

Inventor of molded fiber technology to be inducted into Paper Industry International Hall of Fame

Martin Keyes, founder of Keyes Fibre Company in 1903 and inventor of molded fiber technology will be inducted into the Paper Industry International Hall of Fame (PIIHF) on October 9.

As the father of molded fiber, Keyes significance to the industry and Huhtamaki is undeniable. Molded fiber products such as packaging for eggs, fruit and other food products, as well as cup carriers and packaging for electronics remain critical to the company's success.

Huhtamaki acquired the rights to market molded fiber products in Europe in the 1930s and eventually bought the Keyes Fibre Company in the late 1990s. The factory built in 1908 to house Keyes' expanding business still operates today in Waterville, ME as part of Huhtamaki, Inc. and is also the original factory for producing the CHINET® line of single-use tableware.

Nominating Martin Keyes

The nomination process for gaining this much-deserved honor for Keyes was spearheaded by Paul Anderson, Huhtamaki materials manager and resident mill historian in Waterville, ME and Waterville Mill Manager Ray McMullin.

However, the idea for nominating Martin Keyes for the PIIHF came from Marilyn Gardner, a former employee of Quality Assured who bought film for plastic bottles from Huhtamaki in Finland. While on a visit to Waterville, ME, recognizing the Huhtamaki name on the mill, she started to research the company to learn what Huhtamaki was doing in the United States and came across Martin Keyes' story.

"Marilyn is a volunteer for the PIIHF and she quickly realized how significant Mr. Keyes' contribution to the industry has been," Anderson said. "She thought Mr. Keyes should be nominated for induction and started with the Waterville Chamber of Commerce, then went to the Historical Society and eventually to Colby College in Waterville. The information eventually found its way back to the Huhtamaki plant from our connections to Colby College. That's when we started to work on the nomination."

After waiting out a backlog of nominations for nearly two years, Keyes' nomination was accepted and he will enter the PIIHF posthumously, 100 years after his death, in October.

Acceptance

Anderson and McMullin were notified of Keyes' impending induction into the hall of fame in May by Harry Spiegelberg, Chairman of the PIIHF.

"Our Honors Committee and Board of Directors recognize his contribution to the worldwide paper industry and we wish to honor him by including his name with other industry giants in the Hall of Fame," Spiegelberg said in the acceptance letter.

Hall of History - Biographies



CHARLES A. COFFIN
(1844-1926)

"A man born to command, yet who never issued orders." This phrase sums up the leadership qualities of *Charles A. Coffin*, General Electric's first president. His executive skills helped establish GE's place in the front rank of American corporations.

Electrical manufacturing was Coffin's second career. At 18, he moved from Fairfield, Maine, where he had been born in 1844, to enter his uncle's shoe business at Lynn, Massachusetts. He later found his own shoe manufacturing firm, and by 1883 had established himself as an outstanding success in this line.

In that year, Silas E. Barton, a Lynn businessman, proposed bringing to the city the struggling young American Electric Co. of New Britain, Connecticut, whose major asset was the inventive genius of Elihu Thomson. A businessman was needed to supplement Thomson's technical skills. Coffin was prevailed upon to take the post.

He led the new company, Thomson-Houston, to parity with Thomas Edison's companies, the previous leaders of the field. When negotiations in 1892 led to the formation of General Electric, a key step in creating a viable enterprise was the installation of Coffin as its first chief executive officer.

Coffin's associates (and he always made a point of calling them "my associates," not "my subordinates") knew him as a gracious gentleman and delightful companion. He never ordered one of them to do anything, preferring to rely on his powers of suggestion. In his turn, he graciously sought and welcomed suggestions from those around him - and then decisively made up his own mind on key questions.

Customers and competitors knew him as both the outstanding statesman and the outstanding salesman of the electrical manufacturing industry. He took a personal interest in major negotiations, often writing business proposals to important customers in his own hand. At tense meetings he knew how to the

Amos F. Gerald ~



Photo courtesy of the Fairfield Historical Society

Amos F. Gerald, born in Benton, Maine on September 12, 1841. Democrat candidate for U.S. Representative from Maine 3rd District, 1900. Died June 14, 1918 age 76. Buried in Maplewood Cemetery, Fairfield, Maine.

The Hon. Amos F. Gerald, a native of Benton, is one of Maine's most prominent financiers and industrial promoters. When 20 years old he went to California to win a position in the world and lay the foundation for fame and fortune. After three years, ill health compelled him to return home, but his ambition was not curtailed or energy daunted. He commenced the manufacture of curtain rollers, and possessing the inventive faculty patented several articles that brought him considerable money. This capital gave him his start, and with a ready grasp of the possibilities of electricity as a power that must revolutionize the world's work, he established a lighting plant in his own little village, the first in Maine. This was followed by the promotion of electric street railways in various sections of the State of which he is justly styled king having promoted and built, more than a dozen. Mr. Gerald is now developing the water plant at Fowler's rapids on the Sebasticook river, 6 miles above Benton Falls. A dam getting a head of 25 feet and some 1000 horse power will be built. Electric generators will be established and a line of wire extended to the Kennebec River, supplying power to industries in Fairfield and Waterville. It is probable, also, that this power will be employed to run cars on a trolley road between Waterville and Augusta. Mr. Gerald has extensive real estate and manufacturing interests in Maine, and is a firm believer in the State's future progress and prosperity. As a citizen of Fairfield he is public-spirited and loyal to its advancement. The town's handsome hotel, "The Gerald," spoken of elsewhere, is his residence. Mr. Gerald is a persistent worker, always finishes what he undertakes in the most competent manner. Takes great pride in the prosperity and popularity of his town and true to his friends. Always ready to do his part in any position he may be placed.

The Fairfield Register, 1904

Sept 28, 1892 Capt. Cornelus Nye

In- 1796 there was born in a little log house situated on what is known as Ohio Hill in Fairfield Village a baby son to Elisha & Sarah Nye. Today the baby of 1796 is Capt. Cornelus Nye one of Fairfield's oldest and most respected townsmen who can look back upon what is now a thriving manufacturing town & in his mind's eye see forests spreading all over this area as states "looking back to my childhood days I recall the fact that but 2 houses except my father's constituted what is known as Fairfield Village.

In those days we had to go a number of miles for our provisions, which were what we called "sacked in" and many is the load which I have carried over my shoulder in this manner.

My father came here with his two brothers from Sandwich, Mass. in a Coaster in May 1788 - taking them 13 days and I was born 8 years after they made a clearing here for this new home.

Just how long we lived in the old log house I do not recall, but can well recollect what an event it was when we moved into our new frame house and that first meal was a supper consisting of pudding and milk. XXXX

Fairfield's growth commenced shortly after the erection of a small saw mill. So you see the industry with which it commenced continues to-day to be of one for which it is noted through New England having some of as finely equipped mills as in the world.

When I was about 20 yrs old I married Matilda Phelps of this town. 8 children were born to us - 3 girls & 5 boys.

In the earlier days of my married life I was obliged to work quite hard & it was some years before any one appreciated recreation of husking bees, singing schools, & militia training came in style.

In the Militia I had the position of Captain & at the time of the war of 1812 broke out I with my company went to Augusta expecting to be ordered to the front, but was detailed here.