



*THE ORIGINAL FOUR paper machines of the Ecusta Paper Corporation had been completed when this photo was taken in, 1939. Transylvania's largest industry, it was expanded over the*

*years to today's industrial complex employing some 2,800 persons with an annual payroll in excess of \$36,000,000.*

year 1941 there was manufactured the stupendous amount of 206 billion cigarettes, on which the Internal Revenue Department of the United States Government collected in excess of \$650,000,000."

Hundreds of Ecusta employees left Pisgah Forest for service in World War II. Of extreme interest was the Ecusta Honor Roll listing one and all, prominently and proudly displayed. News of Ecusta servicemen and their pictures were carried in the company newspaper, *The Echo*; the bad news as well as the good. Meanwhile, it was full steam ahead at Ecusta.

The Ecusta cigarette paper was of importance as a morale factor at home as well as overseas. The flax from which it was made also took on a new war-time service. Woodpulp was becoming scarcer as the months dragged on and requirements grew tougher for cardboard ammunition cores, cartons, even printing papers, needed in the allied cause. Ecusta turned to making printing papers and carbonizing papers of flax pulp, saving that much woodpulp for other uses. A lightweight Bible was published in 1944 using Ecusta paper, opening the way for untold tonnage of lightweight papers made by Ecusta for Bible publication.

An unexpected use of the strong, lightweight, tough flax paper was for military messages flown by carrier pigeons.

There seemed a unified dedication to the war effort. Helping to finance it through promotion of war bond sales was especially effective. Setting tar-

get on a goal as high as a four-engine bomber, Transylvania added another bomber to the airborne fleets, largely through efforts of the Ecusta workers. Several major successes such as this were reported. Employees of all rank spoke at bond rallies, others sang or made music; often as an extension of their work-related entertainment.

When Mr. Straus spoke in 1940 of working together and playing together, he meant it. There was developed in early months of the company a variety of activities: singing groups, an Ecusta band, teams for sport and recreation. These extended into the communities, and the communities benefited as well. The Ecusta cafeteria, opened in August 1941 as part of the first expansion, was at once a popular auditorium for such events. Yet, there was a need for an off-plant recreation area, soon to be met.

Camp Sapphire, the section's oldest organized summer camp for boys, was owned by Capt. Fetzer who had sold the main plant tract to Ecusta. This, too, he sold to Ecusta, to become the scene of extensive employee activities.

The war behind, Ecusta launched a major planning project that in July 1947 resulted in announcement of a \$5,000,000 expansion program, its largest by far. In the next several years, changes were frequent and significant.

Mr. Straus expressed his concern about Ecusta and the need for a broader product line to produce more jobs. Reinstatement of service personnel to their earlier jobs, and a lagging

post-war economy, brought on the first major surplus of personnel in Ecusta's history. Something was being done about it.

The Ecusta plant and all of Transylvania were thrilled in the period following the Berlin Airlift by the visit of General Lucius D. Clay, post-war commander of U. S. Armed Forces in Europe and the defender against the Berlin blockade. He and Mrs. Clay expressed pleasure with what they saw of the plant and its surroundings. It became a semi-permanent situation.

It was announced September 25, 1949, that General Clay would become president of the Ecusta Paper Corporation. Mr. Straus, known to have been having problems with his health, would remain as chairman of the board when the changes became effective six days later. Two months later, concurrent with Olin Industries' announcement that it would construct cellophane manufacturing facilities at the Ecusta plant, General Clay tendered his resignation effective January 1, 1950; shunning conflict of interest with the munitions firm in view of his earlier military responsibility for arms procurement.

The Ecusta Paper Corporation was a subsidiary of Olin Industries for many years, with Ecusta Paper and Film operations designated divisions. This continued for some time in spite of the August 31, 1954 merger by Olin Industries and Mathieson Chemical Corporation, forming Olin Mathieson Chemical Corporation. A corporate

restructuring brought Ecusta and Film under the Packaging Group. Later changes shortened the corporate name to Olin Corporation, and constituted the operating units as the Ecusta Paper and Film Group.

To be stated in later issues of this account of Olin at Pisgah Forest are the Ecusta Paper and Film developments following Olin Industries's acquisition of the Ecusta Paper Corporation. Several events, however, have bearing on the account of the early years.

Little more than a year after the sale of Ecusta to Olin Industries, Mr. Straus died at his home. It had not been long since North Carolina formally recognized his contribution to the state with the award of an honorary doctorate degree by N. C. State College. Posthumously, he was given an honor that would have been of greatest significance to him.

The employees' activity camp, where he had officiated at the company's annual picnics since its purchase, was dedicated to his memory by his successor, Ecusta President and Board Chairman John W. Hanes. Since July 5, 1951, the former Camp Sapphire has been named Camp Harry H. Straus.

Inscribed on a bronze plaque at the entrance is this testimony to Mr. Straus:

"His sincere and ever-present interest in the welfare and happiness of others is particularly evident here in this recreation area. It is in his honor that this camp is maintained for the enjoyment of employees and their families."