

GENEALOGICAL
AND
PERSONAL HISTORY
OF
Western Pennsylvania

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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(VI) William Wallace Kincaid, only child of Rev. John Smith and Margaretta O. (Tuttle) Kincaid, was born in Wayne township, Erie county, Pennsylvania, April 26, 1868. He attended the public school of the town, and later entered the high school at Corry, Pennsylvania, whence he was graduated in the class of 1887. In the fall of 1887 he began teaching school in Wayne township, continuing until the close of schools in 1888. He then became a subscription book canvasser, and until 1896 he was engaged as general agent and publisher, locating in 1889 in Philadelphia. In 1897 he located in Meadville, Pennsylvania, as manager for the Keystone View Company, retiring from his position as sales manager with that firm in January, 1904. In that year he associated with Marcus Merritt Beeman and Jesse Homan Pardee in the formation of a firm for the manufacture of the Spirella corset stay and Spirella corsets, the invention of Mr. Beeman. They organized first March 16, 1904, as a copartnership, but a year later incorporated under the laws of Pennsylvania as The Spirella Company, with W. W. Kincaid, president; M. M. Beeman, vice-president and secretary; and J. H. Pardee, treasurer. On November 29, 1912, they incorporated under the laws of the state of New York as The Spirella Company, Incorporated, with the same officers. The business has grown to great proportions; six factories are engaged in the manufacture, the main plant at Meadville with branch factories and sales offices established early in 1914 at Niagara Falls, New York, and Lincoln, Nebraska; The Spirella Company of Canada, Limited, with plant at Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, of which Mr. Kincaid is president; The

Spirella Company of Great Britain, Limited, with plant at Letchworth (Garden City), England, of which he is a director, and which was promoted in 1909 and 1910 by Messrs. Kincaid and Beeman and The Spirella Gesellschaft für Deutschland m. b. H., organized in 1913, located at Düsseldorf, of which he is a director, Mr. Kincaid spending the summer of 1913 in Germany for the purpose of organizing it. At the breaking out of the war in Europe in August, 1914, the Düsseldorf factory was partly dismantled and offered to the German government as a hospital.

There never has been, in the history of manufacturing in this country, so instant a success as The Spirella Company has scored in its eleven years of existence; an army of about twelve thousand factory and office employes and corsetieres are exclusively engaged in making, recording and selling, about ten thousand of these being women engaged as corsetieres in the United States, Great Britain, Ireland, Canada, Germany, South Africa, Australia, Mexico and Cuba. Patents have been taken out and trade marks registered in the United States, Canada, the continental countries of Europe, in Turkey, Egypt, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico and South American countries, the inevitable result being, and that not far distant, when business will be done on a large scale in these countries. With perfectly equipped plants, a wise management and an organized sales force, nothing is impossible to these three mature, ripened business men between whom exists a mutual friendship and confidence that means more than the words imply.

A feature of The Spirella Company, that is most pleasing to contemplate, and a feature all too rare among factory owners, is the social and educational work conducted at the various plants. The Spirella Association has been formed, to which every one of the more than two thousand employes of the different plants, from president to office boy, belongs. To this each contributes the sum of ten to twenty-five cents quarterly, the entire excess of expenses over this sum being borne by the company. This association has a constitution and by-laws, with a policy which sets forth the worthy ideals and objects of its being. The company furnishes its factories with large dining rooms and kitchens where meals are served at actual cost. They also furnish a splendid hall for weekly meetings, with rooms for a gymnasium, a library and different classes and societies. Its educational course embraces classes in vocal and instrumental music, china painting, fancy work of various kinds, an orchestra of a number of pieces and a choral class of more than a hundred voices, a class on the violin, a mandolin class, and classes in the French and German languages, domestic science, millinery and sewing. In athletics, it has physical training and bowling classes for both men and women and a gun club for its men. It also has a large baseball park and several tennis courts. All these various organizations are furnished with competent instructors paid for by the company. At each of the Spirella plants a staff of young ladies trained in social and educational work are regularly employed by the different companies to devote their entire time to looking after the interests of the members. This

corps embraces a social secretary, a physical director, librarians and nurses. There is also a hospital equipped in the different institutions with regular trained nurses who look after those who may become temporarily ill or meet with accidents. They also counsel the girls and all employes on points of hygiene and health, visit any that may be sick at their homes, and see that they have perfect attention. The choral class and orchestra have given a number of entertainments in the Academy of Music in Meadville, filling it to its utmost capacity, and on two occasions have gone out of town, once to Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, and once to Niagara Falls, New York, one hundred strong, to give concerts. The annual outing every year since 1907 is also a feature of the Association work, the last one of the Meadville plant being on June 7, 1914, at Oakwood Park, where about one thousand of the company's and visiting corsetieres sat down at one banquet. Two of the annual outings which were participated in by both the American and Canadian companies have been held at Niagara Falls, with an attendance of several hundred from the Meadville plant who went by special train.

The British Spirella Company completed and moved into its magnificent new building at Letchworth (Garden City), England, in July, 1913. The whole top story of this building is given over to the social activities of the employes and embraces an auditorium seating 1000 people; a kitchen and dining room, a library, a roof garden and baths. All employes are allowed thirty minutes a week of the company's time to take baths. The business of the British Company has been organized and built up to its present splendid proportions under the very able management of Joseph Howard Moore who has been for many years a friend of Mr. Kincaid. Mr. Moore also started the business of the Canadian Company.

As a result of this organization and beneficent work done by the Spirella Association a general spirit of good fellowship pervades the entire institution, and The Spirella Companies have the most contented and intelligent bodies of employes to be found anywhere.