

Business  
STACKS

"Behold how great a matter  
a little fire kindleth"  
(Bible.)



SOUVENIR  
KNECHTEL  
FURNITURE CO  
LIMITED  
HANOVER,  
ONT.

THE TORONTO LITHO. CO., LIMITED  
LITHOGRAPHERS & PRINTERS

# Souvenir

COMMEMORATIVE OF OUR

## Rise From The Ashes

TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF OUR HANOVER FACTORY BY FIRE

*December 20th, 1900*

NEW FACTORY COMPLETED AND FORMALLY OCCUPIED

*December 20th, 1901*

338.47684

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*Ruins of Factory, Hanover*



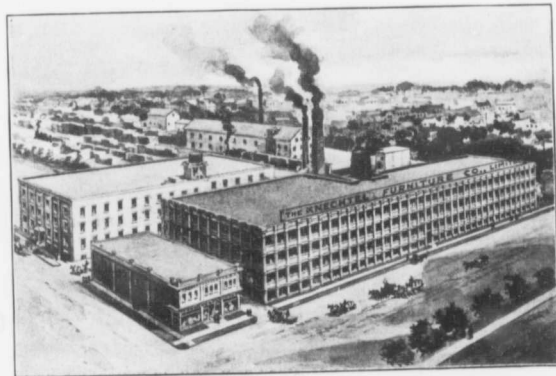
## *Salutatory*

**T**HE 20th of December, 1900, is a date that we are likely long to remember, for upon the evening of that day a fire, originating in one of our boiler rooms, totally destroyed our large factories at Hanover, with the valuable machinery and heavy stock therein contained.

It was a severe blow and a heavy loss, not only an actual loss as between value and insurance, but also a loss of prospective profits, and, we then feared, of business connection. However, we were cheered and encouraged by the very many telegrams and letters which we received from firms and individuals in all parts of Canada and the United States to whom we had sold and from whom we had purchased, and from other friends, expressing for us sincere sympathy and regret. And we had also to thank the Companies carrying our fire insurance for prompt and honorable settlement of our claims. Thus helped in spirit, sentiment and pocket, and having had, too, some consideration for the village of Hanover, which our business had, at least to some extent, assisted in supporting, and for our workmen, many of whom owned homes in the place, we decided to refuse the many liberal offers that had been made us by other municipalities and to rebuild in Hanover.

On December 20th, 1901, our large new factory, built on the site of the old, and more fully described hereafter, was formally opened with a splendid banquet tendered our firm by the good citizens of Hanover. The banquet was held in the fourth story of the building, and was largely attended by Hanover citizens, including other leading manufacturers of the place, who were present as honored guests, and by prominent business men from other places. A pleasing part of the evening's programme consisted of the presentation of a very kindly worded and flattering address and beautiful gold headed cane to our President, Mr. Daniel Knechtel.

It seemed to us that these two events of so great importance in our business history, the one productive of sorrow and loss, the other of glad rejoicing, should in some manner be fittingly memorialized, and we could think of no better method than the issue of this little booklet, which we trust may prove interesting in some measure to our many friends both in and out of the "Trade." Without apology we, therefore, place before you this sketch of the firm's career, with short biographies of those who comprise our Management and of a few of the many faithful men who, for longer or shorter periods, have stood by us and helped in the building up of an immense business. Confining ourselves to these, we can only make a general acknowledgement to those other valued helpers, foremen and mechanics, whom space will not permit us to bring to your more particular notice. We well realize that whatever success we have attained is due in large measure to the faithful and intelligent labor and wise counsels of our employes in the various departments of our work, and our policy has always been to preserve to the greatest possible extent the individuality of our men and to develop the "man" in each, rather than to



*Our New Factory, Hanover*

employ mere human machines for which we have but little use. We endeavor to have each employé realize that it is to his and our common interests that he strive to obtain best possible results.

Our now large business had its very humble origin in 1866, when our President, Mr. Daniel Knechtel, began in a small way the manufacture, by hand, of furniture, perhaps stronger in its construction than beautiful in its design or finish. Seven years later a small steam factory was purchased and ten or a dozen men employed. In 1874 a new frame factory was built, and the pay roll grew to include some thirty names. A little time previous to this Mr. Daniel Knechtel had taken his brother, Mr. Peter Knechtel, into partnership under the firm name of "D. & P. Knechtel." In 1882, Mr. Peter Knechtel left the business, and Daniel Knechtel was again sole proprietor. In 1884, the first brick factory was erected, and from that date extension was added to extension, and improvement to improvement, and, notwithstanding many reverses and difficulties, it appeared to be a case of "Nothing succeeds like success."

In 1887, Mr. Solomon Knechtel (another brother of our President) and Mr. Henry Peppler were given interests in the business, and the firm was known as "The Knechtel Furniture Company." Four years later the business was converted into a joint stock company, in which the principal shareholders were Messrs. Daniel Knechtel, Henry Peppler and J. S. Knechtel, who were elected the first, and have ever since continued to be, the only directors of the Company. Under this triunity the business has prospered in a wonderful degree. The greatest harmony and mutual confidence has always prevailed,

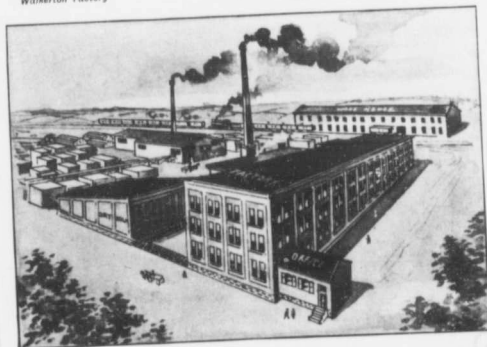
and "three heads in one" best describes the working of this "triple alliance." Mr. Daniel Knechtel has, it is true, ever been our guiding star and directing spirit, but he has never been autocratic, and every change or undertaking of importance has been with the perfect unanimity of the whole directorate, each looking after details in his own particular sphere as mentioned hereafter.

In the spring of 1899, when a lumber famine was threatened, Mr. Daniel Knechtel and Mr. Henry

Peppler, our President and Vice-President, with experienced assistants, spent weeks in the Bruce peninsula selecting and purchasing a large tract of timbered lands and a saw-mill.

In 1901, we took over the business and the properties of The Southampton Manufacturing Company, Limited, at Southampton, and of The Sieling Furniture Company, of Ontario, Limited, at Walkerton. The Southampton Company had been founded in 1895, and our Mr. Daniel Knechtel was its President and largest shareholder. The

Walkerton Factory



Sieling Furniture Company was founded in 1899, with Messrs. Daniel Knechtel, Henry Pepler, J. S. Knechtel, Samuel Fellman and Adam Sieling as the chief shareholders. While, therefore, the principal shareholders in The Southampton and Walkerton companies were also the largest shareholders in The Knechtel Furniture Company at Hanover, the three concerns had, previous to our economical and in every way advantageous amalgamation in 1901, been run as separate businesses and in no way connected with each other.

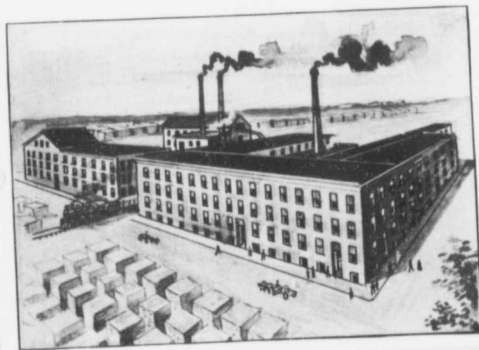
Immediately after our fire of December 20th, 1900, we rented a small factory in Hanover formerly occupied by The Hanover Manufacturing Company, and were thus enabled to continue to provide work for a number of our best married men, and, with the aid of our recently acquired Southampton and Walkerton factories, and the kind and indulgent patience of our customers, have succeeded wonderfully well in retaining our trade connection. We have, as before stated, just begun operations in our new Hanover factory, and we begin the second year of the century equipped about as follows :

*At Hanover* we have a magnificent very large four story factory, strongly built of cement concrete, moulded to resemble cut stone, the cement for which was made by The Hanover Portland Cement Company, Limited, whose product is admitted generally to be equal to anything turned out by any Portland cement factory on the continent. The building is splendidly lighted and most conveniently planned and arranged. It is the pride of Hanover, and there is, perhaps, no other building in the world that is quite like it. The large four story warehouse and office building is in the rear of the factory, fronting upon another street,

and is constructed of brick with pressed brick front. We have installed in our Hanover factories the best and most modern machinery obtainable, the new machines doing their work much more quickly and with much better finish than those which but a few years ago were regarded as the best. We have also at Hanover a first class band saw mill.

*At Southampton* we have very fine factory buildings, constructed, save as to one or two of the smaller buildings, of brick and very recently built. In fact a large brick extension to our Southampton factory has just been completed. This factory is also splendidly built, very conveniently arranged and well provided with first class machinery. We have, too, a saw mill in connection with the Southampton factory. Southampton is an excellent lumber point, as, being a Lake Huron harbor, lumber and logs are cheaply and conveniently brought in by water from any point in the great lumber districts of the North.

Southampton Factory



*At Walkerton* we have the factory erected by the Walkerton Chair Company in 1898. Since purchasing we have twice added large brick additions and erected a first class saw mill with band saw plant, and have placed in the factory much new and up-to-date machinery. Walkerton obtains a good local supply of furniture lumber, and is, moreover, but a short run from Southampton on the G.T.R.

*At Chippewa Hill* we have a frame saw mill of large capacity where we have annually a large cut of lumber suitable to our trade.

*In the Bruce Peninsula* we have our timber limits and saw mill before referred to. A railway, promoted by Mr. Clergue, of Sault Ste. Marie fame, will, it is believed, be running through the peninsula to the North Shore within two years, and the survey therefor runs almost through the centre of our timber lands. The construction of this railway will enable us to ship logs and lumber from our own reserves and from other peninsula and North Shore points to the doors of our Hanover mill and factories without transshipment.

Our Hanover, Walkerton and Southampton factories each have railway sidings running through the lumber yards to the factory entrances. The Hanover and Walkerton factories have each been equipped with automatic sprinkler fire protection systems, and we are negotiating to have the Southampton factories similarly protected, thus reducing the fire hazard to the minimum. The installing of the sprinklers is costing us large sums, but "a burnt child dreads the fire."

While we believe that no other furniture firm in Canada is in a better position than ourselves to obtain cheap lumber and to produce good goods at the lowest possible price, we well realize that in order to be successful, and to give our customers the satisfaction which they are entitled to, we must have system and method in the conduct of our business, and we have, therefore, given especial attention to the arrangement of our office work. As you have probably observed during the past six months our shipping department has been splendidly organized. We now promptly acknowledge every order, and *give the exact shipping date*, which must be much more satisfactory to our customers than an indefinite announcement that "we will ship as soon as possible." The car famine last fall prevented us in some cases from shipping upon exact date promised, and it used to almost break Mr. Muter's heart when his promises would thus be made impossible of fulfillment, but, even then, nine-tenths of our orders were shipped on dates promised.

Now, in conclusion, let us ask you to pardon us if anything that we have said has appeared to you to be in any way boastful. It has not been our desire or intention to boast or unduly blow our own horn, and yet we are thankful for the measure of success that has been ours in the past, and we can see no reason why we should not hope for at least as great success in the future. We have built up a very large trade, covering nearly every corner of our great Dominion, and we have been able to do so for the most part because it has paid our customers to deal with us. We have had our ups and downs, our successes and our failures, and now, with unexcelled facilities, a sufficient capital, a splendid staff of skilled workmen, long experience and a first rate trade connection from ocean to ocean, a very long pay



roll, and an output so large as to enable us to buy our supplies direct in very large quantities and at closest figures, we believe that we are in a position to do business with you, not only with profit to ourselves, but with pleasure and profit to you. If you have been dealing with us, we are sure that it will pay you to continue to do so, and if you have not been dealing with us, we are quite as confident that it will pay you to favor us at least with a trial order. No order, whether by mail or traveller, is too small to receive our very best attention, no order is too large for us to fill with reasonable promptness.

It had occurred to us that comparatively few are aware of the very great magnitude of our business, and our object in issuing and presenting to you this little souvenir publication is to make you better acquainted with our business history, our factories and facilities and our staff, and if the information contained in the foregoing pages and the biographical sketches we append interest you, we will be pleased.

We thank you very sincerely for such orders as you may have favored us with in the past, and very respectfully request such further orders as you may deem it profitable to send our way, and we, with very best wishes, remain

Very respectfully yours,

*The KNECHTEL FURNITURE CO'Y,*  
*Limited*

### *Personnel of Our Organization*

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#### *General Management :*

D. KNECHTEL, President ; H. PEPPLER, Vice-President ; J. S. KNECHTEL, Managing Director ; M. S. ARMSTRONG, Secretary-Treasurer.

#### *Travelling Staff :*

E. J. KOSE, CHAS. KUEHNER, W. R. DERTON, J. A. LOUDON, WM. QUAST.

#### *Shipping Department :*

M. J. MUTER, Shipping Manager ; J. KNECHTEL, Hanover Shipping Clerk ; JACOB BECHTEL, Southampton Shipping Clerk ; WM. LIEBECK, Walkerton Shipping Clerk.

#### *Factory Superintendents :*

H. PEPPLER, Hanover ; ADAM SIELING, Walkerton ; HV. GRASSER, Southampton ; B. URSTADT, Upholstering Department.

#### *Foremen Finishers :*

S. FELLMAN, Hanover ; FRED. KOEPKE, Southampton ; FRED. ERMEL, Walkerton.

#### *Sawmill Foremen :*

F. J. LANGLEY, Hanover ; JNO. ERMEL, Walkerton ; ALEX. MCNEILL, Southampton ; JNO. BECHTEL, Chippewa Hill ; HV. KLEINSCHROTH, Stokes Bay.

*(See biographical sketches appended.)*

All correspondence and orders must be directed to head office : HANOVER, ONT.



DANIEL KNECHTEL

DANIEL KNECHTEL, our President, is a grandson of Valentine Knechtel, who came to this country from Bavaria, Germany, in 1830, and settled in Preston, Ontario, in which place he died. Daniel Knechtel, senior, father of our President, carried on a cooper shop in Roseville, Ontario, but later left the cooper's trade and removed to a farm in Waterloo county, where the subject of this sketch was born and grew up. On the 20th of December, 1864, at the age of twenty-one and with an empty pocket, Daniel Knechtel first saw Hanover, which was then a very small settlement in what was called "The King's Bush." While on the farm he had learned the carpenter's trade at which he worked for several years after coming to Hanover, filling in slack times at the Lincolnian occupation of rail splitting and at logging and such other work as willing hands could find to do, often at fifty cents per day, the day not being measured by the clock, but from "sun-up" to "sun-down," though as the settlement developed he obtained more regular employment at his trade and began, by strict economy and the aid of a thrifty wife of ability and good judgment, to save a little money.

In 1866, he and his brother Peter began making furniture by hand and sold it to the settlers, which was really the beginning of their furniture business. In 1868, the two brothers, Daniel and Peter, bought a saw-mill about two miles from Hanover, which they operated mostly after hours by daylight and lantern light, working at their trade by day. Mr. Daniel Knechtel's subsequent history is identical with the history of our business and has already been related in that connection. He is a thorough lumberman, and the management of the lumber trade and saw-mills and the important matter of fire insurance are entirely under his control, besides which, his keen eye is, in a general way, upon every department of the business. His motto has ever been "Early to bed and



H. PEPLER

early to rise," he is temperate in all things, lives simply, is in splendid health and as full of fire, energy, vigor and courageous enterprise as a boy, and his appearance would indicate that our Company may reasonably hope to be favored for many years with his valued and able assistance and leadership. What a strange coincidence that the 20th of December should be the anniversary of his birth in 1843, his coming to Hanover in 1864, and of our destructive fire in 1900!

HENRY PEPLER, our Vice-President, was born in Waterloo County, 47 years ago. He was brought up on a farm and received but a meagre school education but had great natural ability, bound to assert itself in spite of his early disadvantages. Twenty-eight years ago—a lad of nineteen—he entered the employ of our President and has ever since been actively connected with the business. He is decidedly a mechanical genius, the

latest great evidence of his skill having been clearly exhibited in the planning and setting up of the machinery and plant in our new factories. He possesses, too, the further, and yet more valuable, talent of being a natural leader and manager of men. Of a kind and genial temperament, and honorable and reasonable disposition, he is popular with the men, and yet, without friction, sees that every man does his proper share of the work, and is very skillful in laying out the work and apportioning it to the best advantage. To him is left the management of the mechanical part of the business and in this he is assisted by an excellent staff of departmental foremen.

J. S. KNECHTEL, our Managing Director, is the eldest son of our President. He was born in Hanover thirty-three years ago, and, from the completion of his education, grew up in and with the business. He, some twelve years ago, began to develop and cultivate,



M. S. ARMSTRONG



J. S. KNECHTEL



M. J. MUTER

by practice and study, a natural talent for drawing and has ever since acted as the firm's designer, and as such seems to have instinctively grasped and met the requirements of the trade. He also directs the office work, gets out the catalogues, keeps cost records and makes the prices. He has furniture values down to a fine point, and is a sort of connecting link between factory and office. For the first two months of last year he was employed by The Canada Furniture Manufacturers, Limited, in which organization, until the first of March last, he filled the position of general factory superintendent, but resigned after a disagreement regarding the taking over by the firm just mentioned of our Hanover factory.

M. S. ARMSTRONG, our Secretary-Treasurer and chief accountant, is six and thirty. He left the farm in Perth County, which was his early home, to acquire a business education, and has spent his life thus far at office work, and is now unable to breathe in any atmosphere not permeated with the smell of ledgers, drafts and business correspondence, but "protests" and "overdues" are not necessary either for his health or happiness. He is quick, accurate, shrewd in judging credits, and looks well after the financial end of our business. His knowledge of his profession, quick and up-to-date methods and general good sense and level-headedness, enable him to handle our very large volume of office work with a comparatively small, though capable, band of assistants. It is not necessary to say that he has our entire confidence both as to his integrity and ability. A large part of the correspondence devolves upon him and his letters may be recognized by the initials "M.S.A."

M. J. MUTER, our shipping manager, is twenty-two years of age and entered our employment six years ago, the five months intervening between his school days and



E. J. ROSE



CHAS. KUEHNER



W. R. DEETON

engagement with us having been spent in a local business office. For a little more than a year he very satisfactorily managed the office of The Sieling Furniture Company. After the amalgamation we recognized his ability by placing him in full charge of our shipping department in connection with which he does a large correspondence. His letters are initialed "M," enclosed with a circular flourish.

EDWARD J. KOSE, our senior representative on the road, is thirty-one years of age, with the appearance of a younger man and the wisdom of an older. He entered our employment in 1885, and for four years filled positions in factory, store and office. In 1889, when nineteen years of age, we placed him on the road, giving him Western Ontario, which he covered regularly until 1894, when we shifted him to Eastern territory with residence at Montreal. No Frenchman, in Canada or France, has a more courtly manner than has our Mr. Kose, and he can sell goods. He has been with us for seventeen years, and we trust that at a very old age he may die in our service. Like our other travellers, he is endeavoring to form and to hold a connection, not for to-day only, but for to-morrow and the years to follow, and we assure you that you may depend upon him. If you doubt it look at his curly head. You have often heard of him: "The curly headed boy that never told a—" etc.

CHARLES KUEHNER, now forty-two years of age, was a successful and enterprising Hanover bricklayer and contractor, but seven years ago we persuaded him to abandon



J. A. LOUDON



JACOB KNECHTEL

the plumb line and drafting table to travel for us upon Mr. Kose's old route in Western Ontario. Lots of men can talk more words to the minute than Mr. Kuehner does, and make more fuss, but they can't sell more goods or win more respect and confidence from their customers, who, like our citizens, think the more of him the better they know him. That he wears well is proven by the fact that he has more than doubled the sales upon his ground.

WILLIAM R. DEETON doesn't look it, but he will be twenty-nine his next birthday. Before carrying our grip he had a varied experience as harness maker, hardware merchant, undertaker and furniture retailer, but men, like water, will find their level. We had been reading Du Maurier's "Trilby" and were so struck with the resemblance between the hero of the tale, "Little Billee" and Mr. Deeton, that we forthwith offered Mr. Deeton our Central Ontario ground, which for six years he has worked with credit to himself and satisfaction to us.

J. A. LOUDON, our senior and junior traveller, oldest in years and youngest in his connection with us, is fifty-six years of age and has been a knight of the road for ten years, the last five of which he has spent in Manitoba and the West, where he has worked up splendid connections. He is too modest to say so himself, but others tell us that he sells more goods than any other furniture traveller in his territory. During the year that he has been in our employ he has shown such good results that we have deemed ourselves



SAMUEL FELLMAN



ADAM SIELING



H. GRASSER

fortunate in being able to re-engage him. In the very wide, prosperous and rapidly developing field which he covers, we expect him to do great things for us, and are satisfied that we have the right man in the right place.

JACOB KNECHTEL, our Hanover shipping clerk, is a younger brother of our President, and was born fifty-one years ago. He had had a varied career until he took up his present work with us nine years ago. Better health would have enabled him to have been financially more successful in his undertakings, which were many times changed for health's sake. But, while everything he touched did not turn to gold, he always endeavored—and successfully—to pay a hundred cents on the dollar, and is worthy of respect as though he had made a million. He has railroad routes and rates at his fingers end, and is in every respect well qualified for the important, and often trying, position that he holds, and has rendered us very valuable assistance.

SAMUEL FELLMAN, superintendent of our finishing department at Hanover, is forty-eight years of age. He began to work for us twenty-eight years ago, and in that time has probably not been off duty a dozen working days. He served his apprenticeship with Mr. Isaac Hoffman, of Berlin, is one of the very best finishers in the country, and has certainly done his share to make the "Knechtel" goods famous. Mr. Koepke and Mr. Ermel, our foremen finishers at Southampton and Walkerton, received their training under Mr. Fellman, which accounts for the uniformly good finish of our goods at all three factories. In fact upon Mr. Fellman devolves the duty of seeing that there is this uniformity and excellency of finish at every point. Being thoroughly versed in all that pertains to finishing material, he makes all purchases for his department, and the traveller or firm who would fool him once would have great difficulty in repeating the offence.



JACOB BECHTEL



BERNARD URSTADT

ADAM SIELING, superintendent of our Walkerton factory, entered upon his apprenticeship with us at Hanover, in 1887. In 1898, he was made manager of the Sieling Furniture Company at Walkerton in which he held considerable stock. He is well posted in every detail of factory work and is a very capable and satisfactory superintendent.

HENRY GRASSER, our factory superintendent at Southampton, is thirty-seven years of age. He began to work for us twenty-one years ago—a sixteen year old apprentice—and after eight years was made a shop foreman, which position he held for thirteen years, until, on the 14th of October last, we promoted him to the responsible position that he now occupies, and at Southampton he's "The Boss." Mr. Grasser was a general favorite in Hanover, and upon his departure last fall for Southampton, a number of his friends surprised him with a very nice address and presentation.



WM. LIEBECK

JACOB BECHTEL, our shipping clerk at Southampton, will soon be forty-eight years of age. He has been in his present position for four years, and for six years preceding had worked in our shipping department at Hanover. He is industrious, careful, and conscientious and makes few mistakes.

WILLIAM LIEBECK, our Walkerton shipping clerk, is twenty-nine years of age, and has been in his present place for three years, previous to which he was for six years employed by the Messrs. Krug Bros., of Chesley. He has given satisfaction to ourselves and our customers.

BERNARD URSTADT, in charge of our upholstering department at Hanover, is thirty years of age, and has been in our employ for about four years. He is well posted on

coverings and upholstering goods generally, and buys all the supplies and engages all the help for his department, facts which show the great confidence that we have in him.

F. J. LANGLEY, foreman of our Hanover lumber-yards and saw-mill, was born in England fifty years ago, and is nearly as loyal to us as he is to the Union Jack, which is saying a great deal. As our yard always contains millions of feet of lumber, Mr. Langley's duties are not light or unimportant. He is a very capable man and has been at his present post for twenty years.

JOHN ERMEL, lumber-yard and saw-mill foreman at our Walkerton factory, is thirty-four years old, just four years older than when he first picked up our log rule. He is a good man and understands his business.



JOHN ERMEL



ALEXANDER McNEILL

ALEXANDER McNEILL, foreman of our Southampton saw-mill and lumber-yards for the past eighteen months, is thirty-six years of age. He acquired his lumber knowledge and experience during a nine years' engagement with Messrs. A. Fisher & Son, at Paisley, and gives entire satisfaction.

JOHN BECHTEL, foreman of our Chippewa Hill saw-mill for the past seven years, gives us good service, gets along smoothly with the many white men and Indians (of which latter there are many) who draw him logs, and generally proves himself to be capable. He studies his own interests by studying ours, as all our employes must who hope for success and promotion.

HENRY KLEINSCHROTH is foreman of our saw-mill and timbering business at Stokes Bay, in the Bruce Peninsula, the home of the deer, the bear and the rattlesnake. He is thirty-eight years old, and as much at home in the bush as any Indian, a veritable child of the forest. He has had many years' experience and is thoroughly up in milling, lumbering, timbering and rafting in all their branches. He has served us well for two years and we hope to hold him.



JOHN BECHTEL



F. J. LANGLEY



H. KLEINSCHROTH

From the foregoing sketches you will see that most of our men holding responsible positions are young or in the prime of life. We like the young men for their vigor, keener perception and greater adaptability and ambition, nevertheless, we never discharge faithful employes whose only offence is old age, as is well evidenced by the fact that we yet have in our employ Mr. William Fleischer, who is eighty-eight years of age, and has been one of "our men" thirty years. He is, we think, the oldest actively engaged factory workman in Canada.

We trust that you will have been more or less interested in reading these little accounts of our prominent workmen, many of whom have an added interest in our business and success through holding less or more capital stock, and we have no doubt but that our next publication of this kind will contain the portraits and short life histories of men who will then be occupying important positions with us, though now among our boys and junior employés. We have our eye on them now.

We expect that at our next annual meeting, to be held shortly, Mr. Adam Sieling, above referred to, Mr. C. M. Bowman, M.P.P., of Southampton, and Messrs. J. H. Adams and H. H. Miller, of Hanover, all successful business men, will be added to our present board of directors. We expect and believe that their presence will help us.

*The KNECHTEL FURNITURE COMPANY, Limited.*

