existence and offered lively competition. The influence of these rivals began to make itself felt in the profits of the original Two Rivers company, and negotiations got under way for a consolidation.

● After preliminary conferences with the Manitowoc and Jersey City companies it was decided to meet at Pittsburgh and form a merger, in which was to be included, if possible, the Pittsburgh Reduction Co., manufacturers of aluminum, and a principal source of the raw material. This is the concern

which later became the Aluminum Company of America, the powerful Mellon group which even at the time of which we are writing was in virtual control of the known bauxite deposits of the country, from which the new metal was drawn.

● The negotiations proceeded to a successful conclusion, and in 1909 the Aluminum Goods Mfg. Co. was formed, with capital stock of $600,000, each of the original three companies taking substantially one-fourth of the stock, while the Pittsburgh Reduction Co. took a similar share. Mr. Kruttschnitt of the New Jersey company was the first president, with J. E. Hamilton being chosen chairman of the board of directors, a position he held continuously thereafter. In 1912 Mr. Kruttschnitt sold his stock in the company to the Vits family, founders of the original Manitowoc company, and George Vits succeeded to the presidency, which he has held since.

● In the financial and business development sketched above the originator of so many processes and developments of aluminum manufacture, Mr. Koenig, remained with the company as an active officer and director. His interest had always been chiefly the mechanical and development end rather than the marketing and business side, and it was largely the combination of his foresight and mechanical ingenuity, with the able management of Mr. Vits, which brought about the phenomenal and rapid development of the Aluminum Goods Company. Its lines were steadily extended and improved, its goods and trademarks widely advertised, and it became one

of the outstanding leaders in its field, with plants in Two Rivers, Manitowoc and St. Louis which employed thousands of operatives. In 1931 its business was still further enlarged by the purchase of a Canadian company with a plant in Toronto. Its capitalization had grown to $12,000,000, and its annual volume to approximately $15,000,000.

● While the aluminum industry was Mr. Hamilton's principal "side line" it was by no means his only one. He found time also to be active in the Bank of Two Rivers, to organize—as is told elsewhere—the first telephone company in his native town, and to handle the construction and operation of a hotel, a housing company, and a coal company. These last were rather the answer to the need of a town that was growing industrially a good deal faster than its facilities could keep pace, than any effort to create profits. The Hamilton and Aluminum Goods plants were drawing men by the hundreds into the city, many with families, and there was a chronic housing shortage. So the Hamilton Company, with others, formed a concern to erect a hotel which would furnish temporary living quarters—good ones—to the people flocking in, and at the same time the Hamilton Company embarked upon a housing scheme of its own, building some twenty homes which were sold or rented to employees. The Hamilton Hotel was later sold to E. H. Wey, and is operated as a regular commercial hotel.

● The Two Rivers Coal Company was a project built upon utilization of Two Rivers' favorable situation, to insure an

adequate supply of fuel for the city and its industries, at low cost. In this the Hamilton Company was joined by the Aluminum Company and the Eggers Veneer Seating Co., of Two Rivers, although the coal company was a separate concern with J. E. Hamilton as president. Coal docks with modern handling machinery were built on the harbor, and for some seven or eight years the company did a successful business in wholesale and retail dock coal, chartering vessels to haul its coal from the mining outlets on the lower lakes. However, neither Mr. Hamilton nor his associates had time to devote to the coal business, and other companies owning their own vessels and mines were able to conduct the trade more economically. While the Two Rivers Coal Co. showed an annual profit, and served its major purpose of rendering the community independent of rail-hauled coal during the winter traffic tie-ups which were general in those days, it was a constant addition to the load which its executives carried in their own businesses, and eventually it was sold to the Reiss Coal Co., a large concern founded at Sheboygan, Wisconsin, which owned docks and vessels all along the Great Lakes.

● Mr. Hamilton's connection with the Bank of Two Rivers, of which he had been president for 25 years at the date of this writing, goes back to the bank's early days, when it was a private institution with a small minority of local stockholders, being controlled by Decker & Decker, a banking firm which started in Algoma, Wisconsin—a small town north of Two

Rivers on the lake shore. The Two Rivers bank was a unit in one of the earliest mid-west ventures in chain banking. It was organized in 1895, operating in connection with the Decker banks at Algoma and Kewaunee, the latter another small town on the lake lying between Algoma and Two Rivers. This little chain of country banks did very well, and the Deckers grew ambitious to invade the metropolitan field, drawing heavily on their resources to open a bank in Chicago.

● The Chicago experiment proved unsuccessful. After a short time it was in difficulties which involved the Wisconsin properties of the proprietors, and a disastrous run started on their whole chain. The Bank of Two Rivers, in whose keeping was much of the community's available funds, was closed in the face of this run, and there was confusion and alarm in the town.

● Mr. Hamilton, who had held a small amount of stock in the bank, although it was controlled by the Deckers, was chosen to act as receiver. After a survey of the bank's situation he came to the conclusion that it was not necessary to liquidate the institution, but that given time and support it could be saved without loss. He called a meeting of the alarmed depositors, and laid his findings before them, assuring them that the bank was fundamentally solvent, and pledging his own assistance and support in its operation. Confidence in Mr. Hamilton was such that the depositors agreed to stop withdrawals if the bank were re-opened and to allow their

deposits to remain for a given period while other assets could be realized upon. Within a week from its closing during the run, the bank was re-opened with the receiver in charge. Mr. Hamilton had made good his prediction and no depositor lost a penny by his confidence. The community funds were saved, and the bank lived to become one of the strongest small-town banking institutions in Wisconsin.

● The Decker interests, however, were so badly hit by the difficulties arising from their Chicago fiasco that the Two Rivers bank passed out of their hands. In 1895 the former private institution was incorporated for $25,000, and the late receiver purchased some of the stock and was chosen a director. The bank prospered conservatively, and in 1906 the capital stock was increased to $35,000, with a surplus of $13,000. Mr. Hamilton became president of the bank at this time, which year also marked the entrance into the institution of H. C. Wilke, long its cashier and manager.

● In the meantime Two Rivers was growing lustily, with its thriving Hamilton plant and expanding aluminum industry. Deposits and general banking business increased rapidly, so that the capital and surplus of $48,000 became inadequate to supply the needed financial facilities of the community. Accordingly, in 1920 the capital stock was increased to $150,000 with a $30,000 surplus, and a further increase became necessary in 1929, when the stock was raised to $200,000 with a surplus of $50,000. At this period the erstwhile frail private bank of

the nineties had seen such a growth of depositors that it ranked as a two-million-dollar institution.

● During all this period of expansion Mr. Hamilton was president of the bank, and devoted considerable attention to its affairs. He refused to permit credit for the bank's success, however, to be laid to his account in any large measure. That, he insisted, was attributable to H. C. Wilke, who entered the bank's employ as a clerk shortly after Mr. Hamilton became president. A former school teacher, Mr. Wilke was selected for the bank with the intention of training him as its cashier, a position to which he attained in the year following his first employment in the institution. He became one of the best-known figures in banking in Eastern Wisconsin, and under his management the $174,000 deposits of 1906 grew to the surprising total of $1,807,000 in 1929, almost a record for a bank in a town of less than 10,000 people. In 1931, on the 25th anniversary of Mr. Wilke's employment with the bank, Mr. Hamilton was thus quoted in the Two Rivers Reporter:

● "We feel that the officers and stockholders of the bank are to be congratulated on Mr. Wilke's anniversary quite as much as Mr. Wilke. We are fortunate to have a man of his capacity in the management. But I think the depositors of the bank are also to be congratulated on having such a careful, far-sighted and conservative man in charge of their funds.

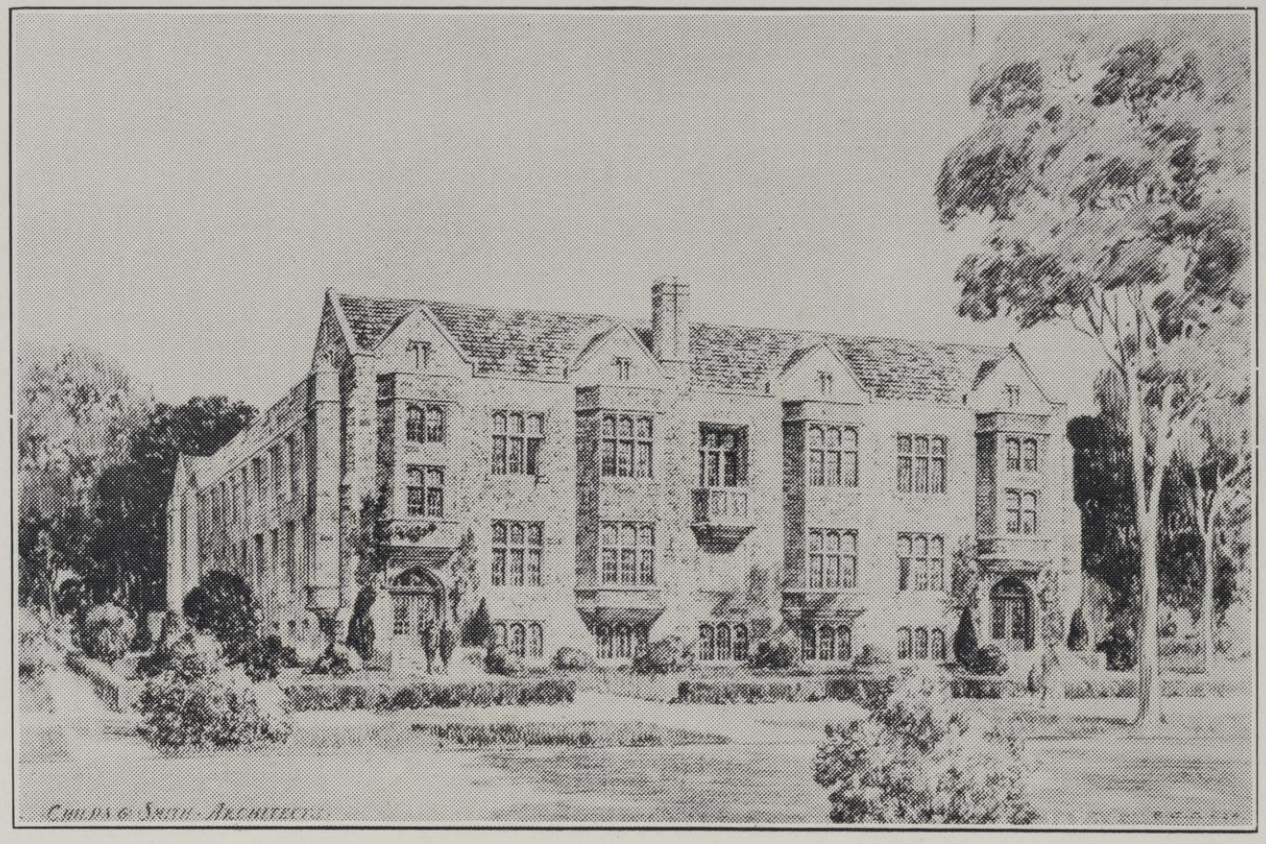
● "On behalf of the bank I should like publicly to express our appreciation of his faithful and exceptional services, and to

congratulate him on his splendid record of service to the bank and the community."

● Mr. Hamilton retired from active business—or at least from direct management of the Hamilton Company—in 1920, turning the control of affairs over to younger men who had grown up with the business under his leadership, although he remained chairman of the board. From that date he spent the greater part of each year in California, where for some years he had spent the worst months of the Wisconsin winter. With his retirement, he became a resident of Two Rivers only during the brief but beautiful summer season which has earned the city the title of "the coolest spot in Wisconsin."

● But Mr. Hamilton soon learned that the business habits of a lifetime may not be easily broken. No longer active in his own plant, he was shortly seeking activity in other lines, particularly in California, where he purchased an orange grove and other real estate. He also became a principal stockholder in the Hotel Vista del Arroyo, at Pasadena, a $2,000,000 corporation controlling the hotel on the grounds of which is located the bungalow where Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton made their home eight months of the year. Mr. Hamilton is also a stockholder in several western mining enterprises, and his hunting interest, a favorite sport since his boyhood, brought him to purchase a preserve of several thousand acres of wild land near Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, on which he maintains a hunting lodge where he and his family spend a

month or more every fall during the shooting season. It might be added that Mr. Hamilton first hunted in that territory in 1879, the year before the Hamilton type business was founded. A brother, George D. Hamilton, had started a newspaper at Detroit Lakes, and induced Mr. Hamilton to come up for the duck-shooting. And for fifty-two years thereafter, to the date of this writing, Mr. Hamilton never failed to keep his rendezvous with the mallards and canvasbacks on the lakes of the region.



J. E. Hamilton Community House at Two Rivers. Dedicated in 1931

CHAPTER X

AN ABSORBING study of American democracy in action, with its inherent play of action and reaction between driving individualism and government by majorities, is to be found in the story of the relations between J. E. Hamilton and the community of Two Rivers.

● It is by no means a peaceable chapter in the life of the man who came in his later days to enjoy the admiration and respect, and a considerable measure of affection, of the city which he unquestionably helped to build. That esteem which became his own by common consent as his position of benevolent and unselfish leadership came to be understood was not won without many clashes between the manufacturer and various groups of his fellow-citizens. The reasons for such clashes are not hard to understand. The prophet in his own country is proverbially at a discount; the "home boy" who furnishes the material for local pride after he "makes good" has to run a gauntlet of doubt, suspicion and carping criticism on his way up the ladder. It is not easy for the average man to accept

that the young fellow he knew as a barefoot youngster, town athlete and factory hand, can be entitled to wield authority, or to take leadership. His very success in his own enterprises is a handicap in the rough-and-tumble of town politics, where one man's vote is as good as another's, and there is an irrepressible instinct to combine to show the prominent "leading citizens" a thing or two. Perhaps this fundamental trait of American popular government is even somewhat exaggerated in a town like Two Rivers, which as J. E. Hamilton came to the zenith of his vigorous and active career was becoming more and more of an industrial community with the definite beginnings of class cleavage.

● This is one side of the picture. The other side is that of a clear-headed, determined man of great energy and decision, who saw further than most of his fellows, and had withal the interests of his town very close at heart. Accustomed by this time to exercise authority, it is probable that Mr. Hamilton was not a very astute politician—he himself was willing to concede, with a chuckle, that he never understood the art of campaigning, and preferred a good fight to the wily smoothness of the gladhander. He had plenty of such local rows, and the early years of his contacts with civic affairs were stormy more often than peaceful—but they are studded with ultimate accomplishment. "J. E." in the long run usually had his way, because eventually the citizenry perceived the logic and good sense of what he proposed. So he was first president of the

water and light commission, which gave Two Rivers early distinction as a city of successful municipal ownership; he was twice mayor of the community, and the father of its modern improvements—sewers, water and light systems, sidewalks and paving.

● These things, the substance of politics in small towns, were not conceived as politics by Mr. Hamilton. They were such improvements to his town as a prudent and progressive home owner would add to his own property; sound investments returning more than they cost. But to get them meant frequent collisions with the local politicians who had a large fear of increasing taxes and so getting themselves out of office. A considerable local organization of the socialist party, complete with its own weekly newspaper, added to the complications. It assumed as axiomatic that what "King Ed"—the title conferred upon the manufacturer by the socialist editor as a convenient means of ridicule and hostility—that what "King Ed," as an" exploiter" of the "proletariat" might propose to the community proceeded from deep-laid schemes of capitalistic dominance. Slightly ridiculous as such sounding phrases might be applied to the affairs of a town of six thousand people, nevertheless they guaranteed plenty of enthusiastic opposition.

● Politics as an art and science had no particular appeal to Mr. Hamilton. He was a mild party democrat. By his own confession his democracy was largely a matter of inheritance, his soldier father having been a "war democrat" who rejected

slavery and the extremism of southern states' rights doctrine. J. E. Hamilton never ran for any but local office, never held a party committee appointment, and in later years—following the Bryan free silver campaign which alienated what little party loyalty he professed—was an independent in state and national politics. Men rather than parties engaged his interest; he was a Cleveland man, a Roosevelt man. His chief contact with national politics was his intimacy with Senator Tom Walsh, the Montana liberal, who had been a boyhood friend and baseball team-mate. The western radical senator and the conservative manufacturer, ill-assorted as their association may seem, enjoyed life-long friendship, and Mr. Hamilton was a regular contributor to the campaigns in which his chum attacked many of the principles in which he himself believed.

● So it was not politics that drew Mr. Hamilton into the arena of local public affairs. He had no taste for office nor flair for the intrigue and machinery of the political game. But he had that abiding affection for his native town that is the keynote of his character. His sharp sense of the town's needs and urgent solicitude for its future were the springs of his adventures in local politics.

● A typical history is the story of Mr. Hamilton's connection with the water and light plant, one of Wisconsin's pioneer municipally-owned utilities. As a manufacturer, Mr. Hamilton was interested in adequate fire protection for his growing plant; as a progressive citizen he wanted Two Rivers to have

the benefits of electricity and a good and plentiful water supply. He was a leader in the agitation which led the community to take the step which put it into business as its own purveyor of water and light. The usual academic protests against "government in business" made little impression on Mr. Hamilton as applied to a local water and light plant; he had carefully analyzed the possibilities, and in his forthright manner joined forces with the local socialists, who were of course hotly in favor of the adventure.

● Mr. Hamilton, by reason of his business experience and his support of the project, was a natural choice on the board of water and light commissioners, and in due course was elected its first president, early in 1901, remaining in office until 1908. This first board did the spade-work in organizing and erecting a municipal plant, combining water-service with the manufacture of electricity. The plant has long been pointed to as a model and example by apostles of municipal ownership. Its rates were, and remain, consistently below those of private utilities in similar communities, and even after paying the costs of a steady development which spread its services as fast as the rapidly growing city extended its boundaries, it has paid the taxpayers a handsome annual profit. Aside from an original small appropriation, and a bond issue of which interest and principal were met out of earnings, it has never cost the taxpayers anything beside their regular monthly bills for service, at low rates. It was just the sort of work that

Mr. Hamilton appreciated and in which he found himself at home.

● Another incident of Mr. Hamilton's connection with the municipal utility came about through his advocacy of drawing the city's water supply from Lake Michigan, instead of from the inadequate wells which had sufficed the early lumber village. Despite the plain evidence that wells meant a constant shortage of water, with consequent ever-present fire danger, there was a considerable body of public sentiment which feared that lake water would be contaminated, and unhealthful. The suggestion of a modern chlorination plant to destroy disease organisms met strong resistance, and for several years the argument continued, waxing hotter by the month, between the well-system advocates, led by Dr. J. R. Currens, perennial mayor and local "boss," and the lake intake school of thought, led by Mr. Hamilton and the water and light board of commissioners. There were numerous public meetings at which the matter was wrangled at length, with Mr. Hamilton and his adherents marshalling the reports of state geologists and engineers to the effect that a well system would never be adequate, while the Currens faction dilated upon the horrible and deadly matter infused through the water of the lake.

● In such a situation Mr. Hamilton quite naturally found himself under suspicion of that group of local political lights who started with the assumption that any project backed by Hamilton must have a selfish angle. When he fought to con-

vince the city that it must draw its water from the unfailing lake supply, with proper treatment to safeguard health, the wiseacres were somewhat at a loss to ascribe a fitting nefarious motive which could account for his position. Finally, they spread the word that the manufacturer was planning to get the city to build an intake, improving and modernizing the plant at public expense, with the intention of "grabbing" it later as a business for his son, George, who was then passing into manhood. Just how this coup was to be executed was never clearly explained, but it was a very lively canard for a time. It was lively enough, indeed, to win an election, although it later was exploded by its own sheer absurdity.

● At the climax of the argument, a referendum vote was held, and the lake intake adherents were defeated by a narrow margin. The triumphant well-system advocates proceeded then upon a period of rather expensive experimentation. New wells were sunk in the sand of the lake shore, on the theory that the sand would act as a filter; trenches were dug, when the wells failed, to bring in lake water to fill them, and other expedients were tried, to no effective result. The city remained short of water for all purposes.

● It was some ten years before the well-system adherents were forced to surrender. The decisive factor was a fire at the large wood-working plant of the Two Rivers Manufacturing Company, which called for more water than the wells could supply. Mr. Hamilton and other manufacturers were rather

sheepishly called upon by Mayor Currens to open the valves which connected their private boiler-line intakes—leading to the river laden with sewage—to the city water mains, in order to furnish water to fight the fire. The additional supply thus tapped met the fire emergency—but a few weeks later there was a sudden, sharp epidemic of typhoid fever. In the resentment caused by the dozen or more deaths which followed the introduction of contaminated water into the mains during the fire, interest in the well-system died unmourned and after some delay the city embarked upon the construction of a large intake out into Lake Michigan, and the addition of a chlorination system to the water and light plant.

● Years later, Mr. Hamilton was to recall with a chuckle that not only had events vindicated his demand for a lake intake, but that he had enjoyed the last laugh in a way that was not lost upon the town. During the intake controversy he had secured an offer to build the city an intake from a contractor who offered to do the whole job for $45,000. When, eventually, the city came around to his way of thinking, the intake cost $165,000—not to mention the sums wasted in futile well-digging and other by-products of the well-system referendum, including a destructive fire and a typhoid epidemic.

● It was such an incident as this—there were numerous minor matters of a somewhat similar tenor extending over a generation—which gradually wore down the attitude of

jealous suspicion which in his middle years faced J. E. Hamilton whenever he took a hand in civic affairs. He was to live to see a time when Two Rivers recognized him, freely and gladly, as its most-prized citizen, when his suggestions were sought rather than opposed, and his unselfish ambition for the community's advancement was accepted for what it was, without suspicious reservations. And in 1931, a little over half a century after the launching of the Hamilton Manufacturing Co., "J. E." faced a crowded auditorium, gathered at the dedication of the beautiful Community House which he built and gave to the city, which rendered him such an ovation as few men ever receive—a full-hearted outpouring of affection and respect in which all classes of people joined. Perhaps it was the realization that generation-old prejudices had at length been dissolved which, on that occasion, so moved the venerable first citizen of Two Rivers as to make his brief speech of presentation almost inaudible beyond the first few rows of seats.

● This chronicle touches only a few high spots of the many points at which the life of J. E. Hamilton touched the general life of his town, usually with a quickening and fertilizing effect. It is impossible to go into the details of the constant influence which, for nearly a half century, Mr. Hamilton exerted on the community as it grew from a village to a city. The foregoing would be somewhat misleading if it conveys the impression that he was either unpopular or distrusted by his fellow

citizens—although in occasional political contests he was, indeed, worsted by those who were more skillful at the tricky game of local politics. The record shows that he was pretty steadily in public service. He was elected alderman in 1888; in 1893 he was chosen mayor and served for two terms, during which time the city water works and sewer system was begun, under his guidance. As noted above, he served as first president of the water and light commission from 1901 to 1908, and he was selected, during this period, as one of a committee which the city sent to Washington in the pursuit of harbor improvements, which procured a federal appropriation of $100,000. In 1889 he was elected to the school board for a two year term, and he served as a member of the public library board from 1890 to 1897.

● Not all of Mr. Hamilton's contributions to the development of his native town were involved in politics, although some of the matters recounted above were unavoidably intertwined with the exigencies of local campaigns and elections. The part the manufacturer played in providing the town with adequate water supply, municipal electric service and sanitation has been mentioned. This involved a more or less political contest. But there was no politics in Mr. Hamilton's pioneering of telephone service in Two Rivers, which offers another example of his active interest in public improvement and progress.

● It is perhaps characteristic of J. E. Hamilton that he had

the first telephone in his community. It was one end of a crude line of wire running from the Hamilton home on Washington Street to the Gagnon Brothers grocery store at Jefferson and 17th streets. The "instruments" were tin cans at either end. Calls were made by pounding on the cans, and orders for groceries were sent to the store over the line, which sufficed at least to save many steps. It also served to interest Mr. Hamilton in the new form of communication, and he had a similar line constructed between the old type factory office located on Main Street, and the machine shop, which occupied the first section of the area now covered by the modern Hamilton Company plant.

● The result of this crude system was the formation in 1895, of a partnership to establish a local telephone service, between Mr. Hamilton and H. M. Gebhard, which constructed the first telephone exchange. It had 19 subscribers at its inauguration. On December 25, 1901, Mr. Gebhard having died, a partnership was formed between Mr. Hamilton and two brothers of the town—Gus. C. Kirst and Charles F. Kirst—to conduct the telephone business. This partnership was continued until May 1, 1906, when Mr. Hamilton sold his interest to the Kirsts. The business was carried on by them until 1927, when the Kirsts sold their interest to the State Telephone Company of Wisconsin, a large utility which later merged with the Commonwealth Telephone Company.

● There were other incidents abundantly attesting Mr.

Hamilton's urgent interest in the advancement of the town. There is the story of the beautiful lake shore concrete drive between Two Rivers and Manitowoc, famous across the state as one of the most charming six-mile stretches of highway in Wisconsin. Here again J. E. Hamilton was the leader who put through the project against strenuous opposition, complicated in this instance by the fact that the road came under county jurisdiction, and thus had to meet a stout contest on the part of rural members of the county board of supervisors, who thought concrete roads—then very new—useless luxury and extravagance. The eventual victory hinged upon the raising of a private subscription, headed by Mr. Hamilton, of $10,000, to meet the expense of the road.

● "We had no idea what concrete roads cost," Mr. Hamilton told the writer years afterward. "We thought $10,000 would build a lot of road, never having built any. I suppose we would have been scared out had we realized that a good concrete road costs $25,000 a mile. Anyhow, we raised the money, and it so impressed the county board with the demand for the road that they went ahead and built it. Our $10,000 went into the pot, and a lot more. But I never heard of anybody who was dissatisfied with the road after it was built. In fact, a few years later they tore it all up and built a wider and better road over the same stretch, to meet the needs of the rapidly increasing motor traffic."

● Such was J. E. Hamilton's connection with public life. As

politics, it was humble material enough. But as good citizenship, community building, and solicitous ambition for the progress and development of his home town, it is not an unimpressive record. In any survey of the life of Mr. Hamilton, this chapter bulks large. It adds little that will be conspicuous in the history of state or nation; for the most part it is much less spectacular than Mr. Hamilton's contribution to the progress of industry in the early decades of the twentieth century, or his many acts of philanthropy which received wide popular and journalistic acclaim. But perhaps better than any other part of the record, it explains the essential man, with his abiding local patriotism, his love and confidence in his native place. J. E. Hamilton found Two Rivers a village; he made it a city, not only by the development of his own private interests, but by more than a half-century of unremitting and unrewarded devotion to its progress.

CHAPTER XI

BUILDING any business to a size to deserve the title of "largest in the world"—a title belonging to the Hamilton Manufacturing Co. on at least two counts—may be in a manner of speaking a "one man job," but it is never a job done by one man. It may be in the last analysis one man's province to say the final word on policies and take the decisions which govern actions, but in a business of more than continental scope that one man must have associates with whom he counsels, and upon whose judgment and capacity he has learned to rely.

● There was a group of such men around J. E. Hamilton in the development of the Hamilton Manufacturing Co., the first of them being his brother, Henry P. Hamilton, who joined "J. E." in the early days of struggle, and remained at his side thereafter until his death. Like his brother, Henry Hamilton was a self-made man who had known the tempering fire of adversity and hard work in his youth, whose formal education was not prolonged, but who had in him a native

capacity and intelligence which needed no handicap in the race of life.

● Henry P. Hamilton was a printer by trade, who had served his first apprenticeship in the Two Rivers country weekly office of the Chronicle, on whose press the first Hamilton wood type received its baptism of ink. At the time his brother thus put his foot on the bottom rung of his ladder to success, however, Henry Hamilton had left Two Rivers to work with another brother, George, then and thereafter publisher of the Detroit (Minnesota) Record. It was to these two brothers that J. E. Hamilton sent his first tentative samples of wood type, and from them that he received not only encouragement, but the material for the direct-mail advertising campaign which actually launched his business. So Henry Hamilton was very literally "in on the ground floor" of the Hamilton Company. He watched with interest the progress his brother was making, and in 1883, when "J. E." had taken Katz into partnership under the name of Hamilton & Katz, Henry Hamilton came back to Two Rivers and went into the business.

● Henry Hamilton's first work was as a salesman, calling on the printing trade with the wood type line. However, he made but few trips as a salesman, shortly taking over management of the type-cutting department, a position he held for many years. In the meantime his experience as a printer proved useful in meeting the many technical problems which arose as the company's products multiplied to include the full line of

printing office equipment. "H. P.," as he was distinguished from his brother, had charge of the advertising and catalog work for the printers' line until his death in June, 1919, and in his later years was also head of the sales department and a director of the company.

● "H. P.," like his brother, was a Two Rivers enthusiast. He served for many years as president of the Board of Education, and gave the city aggressive leadership in developing a modern school system. He also led in the organization of a park commission, and the construction of an extensive park system. In honor of his many contributions to community welfare, the city gave his name to one of its principal school buildings following his death.

● Henry Hamilton was an enthusiast for detail, a meticulous worker who insisted on having everything done right. For years, in addition to the usual records of the company, Mr. Hamilton kept a sort of corporation diary in which, from day to day, he recorded notable matters concerning the company's progress—the dates new building or machinery was begun or completed, important orders, new developments, etc. It is perhaps worth noting that much of the material of this volume came from these collateral records which Mr. Hamilton kept over a period of thirty-six years during which he was one of the Hamilton company executives.

● Next to his brother in the early days, Mr. Hamilton leaned heavily on the counsel of L. J. Nash, an attorney of reputation

and experience in the neighboring city of Manitowoc. Their connection began in 1885, when Mr. Hamilton engaged Mr. Nash as counsel in a lawsuit, and he remained thereafter the legal representative of the Hamilton company in all its phases. Mr. Nash drew up the contracts of partnership for Hamilton & Katz, and Hamilton & Baker, and so was thoroughly familiar with the plans and capacities of J. E. Hamilton when the incorporation of the Hamilton Manufacturing Company was undertaken.

● Not only did Mr. Nash draw up the incorporation papers and attend to all the legal details, but he was sufficiently impressed with the prospects of the new concern to subscribe for a substantial amount of its stock, and accept the position of its secretary. He served in this capacity, and that of legal adviser, for 32 years, or until the re-organization of the company with the sale of the holdings of the original incorporations to the younger generation, in 1920.

● Mr. Nash and Mr. Hamilton were not only business associates, but close friends for close to a half-century, until Mr. Nash's death in 1929, and Mr. Hamilton frequently paid appreciative tribute to his friend's advice and encouragement in the development of the business through the years. Mr. Nash was a clear legal thinker with sound business judgment, and a truly professional attitude toward business ethics. In his profession he won a state-wide reputation, and built a lasting professional monument to himself in rebuilding the

Wisconsin legal code when, late in life, he accepted the position of revisor of statutes, and devoted several years to this arduous labor of love.

● In the later years of the Hamilton Manufacturing Company's progress another man came to occupy a key position with the company, a man whose aggressive business ability brought him from a bookkeeper's desk to the general management of the company. This man, H. C. Gowran, came with the Hamilton Company, in 1896, during the period of the company's most rapid expansion, and he grew with the business. In a few months after his engagement, he had become cashier and office manager, and Mr. Hamilton soon found in him an eagerness for responsibility and a business acumen which fitted him for executive work. Such a man was needed as the expanding business grew beyond the physical capacity of one man to handle, and Mr. Hamilton turned over more and more responsibility to the ambitious young Vermonter he had met through a casual "book-keeper wanted" advertisement.

● Mr. Gowran, at first as a side-line, brought to the Hamilton Company what later proved to be one of its most productive lines, when in 1901 he and a friend, a Two Rivers dentist, designed a bracket table for dentists which they undertook to sell under the style of The American Cabinet Company. The cabinets were made in the Hamilton plant, the American Cabinet Company acting as a selling rather than manufac-

turing organization. This arrangement was continued for a little more than a year, and the new proposition prospered sufficiently so that Mr. Hamilton suggested taking over the company as a subsidiary of the Hamilton Manufacturing Co. In 1903, therefore, the American Cabinet Co. was purchased by the Hamilton Manufacturing Co., payment being made in stock of the larger concern. The dental line thereafter continued to be the chief concern of Mr. Gowran in the Hamilton company, and it proved to be a very satisfactory addition to the activities of the concern. The line was greatly expanded and improved, and is now one of the best known and most widely sold among dentists and opticians, accounting for a considerable share of the annual output of the Hamilton plant.

● In 1917 Mr. Gowran again sponsored a new line of development, drafting room equipment—drawing boards and tables, filing equipment for blue prints, etc.—which likewise proved to be a sound venture. Within ten years after the start was made in this new line, the Hamilton company had become the principal manufacturer of such goods in the United States. In the dental and drafting room lines together the Hamilton Company claims world leadership, and large quantities of their cabinets are sold for export as well as dominating the American market.

● Reference has been made above to a re-organization of the company in which the original incorporators retired and

placed the company in the hands of a younger generation. Conspicuous among these younger men who took over the management in 1920 was George S. Hamilton, son of the founder. George Hamilton was literally brought up in the business. As a child he played in the first plant while his mother aided her husband in handling the books, and from boyhood he was around the plant absorbing acquaintance with all its machinery and processes. In his school vacations he worked in various departments as a mechanic, and when he graduated from college in 1902 he started a period of intensive training as a permanent employee. Learning all details of the plant inside and out, he fitted himself for executive work and became plant manager, a position he held at the time of the re-organization in 1920.

● Upon his father's retirement in that year, George Hamilton was elected president, H. C. Gowran, vice-president, T. W. Suddard, secretary and plant manager, and Harry Rowley, treasurer. With the untimely death of Mr. Suddard in the fall of 1931, George Hamilton stepped back into the harness as plant manager, resuming the work with which he had been familiar for many years as well as carrying on the wider duties of the presidency.

● Harry Rowley was succeeded in 1928 by Edward P. Hamilton, son of Mr. Hamilton's earliest assistant, Henry P. Hamilton. Like George Hamilton, Edward was brought up in the family business. He first came into the shop as a worker during

his school vacation in 1915. After an interlude of war, in which he served in France, Edward returned permanently to the company in 1919, first in the cost department, and later becoming head of the follow-up and engineering departments. When Mr. Rowley retired, he was a natural choice for the position as head of sales in the printers' goods department, and he was at that time elected a director and treasurer of the company.

CHAPTER XII

IT is something of a tradition with successful American business men to feel that their possessions entail responsibilities in the nature of stewardship in behalf of society. A generous willingness to "contribute" to altruistic causes is characteristic, and has been the source to much in the way of cultural development that would otherwise have been impossible.

● J. E. Hamilton, from the earliest period of his advance toward prosperity, demonstrated a lively appreciation of this theory of the trusteeship of wealth. The reverse of "close" in his personal affairs, nevertheless he was far from a "free spender" in the sense of careless and reckless display of wealth for personal gratification. There was too much Yankee in his blood for him to spend a dollar for less than a dollar's worth. But he did not necessarily expect the return to be made to him personally. If he was satisfied that the purpose of the spending were sound, and the manner of it business-like, his purse strings came readily unfastened.

● It was characteristic of Mr. Hamilton that his own community of Two Rivers should be the chief recipient of his benefactions. It is another demonstration of the essential quality of loyalty to his native place which runs through the record of his whole career. Two Rivers was his home; in a very real sense it was also his work, for the growth of the city beyond the limits possible to a fishing village with a vanishing lumber industry was for half a century dependent upon the development of his enterprises. He had a constant and amazing solicitude that this growth should be upon sound lines; he could return from a long voyage to distant places, or a conference with the business and financial leaders of the metropolitan centers, and plunge eagerly into the details of Two Rivers water supply, paving project or telephone system, or pick up the cudgels in a local municipal controversy. He devoted an unusual amount of time and energy to such affairs, only indirectly connected with his business when there was any connection at all, but important to his sense of citizenship.

● Naturally, J. E. Hamilton knew conditions in Two Rivers; what was wanted, how it could be done, how it would serve or retard the development of the town. He could judge accurately of the worth of any local benevolence proposed to him, or initiate it if need be when others shrank from the responsibility. And when he gave to Two Rivers, he could see for himself that this gift was useful and used.

● So the list of J. E. Hamilton's major benefactions—and

it runs to a recorded $348,500 without counting the numerous minor contributions which are constantly sought from a man of means—is mainly a list of Two Rivers undertakings. Schools, churches, hospitals, community center, parks and playgrounds are on the list, covering a generation in the dates of the gifts. The Hamilton generosity was at the service of the community, for something worth doing, freely and steadily. Two Rivers did not have to wait for its leading citizen's death to receive evidence of his affection for his home town. Throughout his life he gave to whatever was good for the community.

● Mr. Hamilton's greatest gift to Two Rivers, the widely-known Community House which was opened in 1931, was his largest single benefaction, and its history is a typical illustration of his methods of giving. It was, incidentally, a completely voluntary gift. No committee had waited upon him to make the suggestion, no campaign or propaganda had been launched as to the desirability of a Community House. It had never occurred to Two Rivers in general that such a center was either possible or desirable. When J. E. Hamilton notified the city council that he was ready to erect such a building if the city would provide a site, the offer came as a complete surprise to all but a few of Mr. Hamilton's intimates.

● But it was no surprise to them. They knew that for years Mr. Hamilton had entertained the idea of giving the city some such center of public resort, around which the community life might focus. And they knew of the painstaking investiga-

tion he had been quietly making in cities all over the country to satisfy himself as to the type of building that would be most useful. At one time the idea that found most favor in his mind was a Y. M. C. A. building, as a logical development of the boys' work program of the city, in which he took an active interest. Later, for a time, he discussed the possibilities of a large swimming pool and gymnasium. But the boys' work in Two Rivers developed into a general municipal recreation program, including in its ministrations adults as well as children, women and girls as well as men and boys, and its expanded scope demanded something more than a haven for athletics alone. So gradually the plan developed, until the Hamilton Community House, as finally erected and turned over to the city, was received with acclaim throughout the mid-west for its perfect fitness as a general social center for a small city. And the results of the building's operation amply justified, from the very beginning, the praise it received.

● Such an institution, without endowment, has in some cases become something of a white elephant in communities without the taxable resources of a large city for its support. But so wisely was the J. E. Hamilton Community House designed and adapted to the needs and temper of Two Rivers that even in the first partial year of its operation, it was so widely and continually used that the nominal fees charged for its various services—bowling, billiards, kitchen, club rooms, locker fees, etc.,—were well-nigh sufficient to pay not only its

operating expenses but maintenance and depreciation charges, as well as improvements and additions to grounds and building. The tentative appropriation of $5,000 by the city was not required to keep the building going, and part of it was turned back to the city treasury.

● Nothing connected with the Community House, perhaps, gave Mr. Hamilton as much satisfaction as this evidence that his gift was being useful, and that his patient preliminary investigations had led to a choice completely adapted to the city and its people.

● The night of April 15, 1931, when a crowd that overflowed even the spacious accommodations of the Community House gathered for the official presentation of the edifice to the city, may rank as the climax of Mr. Hamilton's long citizenship in Two Rivers. It marked not only the completion of a great gift to his native place, which was to stand for generations as a monument to his name, but perhaps also the end of a chapter in Mr. Hamilton's life somewhat more obscure and complex than the surface facts of fifty years of successful business progress; it wrote "finis" to a half century of subtle opposition and perhaps jealousies and resentments with which Two Rivers, or parts of it, witnessed the rise of its most conspicuous son. Some effort has been made elsewhere in this book to recall typical instances of this reaction, a reaction which was probably a natural and inevitable result of the social and economic currents of the time in the circumstances of a village

making the difficult transaction from rural to urban existence.

● Mr. Hamilton himself, although occasionally exasperated by the manifestations of this attitude, understood it very well, and made allowances for it with considerable patience. He was used to having his motives misconstrued, as when his efforts to foster a modern water-supply system were interpreted as a subtle scheme to use city funds to establish a business which, it was alleged, he intended to seize for his son. He was used to being the "particular devil" used by local demagogues to frighten the electorate into giving them the jobs at the city hall. The irritations incident to this perennial campaign were never sufficient to cause him, however, to abandon his efforts for community progress, or to drop his share of the load.

● It adds something of a dramatic touch to the history of the Community Building to record that the last manifestation of this anti-Hamilton spirit, if it may be so called, was incidental to the preliminary discussion of the Community House —and that it was finally burned away in the fires of friendship and affection which glowed upon the night that the building was dedicated. Henceforth "J. E." was to live in the hearts of his fellow-citizens as a kindly benefactor, architect of the city's progress, and "grand old man" of the community by common consent. A row over the site of the Community House itself was the incident which precipitated that happy conclusion.

● When Mr. Hamilton had completed his investigations, with the expert aid of national representatives of various recreation and playground associations, architects and others, he made his surprising announcement of his prospective gift to the city. It was in the form of a communication to the city manager and council, in which he sketched his purpose and hopes for the building, and requested the city to furnish the site upon which it might be erected. Mr. Hamilton specified no location, but that matter at once became a topic of general public discussion. Public opinion, through expressions of civic organizations, discussions in the city council and elsewhere, finally led to the promulgation as the city's contribution of a scheme for a general civic center about the square block of grass and trees in the business district known as Central Park. Originally presented to the city as a market place, it was bordered upon one side by a church and schools—one of them the H. P. Hamilton school, named after "J. E.'s" late brother, long the president of the local school board. A new post office was to be built, and a new city hall and police quarters were in prospect for the next few years. It was proposed to link these with the Hamilton gift in a grouping of public buildings about the park.

● This plan, as it was gradually evolved, met with the hearty approval of Mr. Hamilton, expressed in a letter to the council. But opposition, as of old, developed. There was difficulty about the cost of the property needed for the Community House.

Some owners refused to sell, and the council backed and filled over the prospect of condemnation proceedings. Meantime there developed also an underground campaign against the Community House, on the theory that it would be an expensive and unnecessary luxury. Mr. Hamilton's old opponents in local affairs leaped into action again, and the city council was paralyzed in inaction between the contending forces. It began to look as if Two Rivers might reject Mr. Hamilton's gift, as more and more the Community House began to be a political issue, and its values as a community focal point were neglected.

● When the controversy had waged for months, growing in bitterness, Mr. Hamilton acted in a way that brought matters quickly to a head. He sent a letter to the council announcing that his offer was withdrawn. The implication in his letter was that he had no wish to force upon the city a gift which it did not want, and if opposition to purchase of a site was indicative of the general attitude, he would forget the whole business. But if the council could agree, he would reconsider.

● The letter had an electric effect upon the situation. As the prospect of losing the Community House, with all that it meant, was digested by the public, there was an unmistakable crystallization of public indignation against the obstructionists. At the next meeting of the council action was swift and decisive. The city manager was ordered to go ahead and procure the site wanted, by condemnation if necessary—it proved not to be necessary—and Mr. Hamilton was invited to

go ahead with his plans. Which, of course, Mr. Hamilton did; having never meant to do otherwise. His withdrawal of the offer was intended as a means of shocking the citizenry at large into realizing the full meaning of the muddle which had been created.

● That somewhat comic incident, as it happened, was probably the chief factor which assured that the dedication of the Community House was to become a personal tribute to J. E. Hamilton, expressing the esteem and affection of his fellow-townsmen. It broke down the last crumbling vestiges of suspicion of the Hamilton motives, and personal jealousy which had sprung up, inevitably, as the Hamilton company prospered and Mr. Hamilton's personal fortunes drew away from those of men with whom he had started upon equal terms, long before. It brought to the front the new generation of Two Rivers people who accepted "J. E." for what he was, rather than for what he had been, who were able to see his success objectively, and not in terms of their own failure to keep pace with him, by ill-luck or otherwise.

● Whatever the psychology of the affair, however, certain it is that few men ever receive such an eloquent testimonial of community regard as was bestowed upon Mr. Hamilton when, in the completed Community Building, he officially presented the structure to President William Kahlenberg, of the city council. Thunderous applause greeted his appearance, from an audience which jammed all available seats and standing

room, and hundreds of others, denied admittance, listened to the proceedings over the radio.

● Few heard J. E. Hamilton's brief and direct speech of presentation. The ovation he had received left Mr. Hamilton all but speechless. Never a practiced speaker, diffident rather than bold in public, he was overwhelmed by the affectionate welcome of the crowd and the appreciation expressed by other speakers. Only the first few rows of the packed house caught his few and simple words. But to the rest it didn't matter. They were there to see a great occasion in the history of Two Rivers, and to let J. E. Hamilton know what they thought of him—which they abundantly did, not only by their cheers, but by the presentation to the building of a handsome portrait of Mr. Hamilton, funds for which had been secretly raised by the business men of the city to make the gift a surprise to "J. E."

● The Community House is the largest and most conspicuous gift of J. E. Hamilton to his native place. But it is by no means the only one. Hospitals, schools and churches bear witness to his generosity. Elsewhere has been told the story of how he started a fund, with $1,000, which led to the first concrete highway in the county. Other gifts to the community, beside the quarter million dollars which it is estimated was the cost to him of the Community Building, include a swimming pool at the Washington High School, half the cost of Grace Congregational church, the Grace church organ, a

large contribution to the building fund of the Two Rivers Municipal Hospital, a substantial subscription for St. Mark's Catholic School, and annual support of the Wisconsin Y. M. C. A.

● There were other gifts by the score, large and small. Few solicitors for worthy causes, who could make out a sound case for themselves, were turned away from J. E. Hamilton's office empty-handed. The Hamilton Company supported a community band which was one of the city's chief prides and a source of enjoyment at its weekly summer evening concerts. Mr. Hamilton's private benevolences can only be guessed at, but are known to be large. And on the innumerable public subscription lists which are forever being circulated for all manner of purposes, in Two Rivers it was usually J. E. Hamilton's name which headed the list and set the pace for other givers.