The Mitten

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MICHIGAN'S CEREAL CITY

The story of how America's breakfast-eating habits were changed started shortly after the Civil War. At the Western Reform Health Institute in Battle Creek, Michigan, patients were cured using water, sunshine, exercise, rest and a healthy diet. In 1875, Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, a Battle Creek native, became the institute's director.

Dr. John Harvey Kellogg

Kellogg renamed the institute the Battle Creek Medical and Surgical Sanitarium. Patients at the "San," as it was called, practiced "methods of healthful living." The main idea of the San's program was to change the patients' unhealthy eating habits. At the time of the Civil War, Americans ate heavy meals of meat and potatoes. Many also ignored grains and fruits. Dr. Kellogg told his patients, "Eat what the monkey eats—simple food and not too much of it."

At the San, patients were served Granula, a mixture of dried, ground-up leftover bread, and Caramel Cereal Coffee, a coffee substitute made of burnt bread crusts, bran and molasses. To make a healthy diet taste better, the sanitarium experimented with food. It was during one of these experiments that the wheat flake was created.

Charles W. Post

(continued on page 3)

Kellogg Corporation

Kellogg's print advertisements were colorful and got the reader's attention. The Sweetheart of the Corn (left) appeared in 1907. Kellogg's advertisements also made Battle Creek one of the most recognized cities in the world.

When W. K. Kellogg started his cereal company he understood the importance of advertising. Although a cautious man, W. K. Kellogg was fearless when it came to telling people why they should buy his corn flakes. As soon as he started his company he spent a lot of money on advertising.

In an early magazine advertisement, Kellogg told customers not to buy his product. He hoped that might make people more interested in Kellogg's Corn Flakes. It worked.

Kellogg was one of the first businessmen to use large-scale outdoor advertising. In 1912 he built the world's largest electric outdoor advertising sign. He placed the sign on a building in New York City's Times Square.

Kellogg also introduced the "Sweetheart of the Corn" to help customers recognize his company's products. W. K. also printed his signature on the front of each box of cereal. He claimed that none were "genuine" without his signature.

The Sweetheart of the Corn, along with the Kellogg signature, quickly made Kellogg's the world's largest producer of dry cereal.

Cereal City *(continued from page 1)*

One day in 1894, Dr. Kellogg and his younger brother William Keith (better known as W. K.) left some cooked wheat sitting out for almost two days. When the brothers returned, they ran the dried wheat through some rollers. Each wheat kernel had been flattened into a small sliver of grain. The flakes then were baked. These early wheat flakes were tough and tasteless, but patients at the sanitarium liked them.

The Kelloggs had created the wheat flake, but Charles W. Post made Battle Creek the Cereal City.

Born in Illinois, Post was a patient at the San. When Post left the sanitarium, he stayed in Battle Creek and opened a health spa. He also experimented with health foods. Post created a hot drink from wheat, bran and molasses. He called it Postum Cereal Food Coffee. Post then introduced a dry cereal called Grape Nuts. It was made from wheat and malted barley flour. Post said Grape Nuts was "the most scientific food in the world" because it helped with **digestion**.

Post formed a company and began selling Postum and Grape Nuts. Within a few years he was a millionaire. Post's success led others to start cereal companies.

In 1902, one observer noted that everyone in Battle Creek "has gone daft over [the] food cereal business."

At least 30 different Battle Creek companies were started to make cereal. Many companies had problems. Frumenta Flakes were so brittle that the sharp edges cut the mouths of **consumers**. Norka's Malted Oats were gray in color and quickly spoiled on the grocer's shelves.

William Keith Kellogg

Kellogg Corporation

As Battle Creek's cereal boom began, W. K. Kellogg started experimenting with corn. Kellogg boiled some raw corn. He then dried it out and ran it through rollers. He had invented corn flakes.

On February 16, 1906, Kellogg founded the Battle Creek Toasted Corn Flake Company. The company was soon renamed the Kellogg Toasted Corn Flake Company. Within a few years, Americans all across the country were eating Kellogg's Corn Flakes.

In the 1920s, C. W. Post's company became part of the General Foods Corporation. Today, the name Post still appears on cereal boxes. As for W. K.'s company, Kellogg still makes cereal in Battle Creek. It is the world's largest manufacturer of ready-to-eat breakfast cereal.

Where to Take Your Family

The world's longest breakfast table (right) serves more than 60,000 people during the **Cereal Festival** in Battle Creek. This one-of-a-kind breakfast event celebrates the city's cereal heritage. Established in 1956, the festival has become an annual tradition. Other events include a grand parade, children's activities at Cereal City USA, and an arts and crafts show. The festival is held the second Thursday thru Saturday in June. Telephone (800) 397-2240 or visit on-line at *www.battlecreekvisitors.org.*

Kellogg's Cereal City USA offers fun, interactive ways to learn about the history of breakfast cereal and the many aspects of Americana it has touched. At this museum/cereal theme park, visitors can sample Kellogg's Corn Flakes fresh off a simulated production line. School groups are welcome and curriculum materials are available. Telephone (616) 962-6230 or visit on-line at *www.kelloggscerealcityusa.org.*

What Did You Learn?

BONUS:

What cereal was called "the most scientific food in the world?"

a. Kellogg's Corn Flakes
b. Postum Cereal Food Coffee
c. Grape Nuts

1. ***What did Dr. John Harvey Kellogg think would improve sanitarium patients' health?***

a. eating lots of meat and potatoes
b. eating a diet of grains and fruit
c. going for walks in the rain

2. ***Who invented wheat flakes?***

a. General Foods
b. the Kellogg brothers
c. Charles W. Post

3. ***Whose signature appeared on the front of his company's cereal boxes?***

a. W. K. Kellogg
b. The Sweetheart of the Corn
c. John Harvey Kellogg

Vocabulary WORDS

Digestion: the body's process of turning food into energy.

Consumer: one who eats or buys goods and services.

X R N A D V E R T I S E M N M D M Y R B
T C F I Y C D M V P X N R V S F J L O B
U T P P A H O Y H W F H N H L I J F F I
T F E M T T J R W X O G K A T Q T Y B G
O N C D D M R H N Z O L K K A C F G G G
J M N E P J F D W Q M E O X L Y T G J O
B J L X F J P G H F R C A J T S T A O L
A B A F P O S T Z Q W T T C E R E A L L
Y U L G T L M R T H Z X F T E U X L M E
S S A N I T A R I U M Y H K R M L N X K

Find the following CEREAL CITY words

KELLOGG
CEREAL
SANITARIUM
POST
OATS
CORN
ADVERTISE
FLAKE