

## History of corrugated board

### **Invention of corrugated**

Albert L. Jones is the father of corrugated board. Born in America, Jones is said to have discovered the idea while manufacturing neck ruffs and frills on a pleating machine. Instead of using fabric he put paper through the milling cylinders to produce an elastic packaging material. In December 1871 he was granted a patent. In 1874 Oliver Long achieved a considerable improvement by gluing a fluted sheet of corrugating medium onto a linerboard, thus creating single face corrugated board.

During the following years American manufacturers concentrated mainly on the development of new machinery. In 1882 Robert H. Thompson (USA) received the patent for double face (single wall) corrugated board. His company, the Thompson and Norris Society, also developed the first mechanically driven single facer with which the first three European corrugated board plants were equipped.

### **Expansion in Europe**

The first attempts to make corrugated board in Europe were started in 1883, in London. This was followed three years later, in 1886, by the first corrugated board factory on the continent at Kirchberg in Germany. The third European corrugated board production plant was opened in Exideuil-sur-Vienne (France) in 1888.

Independent producers of equipment entered the corrugated board business in 1895. This resulted in the first continuous corrugator developed by Jefferson T. Ferres of the Sefton Manufacturing Company.

### **Double wall corrugated board**

A further important step was the production of the double wall or fivefold corrugated board, which was first produced by the Sefton Manufacturing Company in Kokoma (Indiana) in 1916. It was only in 1929 that two different corrugations were used (one fine and one coarse flute size).

### **Corrugated board in the 20th and 21st century**

The production of corrugated packaging has developed extremely rapidly since the 19th century. Parallel to the Industrial Revolution, the manufacturers of corrugated packaging were able to satisfy a rising need for transport packaging. Close correlations can be seen between corrugated board production and the economic activity of a country.

In the 20th century, machine equipment was improved immensely. By means of computerised working processes (CAD/CAM) production could be accelerated enormously.

Corrugated board has been produced for over 100 years and the rapid development of the world economy (globalisation) will certainly also demand innovative and creative solutions from corrugated board producers in the future. New technologies such as RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) are the challenge of the 21st century.