

Dr. Hermann Simon CBE

Industrialist & Doctor of Chemical Engineering

Born: Mainhardt, Germany 30th October 1900

Died: Stafford, Great Britain 8th September 1978

A history of his Industrial Career.

Written by [WJ Langford](#) and produced by the Evode History Project, 2010.

Forward

Dr Hermann Simon was born in Mainhardt, Germany in 1900.

Hermann Simon's ambitions were not those of his father who was a Country Doctor and from 1910 - 1920 he studied in Stuttgart living at the home of his uncle and aunt in Stuttgart. For the whole of this period he had his own chemistry laboratory in the house.

After graduation he joined the company "[Zimmer](#)" in Berlin. They were manufacturers of bitumens, coating and other building industry products.

Hermann Simon's successful industrial career in Germany was cut short by the impending second world war and he left Germany with his wife and two daughters in 1938. He was fortunate to be offered a job in England and a small stake in Spic & Span Shoe Polishes, a small company in Stafford.

Chapter 1

Beginning of the enterprise

The company which eventually became Evode Holdings p.l.c. began operations a number of years before Dr. Hermann Simon appeared on the scene.

Like most of the industries based in Stafford this company, known as Spic and Span Shoe Polishes Ltd. owed its origins to the footwear industry which was well established in the town and which offered a natural outlet for shoe polishes. The company was registered on 3rd. June 1932 and was formed through the association with Lotus Ltd., a major manufacturer of footwear owned by the Bostock brothers and Mr. Adolph Axelrath who was the Managing Director of Yankee Shoe Polish G.m.b.H. based in Hamburg, Germany.

The idea of having a shoe polish manufacturer located in the town where their shoes were made and sold in their own shops, namely Lotus and Delta, and possibly other retail outlets appealed, to the brothers.

It was decided that the premises in Glover Street, Stafford, which had earlier housed some of the Lotus operations, should be rented to the new company for the manufacture of the shoe polishes as it was no longer used to manufacture shoes. Similarly some of the redundant manufacturing equipment no longer needed in the factory in Hamburg would be transferred to Stafford to allow the new company to begin operations.

The Board of Directors, consisting of members of the Bostock family, Mr. Axelrath, Mr. H. Jolles and Mr. G.G.Niclas, first met on 24th. June 1932, the company having a nominal share capital of £1,000 comprising 1000 fully paid up £1.00 shares. Mr. Frederick M. Bostock was appointed Chairman of the company.

At a Directors meeting held on 20th. July 1932 it was resolved that an application be made for the registration of the word "Dove" to be used in the trade mark applying to the company products.

When manufacturing began, although the quality of the polishes produced was said to be excellent, sales were disappointing put down to the lack of promotion and losses mounted. A further injection of working capital was required and this took place in January and November of 1933. There was also a recorded loss in the balance sheet for 1934.

Consequently, at an Extraordinary General Meeting on 18th. September 1935, the capital of the company was increased to £3,000. The Bostock family were expressing concern over the viability of the company and suggested to Mr. Axelrath that liquidation of the company should be considered. Very little money was being spent on promoting "Dove polishes" although at least one cinema in the town regularly screened a slide, believed to be used up to 1939, advertising the product. The accounts for this financial year also showed a loss.

The financial difficulties continued in 1936 and the Bostock family advised Mr. Axelrath that, unless more capital was forthcoming, the business could not continue. This posed a problem for him because, at this time with the political situation which existed in his country, he was not allowed to send money out of Germany. Also, because of censorship of outgoing and incoming mail, severe restrictions were placed on any discussions in writing of the situation at Spic & Span. However a code was devised to be used in correspondence passed between the interested parties and money was transferred to alleviate the situation.

In March of 1937 the share capital of the company was increased from £3,000 to £5,000 and a further interest free loan from Lotus Ltd. Was forthcoming, but the company was still operating at a loss. Something had to be done to turn the company around and to the relief of all concerned Mr. Axelrath announced that he had found someone who was willing to invest in the company and also bring with him the necessary chemical expertise to put the enterprise on the road to success. That someone turned out to be Dr. Hermann Simon.

Chapter 2

Leaving Germany

The eventual appointment of Dr. Simon to Spic & Span came about via the correspondence on the matter between Mr. Axelrath in Germany and Mr. John J.E. Forman who was employed by Spic & Span.

It is not usual while writing the biography of one person to include a tribute to another but at this stage this is what must be done in the case of [John James Ernest Forman](#).

He was born in Hamburg, Germany of a British father and a German mother and came to England at an early age. In 1934 he joined Spic & Span as factory manager after a period of training at the shoe polish factory in Hamburg and, to put it mildly, was appalled by the conditions in which he found the factory at Glover Street and in which he was expected to produce a saleable product. Nevertheless he made progress and, despite the company constantly being in the red, he was appointed a director in 1937. In this position it was through correspondence between Mr. Axelrath in Germany and John Forman which managed to transfer funds to keep the company going and to the appointment of Hermann Simon to the company. He proved to be a loyal companion and friend to Dr. Simon throughout their co-operation as the company grew into Evode Holdings p.l.c.

Hermann was born on 30 October 1900 in the small town of Mainhart, about 10 kilometres from Heilbronn in the state of Baden-Wurttemberg. He was the only son of Dr. Heinrich Simon, born in Dusseldorf and his wife Bertha, born in Eschenau on 14 April 1872, who were married on 7 August 1894 in the village of Eschenau in the state of Bavaria. It is worth noting that Bertha's maiden name was Bamberger and Eschenau was only a few miles from the town of Bamberg.

There is no evidence that Hermann attended the state school in Mainhart but it is suspected that he was educated at a private school with a view to, eventually, he would enter into higher education. It is known that his father being the local doctor he travelled around the area with his father when he was making calls and the journeys were made by horse and carriage.

As Hermann grew into maturity Germany was, of course, engaged in fighting the First World War. It is understood that as he approached conscription age he was called into the armed services and it is believed that he served in a cavalry regiment of some description. To verify this suspicion there is on file an official letter headed "In The Name Of The Fuhrer And The State Chancellor", who was at that time Generalfeldmarschall von Hindenburg, thanking Hermann for his wartime service. It is dated Berlin, 19 December 1935 and is addressed to "Chemiker Dr. Ing. Hermann Simon".

Hermann Simon moved to University at Stuttgart. The time during which he did this is uncertain (certainly after demobilisation) but it would have taken a period of about six years for him to have gained a Doctorate in Chemical Engineering (D.Eng. Chem.). It is therefore probable that he attended the University at Stuttgart between the years 1919 and 1925.

Correspondence with a person still living in Germany raised doubts as to whether the University of Stuttgart existed when Hermann Simon did his studying. Consulting the Wikipedia website advises that what is now "Universitat Stuttgart" was founded in 1829. Because of the increasing importance of technical sciences from 1876 the University was known as a technical college which was awarded promotional rights for technical disciplines in 1900. The name reverted to a University in 1967.

He has claimed that, during his period at University, he lived on \$1(per day/month)? At this point in time Germany was in dire straights so far as her economy was concerned. Reparations being paid by Germany to the victorious Allied nations led to the economy being devalued. The German mark fell between 1919 from \$1.00 being worth 8.20 marks to December 1923 over 4 trillion marks. People had to make use of the savings accumulated during the war as they could not make purchases from their income. This currency coming into circulation led to inflation and the fall in the mark to hyperinflation. The question arises who subsidised Hermann while he was doing his studies? Did his father meet the cost of his education at this time or did he obtain a scholarship and receive a grant? Sadly his mother died in Heidelberg on 4 August 1928 and on 15 March 1929 his father moved to Stuttgart for what reason is not known, having retired as a General Practitioner. He died there in 1933.

After Hermann had completed his studies at Stuttgart he moved to Berlin and joined Chemische Werke Zimmer & Co. of Berlin and Stuttgart. (Was Hermann originally based in Stuttgart)? The company was situated in Flossenstrasse, Berlin engaged in the manufacture of bituminous products which was an subject in which Hermann gained considerable knowledge and expertise. In addition to these waterproofing products the company made a wide range of materials used in the building industry and also a range of aluminium based paints which, when he came to England, Hermann offered to the Air Ministry. His activities with the company were so much appreciated that he was made a partner after a short while.

While in Berlin his private life was also being enhanced. On 31 March 1932 he married Hildegard Ruth Leiser at Berlin-Wilmersdorf. She had been born in Berlin and they lived at Eichkamp Kikadennweg 48, Berlin and then in Dahlen, Bachstelzennweg 10 Berlin in October 1937. Two of his children were born in Berlin, Marion on 6 October 1934 and Petra on 19 December 1935.

Unfortunately the political situation in Germany was in turmoil and the antagonism against people living there who could not claim to be “of the master race” were persecuted and those who were lucky enough to survive were encouraged to leave, taking with them the bare minimum. Under these circumstances Dr. Simon, after correspondence passing between Mr. Axelrath, Mr. Forman and himself, took the decision to immigrate to Britain, having been offered a position with Spic & Span.

As previously implied, exchange control on bringing money out of Germany, was strictly applied particularly on people who wanted to leave the Third Reich. Therefore the family assets had, to a great extent, to be disposed of but Hermann managed to preserve enough to take his family on a world-wide journey before settling in England and to purchase a considerable stock of clothing for them all. The articles which could be brought with them was also closely monitored and these were packed into two sealed containers which accompanied them to England. While in Germany the family had a pet dog, a great dane called Bille. Ideally they would have loved to bring him with them to England but a lengthy quarantine period, due to the strict British laws on rabies, prevented this. The fate of the dog is not known.

Correspondence available tells us that Dr. Simon made his first visit to Stafford alone in November 1937 to visit Spic & Span and to arrange accommodation for his family. The latter, apparently, was arranged with John Forman who was asked to find a “cheap” place for them to stay. Mr. Forman, took these instructions very literally and reserved accommodation at a hostel on the Wolverhampton Road in Stafford, no doubt the “cheapest of the cheap“, not at all to the liking of Mrs. Simon, as he found out at a later date.

Dr. Simon bought a house in St. John`s Road, Stafford. English houses were very different to those in Germany and it was difficult for Mrs. Simon to adjust easily. German houses were built for harsher winters. They had double glazing and central heating. Rooms were larger and all measurements were in metric. It was awkward to fit their German furniture and curtains into the rooms but it was managed gratefully and a new life began.

Another aspect of English society which Mrs. Simon found difficult to accept was that of visiting people on the off chance. In Germany, when invited to “drop in for a cup of tea” it meant that at any

time, whereas in England it was purely a polite way of conversation a really did not imply that. As she assumed the German convention her unexpected arrival did not always go down very well.

About the same time as Hermann left Germany his cousin George Simon left for New York where he hoped to market, under license, Herman's product Mellitol (a concrete waterproofer and densifier). This did not happen, however, due to lack of support from Mr. Axelrath of Cadie Chemicals Products Corporation.

Chapter 3

Building a Business

On arrival in Stafford to join Spic & Span as Chief Chemist, with a wage of £7.00 per week, Hermann like John Forman before him, was appalled at the condition of the buildings in which he was supposed to produce the wax products.* The buildings were of 4,000 square feet in which the Bostock brothers had made shoes and it had outlived its usefulness. His office was an 8ft. by 10ft. room which contained a desk and a large book case which he had brought with him from Germany. Along one wall was a bench with a gas supply connected to a Bunsen burner. The only other equipment was a set of weighing scales, a few beakers and a quantity of saucepans purchased from Woolworths. The mixing of all raw materials was done by hand stirring and HS was very critical that this was done very thoroughly. The roof leaked badly and the place became flooded whenever heavy rainfall occurred. Six people were employed.

His intention was to improve the quality of the shoe and floor polishes produced but more importantly, he planned to introduce many of the chemical products and paints which he had so successfully made in Germany.

His expertise, knowledge and vigour obviously impressed the people who were then Directors of the company for he was very quickly, made a Director himself. At this “extraordinary meeting” the share capital of the company was raised from £5,000 to £7,100 and the company name was changed to Spic & Span Chemicals Ltd. Registration of this name was approved on 19th. May 1938. At the meeting mentioned above he was allocated 1800 shares in the company.

Since arriving at Spic & Span he and Mr. Forman had organised the purchase and use of raw materials and the administration of the factory. With the arrival of the first person to be employed by Dr. Simon, Mr. Cyril Lawton, much of their previous work was taken over. Dr. Simon brought with him a convention which had been used in the German factory which was not to use the chemical names of the products arriving but to allot code numbers to them in order to provide security for the chemical products made from them. This was done in strict secrecy with only a limited number of people knowing what was going on. For all his life confidentiality of the manufacture of the products made by his companies was most important to him. While this approach was most admirable from the security point of view it did create problems for the people who had to put it into practice.

In early July 1938 the first product under the supervision of Dr. Simon was manufactured in the factory. This was 4 gallons of paint remover produced in a large bucket, stirred with a broomstick. With the installation of a powder mixer, acquired no doubt at an advantageous rate, trial batches of Mellitol were made. This product was a cement based waterproofer and it became one of the most successful products the details of which Dr. Simon brought with him from Germany. Portite, a powder additive for precast concrete, was also an innovative and good selling product. Both proved to be enormously useful to the requirements of the Government in wartime.

The range of products was now increasing to include chlorinated rubber based and bituminous based paints, and others which could be used in the building industry. A great deal of attention was also paid to shoe and furniture polish production. Regular checks on quality would be carried out by polishing shoes or desk tops with the appropriate waxes. If he was not satisfied with the appearance of the products in the tins or they did not perform to his satisfaction in use the waxes would be scraped back into the polish vats for reprocessing. As the war progressed it became increasingly difficult to obtain the correct blend as many hard waxes could not be obtained.

While Dr. Simon's commitments to the factory, administration and laboratory were increasing and always carried out with dedication, he felt that the time had come to make visits to customers who he felt were important to the company. He followed a plan drawn up by his newly appointed Sales Manager, Mr. L. Fishburn.

Between the time of adopting the name "Dove" as a new name for the company and, due to the objections of Wailes Dove, the ultimate adoption of the title "Evode", many Board meetings took place to discuss the matter. At a meeting in November 1939 it was agreed that the weekly wage of Dr. Simon should be raised to £10.00 per week and that of John Forman to £8.00 per week. If projected to the year 1978, when Dr. Simon died, based on average earnings £10 would equate to £254 while £8 would be £203.

As the year 1939 progressed it was becoming increasingly obvious that war with Germany was not far away and the tempo for preparations began to quicken. Late in 1939 part of the Glover Street factory was requisitioned and converted into a morgue for the expected victims of German air raids on Stafford and public buildings in the town were being protected with sandbags and windows were being criss-crossed with adhesive tape to prevent shattering when blown out by the explosion of a near-by bomb. A compulsory blackout regime was going to be imposed and black materials would very readily suffice to cover windows to prevent lights showing from domestic and factory properties. However, factory roof lights were not an easy matter to deal with.

Dr. Simon saw the need for a product that could be easily applied to a glass roof light which would allow daylight in yet prevent emissions of electric light during the dark hours. By using the novel approach of applying a transparent blue paint to the roof lights and coating the electric light bulbs with a transparent, light orange varnish it was possible to meet the stringent blackout regulations. Many thousands of gallons of these products were manufactured during the war years.

At this time money was a scarce commodity and advertising the company products was not a priority. Nevertheless a steady stream of orders were being received, no doubt encouraged by what Hermann had achieved when he worked in Germany. One product which had proved very successful while he was with Chemische Werke Zimmer was an aluminium based paint which was ideal for use in aircraft production, as the Luftwaffe found out. A request was received from the Bristol Aircraft Company for a heat resistant paint for aero engines. With his past experience he realised that, with the political situation as it was, a company which built aircraft was going to be a very important customer. Consequently he delivered the sample of paint to the company himself and explained the background to its use in the German aircraft industry. "Dove" Aluminium Heat Resisting Paint was thoroughly tested by this company and the first order was placed in February 1940.

At the Annual General Meeting held on 8th. January 1940, it was recorded that, upon receipt of the sum of £100.00 from Wailes Dove Bitumastic Ltd., the name of the company would be changed to Evode Chemical Works Ltd., Evode being derived from the reversal of the name "Dove" and an "E" added onto the end. Evode would refrain from the use of the word "Dove" except for polishes, shoe white and cleaners. The new company name was registered with the Board of Trade and the certificate of change of name was approved on 13th. February 1940.

Chapter 4

Internment

When the war began in September 1939, although the company employed only a few workmen, some of these were called up for National Service in the armed forces. Therefore Dr. Simon and Mr. Forman now had to spend more time within the factory helping to manufacture the products which restricted raw materials would allow.

The company, however was now to suffer a major blow to its survival. On 26th June 1940, being regarded by the Government as an enemy alien, Dr. Simon was interned and the company was taken under the control of the Board of Trade. His internment was a result of the edict of Winston Churchill to “collar the lot”. Included in this sweeping statement were German and Austrian citizens of Jewish descent who had emigrated to England to escape the oppression which existed in their countries of birth, people from these countries and Italy who had been resident here for many years and those of other origins who were now regarded as enemies of the Realm.

In this action Churchill, who was now Prime Minister, felt that he was expressing the will of the people who, with Nazi Germany being very successful with the invasion of European countries would, eventually be poised for an invasion of England. Under the circumstances the above people would pose a threat. However, in doing so, people of value and integrity and those most trustworthy who had come to England to escape the regime, were temporarily sacrificed. It diminished the war effort by reducing the workforce and alienating many who were well-meaning friends of Britain. It must be stated that, despite the inconveniences which this action brought upon him and his family, Dr. Simon did not bear any malice towards the Government throughout the war. As the years progressed within these unfortunate times he played an ever increasing roll in supplying products which assisted the civilian and military authorities in prosecuting the war to its fullest extent. One of the managers appointed by the Board of Trade wrote to the Secretary of the company after the internment of Dr. Simon instructing her to cancel all existing arrangements regarding payments to him and to pay £5.00 per week to Mrs. Simon until further notice.

Prior to his internment Dr. Simon was vetted with other aliens and appeared before an investigating committee in Stafford. John Forman was invited by the Superintendent of Stafford Police to act as translator during the interview. He was able and prepared to vouch for Dr. Simon who, as a result, was graded as a Class “C” alien, which gave him the maximum possible freedom allocated to aliens at this time.

Nevertheless, “due to his hostile origins and associations”, he was interned under Defence Regulation 18B. This occurred because it was known that Evode was run by a foreigner and also the factory was very close to the electricity generation station, the gas works and a hospital. The fact that inflammable liquids were used in the preparation of the products in the factory caused concern for the authorities.

On 29th. July the situation was further confused by the internment of John Forman. This is problematic as, although he was born in Germany of an English father and a German mother, presumably he had a British passport. Therefore why was this action taken? Dr. Simon was initially interned at Huyton, near Liverpool and then transferred to Peel in the Isle of Man as was John Forman. During their incarceration the wives of both men applied and received permission to visit their husbands.

With the two principal people within the company taken into custody production ceased at Glover Street and the premises were taken over under the control of the Board of Trade. Three “managers” were appointed to control the company affairs and their first action was to have all inflammable solvents and certain chemicals removed from the factory. Production of polish and paints virtually stopped and, because there were no Ministry of Defence contracts in progress, the manufacture of Mellitol and Portite stopped as it was almost impossible to obtain cement to carry on making them. Every indication was given by the persons in charge that the business at the Glover Street factory was to be wound up since very little was being made. At this time all of the formulation books and notes of Dr. Simon were confiscated by the police. However, those of Mr. Forman and Mr. Lawton were not taken, allowing some products still to be manufactured when the appropriate raw materials could be obtained.

On 15th. August 1940 the predicament of the company and the need to obtain the release of Dr. Simon was brought to the attention of the Government. Lord Farrington raised the matter in the House of Lords. He did this because it was acknowledged that the national war effort must be supported in every possible way. Many of the products made by Dr. Simon at the Glover Street factory would meet this criteria.

This appeal appeared to have some effect because on 16th. August a very significant meeting took place at the Glover Street factory between the appointed Board of Trade managers and Mr. H.I. Clipstone, a director of Evode Chemical Products Ltd. together with Mr. H.J. Bostock, a director of Lotus Ltd. As an outcome of this meeting the Board of Trade would relinquish control of the company if the police approved of the proposals made by this meeting.

The Stafford Wartime Authorities were most concerned about the storage of chemicals in the factory which could constitute a grave risk in the event of an air raid. Public utilities were situated all around the site so the logical answer was to move the factory away from Glover Street. This was agreed if suitable premises could be found and which met the approval of the Board of Trade and the Police authority.

Urgent action was therefore taken to find other premises close to Stafford which, under the circumstances, was no easy task as a large number of other firms engaged in the production of products for the war effort had been attracted to the area. The final choice was an 80 year old, three story former shoe factory at 22, Stone Road, Stafford. The Board of Trade representatives approved the choice and the move to the selected premises took place on 8th. October 1940.

The factory at 22, Stone Road which still stands today was far from ideal for the purpose for which it was intended. Being situated adjacent to the main road, even in those wartime days, a considerable traffic problem was created when goods arrived or were despatched. Traffic could be found at a standstill while a London, Midland and Scottish Railway’s horse and wagon backed through the arched entrance of the building to load or unload goods. In later years this problem became much worse when contractors lorries would park in front of the factory awaiting their turn to drive in to collect the goods produced there.

The factory was a three story building consisting of a basement, which, before production could commence, had to have a concrete floor installed at a cost of £21.8.10. Then two 30 foot lengths of polish tables and electric vats for heating waxes were put in. As there was no heating in the building a coke fired boiler was installed together with radiators at a cost of £112.10.0.

The first floor was converted into offices and a large wooden bench was obtained with water and gas supply to house a few pieces of laboratory equipment which included a small electric stirrer, courtesy of the Lotus laboratory. A number of machines from Glover Street were installed on the second floor and at one end of the floor a wooden ramp was built on which stood four open topped 45 gallon drums, connected to the hot and cold water supply.

The third floor was used for storage of raw materials but solvents were excluded; these were kept in a newly erected petroleum store at the back of the factory. The only way to lift raw materials from the

ground floor to the top floor was by a slow, laborious hand winch. Many were the near escapes from serious injury when raw materials broke away from the slings and fell through the open trap doors down to the entrance, two floors below.

Production re-commenced with the availability of some waxes and chemicals. Contact with Dr. Simon and Mr. Forman was maintained through correspondence and occasional visits which enabled the most urgent matters relating to running the company to receive attention. Some leaflets describing the company products managed to be prepared at the new premises.

A balance sheet for the year ending on 30th. September 1940 shows that the company more than doubled the profit made for the financial year. Considering the problems which the company faced during 1940 this was a remarkable achievement.

Chapter 5

Released to help Britain's war effort

In early January 1941 discussions took place with representatives of the Board of Trade which resulted in two additional directors being appointed. The Board then comprised four British citizens which would help to strengthen the case being made for the release of Dr. Simon as well as withdrawal of the BoT control over the company. Due to the pleas by Lord Farrington in the House of Lords in August 1940 and Mr. Bainbridge, a Director of the company, in February 1941 that Hermann could offer considerable support to the war effort in terms of the products which Evode could manufacture, his release from internment was granted on 3rd. April 1941. It was not until October 1941 that the release of Mr. Forman was granted. He rejoined the company immediately.

Dr. Simon recommenced his employment with Evode on 30th. May 1941 at an agreed weekly wage of £15.00.

He found that the company had suffered severe setbacks during his absence due to his and Mr. Forman's detention, essential raw materials becoming unobtainable, the company being taken over by the Board of Trade and the enforced movement to other premises. Consequently the profit and loss account for the six months ending 31st. March 1941 showed a very poor state of affairs.

He knew that Ministry of Defence approval for his building chemical products was essential for the company to survive. A great deal of time and effort was spent supplying samples to Government authorities together with independent test results to prove that these products had a distinct effect. He visited many large raw materials suppliers to persuade them to make an allocation to the company of the products needed. Many times he was successful in getting at least a weekly delivery of a few hundredweight or a few gallons of these materials.

For the manufacture of "Melitol" and "Portite" an essential raw material was cement which was being supplied to the building trade on very strict allocation. Each week Dr. Simon would visit local builders in order to see if he could scrounge one or two bags of cement which he would load into his car boot, enabling another few days of production for the products in question.

One of the first products to receive approval from the Ministry of Defence was "Evode Frost Protective 101 TS", a product which was urgently needed in the production of airfield runways laid in the wintertime. The requirement for this product was increasing with orders coming in from Ministry of Works contractors around the country.

As previously pointed out, all of the chemicals used in the manufacture of products in the factory were allocated code numbers to improve security. Such a raw material was G447 which was flaked calcium chloride supplied by Imperial Chemical Industries. This company could not supply the product in the quantities requested in 1942/3. Consequently another supplier was found but the grade of product which they offered was much more difficult to handle as it was in solid form.

As a young chemist in Germany, Dr. Simon had acquired a considerable knowledge of bituminous emulsions and bitumen compounds. Included in the latter were formulations for gas-proofing buildings used as food ration stores. This was a concern to the Ministry in case the Germans resorted to the use of mustard gas as in World War I. The emulsions had already been introduced into the Dove Products range under the name of Insulating Pastes.

Although a small quantity of these pastes had been sold over the past two years a very important need was soon to arise, which certainly affirms that one persons disadvantage becomes another persons gift!

As the nightly attacks on London by the Luftwaffe increased in intensity, millions of gallons of ready-at-hand water were needed to fight the fires which the bombing had created. Engineers were ordered by the Ministry of Works to turn gutted basements into reservoirs. Hastily, bomb sites were cleared, the sides and basements were concreted and then filled with water. These crudely built static water tanks were unsuccessful as the concrete was porous and the precious water gradually seeped into the ground. Dr. Simon became aware of the problem and he knew that he had a ready made answer. His Sales Manager was despatched to the Ministry of Works in London with the data on Evode Insulating Paste.

The authorities at the Ministry, who had suffered the recriminations of both contractors and raw materials suppliers over the leaking water, would only agree to trials with the Evode product if the company would agree to apply the treatment. This Dr. Simon agreed to do and six, newly concreted basements were allocated for trial. Although he had no practical experience of carrying out such work, and neither had anyone else at Evode at that time, he set off for London in his car with a supply of sweeping brooms and buckets to apply the product to the prepared concrete. The rest of the labour force, consisting of his Sales manager and two part timers who helped in the factory (these two men were male nurses from the local hospital who had taken leave), made the journey by train. After the work had been completed and the areas filled with water, they were inspected by people from the Ministry of Works who, a week later, found that the water level had remained unchanged. As Dr. Simon had claimed, Evode Insulating Paste had made the tanks watertight and its use was now approved by the authorities.

Contracts were now received for waterproofing not only more water tanks but air raid shelters too. The business was being received at such a level that it became necessary to set up a permanent contracts team in London to carry out this work. A labour force was recruited which consisted of a Mr. Washer, his two sons plus another workman. One of these sons, Mr. E. Washer, later became Evode Contracts Manager.

The Ministry of Works now began to place contracts for similar types of waterproofing products to be applied in other cities in Britain which were being subjected to bombing. It was not possible for the London team to carry out all of this work and so more teams were recruited to do so. The waterproofing process was now being extended to aircraft hanger roofs, water towers and other structures which held or were likely to be affected by water. To administer these teams so engaged Evode Contracts Department was formed.

The accounts for 1941 presented to the Board were not encouraging. Nevertheless, taking into consideration that Dr. Simon did not rejoin the company until May of that year, Mr. Forman was not released until October, the cost of moving the company from Glover Street to Stone Road with all of the necessary alterations to assist manufacturing the products, the building work which had to be done, the loss of production while the move was taking place and the difficulty in obtaining raw materials to continue production, these were considered satisfactory under the circumstances.

The production of all established products continued to increase as the company went into the year 1942. However, wartime restrictions and quotas of raw materials was now beginning to make it extremely difficult to supply products for "non essential" use. Those customers who could not endorse their orders with Ministry of Works priority authorisation found that it was not possible for Evode to offer a firm delivery date.

Dr. Simon and Mr. Forman were now spending a great deal of their time visiting and corresponding with various Government departments and Ministers to gain increased allocations of raw materials. Their efforts met with some success, which now allowed Dr. Simon to concentrate on obtaining new business. Due to petrol rationing he could only use his car for short journeys and, therefore, travelled

much of the time by train. This mode of transport led to a lot of inconvenience as, on many occasions, he reported that the train may arrive many hours late, or it did not stop at the station at which he wanted to alight due to an air raid having taken place. Matters were not made any easier as stations were blacked out and, on more than one occasion, he found himself getting off the train at the wrong station.

Undoubtedly, the most frustrating problem to be dealt with was that of getting Evode products written into specifications. Even when contractors were content to use products made by Evode not all architects or people at Ministry departments would give their approval. In a case in point the firm George Wimpey were carrying out construction work at Watford airfield and wanted to use Evode Frost Protective. However, the military needs of war were not always treated with the urgency they should have been and Dr. Simon was asked by the contractor to attempt to resolve the problem. He was always unwilling to tolerate delays of any kind, particularly when he was sure that the product he produced could meet the criteria. An appointment with the Ministry of Works in London was quickly obtained at which he produced a mass of test results on the Evode product in question, supported by numerous letters from the major building contractors who had used it. George Wimpey quickly received approval to use the product and very large orders were received from the site.

In October 1942 a notice was produced giving conditions of employment. Depending upon availability of raw materials the hours of work, regularly increased by overtime, could exceed 70 hours per week. At the end of the financial year for 1942 the report submitted to the Directors indicated that turnover had been very satisfactory. However, for the future, the rate of increase could not be foreseen due to the quota of raw materials allocated to Evode and other wartime restrictions.

At a meeting of the Board of Directors held on 3rd. March 1943 it was reported by Dr. Simon that enquiries had been made in July 1942 concerning the purchase of a plot of land in Silkmore Lane, Stafford. If granted, it was planned to erect buildings and manufacture products which were not permitted by the authorities in the Stone Road factory. Objections were raised by local residents and, consequently, the application was rejected by the Stafford town council. The company appealed against the decision but this was turned down. Therefore, the Board decided to purchase the premises at 22, Stone Road for the sum of £2,000.00

The company had, by now, settled into an existence which was totally controlled by the necessities of wartime. Its growth was constricted to a considerable extent by raw materials quotas, shortages of labour and transport restrictions, to name but a few of the difficulties faced. Nevertheless, Dr. Simon was keen to promote the company products and, even though very little advertising took place, he or Mr. Forman contacted many customers personally or by letter to get the products better known and used.

At the same Board meeting it was decided that Dr. Simon would receive a fixed salary of £750.00 per annum and be entitled to receive £50.00 for every £1,000.00 profit made by the company. From the outset, he proved to be more than a very competent scientist. He showed interest in the well being of other people who worked in the factory. Within his character a strong feeling for truth and justice was apparent and, combined with discipline, enthusiasm and the will to build up a successful company, ensured that he gathered around him a loyal and able team of co-workers. Through the joint effort of all involved the company grew.

The financial position of the company at the end of 1943 was considered to be satisfactory and an increase in profits had been recorded.

The successful results obtained from the building industry using Evode products were acknowledged by large concerns of this type in the receipt by the company of congratulatory letters on the efficiency being obtained. Thus, in 1944, events followed a similar pattern to those in the previous year. Dr. Simon must have felt extremely proud to receive such commendations concerning the products manufactured by his company and, in particular, the receipt of a letter from the Ministry of Works

praising the work which had been done on the South Marston airfield. His formulations were now being acknowledged as contributing great value in aiding the National War Effort. This must have made the tribulations and set backs which had befallen him in the early years of the war more bearable.

As in the previous year the final balance sheet of the company showed that the profit made was considered satisfactory.

The year 1945 was significant for two reasons important personally to Dr. Simon and to the company which he had a great share in creating. On 1st. April his only son, Andrew, was born in a Wolverhampton nursing home. It is claimed that this event was important in him becoming a life long supporter of Wolverhampton Wanderers. On the arrival of his son he allegedly announced "Now we have an Englishman in the family". Nationally, and of long term benefit to the company, the war in Europe was declared ended on 8th. May and that with Japan on 15th. September.

When Government restrictions were lifted in January 1945 most buyers of the polishes produced by the company immediately purchased large quantities of the products, even so, sales were slow. One wholesaler, The Danish Bacon Company, to whom about £10,000.00 worth of polish had been supplied during the period of restrictions, failed to place an order when controls were lifted. Some major wholesalers placed no orders in 1945. Consequently, Dr. Simon now felt that the time had come to put more effort into manufacturing more of the chemical products of his own design.

Dr. Simon informed the Directors that he had recently obtained an allocation of vegetable oil for the manufacture of paints. In his opinion there was an excellent market to exploit and, as soon as production could move into other buildings, the company would be able to make paints selling at 45 shillings per gallon as against 15 to 20 shillings fetched for similar products before the war. He also stated that the company had doubled its business with Lotus Ltd. and that Lotus Shoe Cream should be packed into glass jars. If, however, these jars could not be found, he proposed to go ahead by filling the cream into tubes.

There were also two further events in this year which affected the company structure. At a directors meeting held on 21st. December Mr. Clipstone, who had served as a Director and Chairman of the company since 1937, tendered his resignation and this was accepted. In addition, Mr. Bainbridge, who had been appointed a Director in 1941, also stated that he wished to leave the company. His wishes were also accepted. Dr. Simon thanked both gentlemen for the service they had rendered to the company, particularly during his and Mr. Forman`s absences in 1940/1941.

The final balance sheet tendered for 1945 indicated that the profit made by the company showed a very acceptable increase.

Chapter 6

New chemical products, needed as the war ends

Business was steadily expanding and it became an urgent necessity to return to Glover Street as soon as possible. At a meeting of Directors on 11th. January 1946 Dr. Simon announced that negotiations had taken place with West Midlands Joint Electricity Authority with a view to Evode acquiring a lease of the whole of the Glover Street premises. An offer had been made by this authority of a 5 year lease at an annual rental of £700.00. These conditions were acceptable to the company and the offer would be accepted.

At the 13th. A.G.M. held on 21st. January 1946 it was proposed that Mrs. I. F. Bostock and Mrs. D. Bostock be appointed as Directors of Evode Chemical Works Ltd. This proposition was accepted and passed.

In the year 1946 Evode employed three office staff, eleven polish and chemical workers, six waterproofing applicators and three salesmen. The hourly rates paid to these people varied between 10 pence and 1 shilling and one pence with those men working on waterproofing contracts earning well above the average pay due to the long hours worked. The net work force wage bill for the week at this time was £73-2s-7d.

By 27th. July 1946 the move back to Glover Street from Stone Road had been completed. At a meeting of Directors held on 13th. September Dr. Simon admitted that, for the past few months, the company had been unable to occupy all of the Glover Street premises. During the war the buildings had been used by the Ministry of Supply to store materials used by the Universal Grinding Wheel Co. (another firm located in Stafford) and this ministry had not complied with the directive to vacate the premises by the end of June. Consequently there had been a considerable shortage of manufacturing and storage room which had greatly hampered the progress of the company. A promise had been received that the final 200 tons of stores would be removed on 14th. September. However, he was concerned that, if there were further delays, the company's own products, which had been stored outside, could be damaged by frost. The situation which had arisen had now been put into the hands of the company's solicitors.

He presented a resume of the state of manufacturing within the company to the Directors. During the year the sales of polish had decreased considerably and those of chemicals had increased sharply. This was the first year that the company had achieved a credit balance.

The 7th. January 1947 was a memorable day for Hermann Simon. On this day he was granted citizenship of the United Kingdom. Also included in the grant was citizenship for his wife and daughters who were minors at this time, Marion Ruth and Petra being 12 and 11 years old.

Mrs. D. I. Wood, who had joined the company in 1932 and became a Director and Secretary of the company in 1937, tendered her resignation quoting health reasons for doing so. She had served the company loyally particularly during the period when Dr. Simon and Mr. Forman were detained in the Isle of Man. In this period she had assumed the responsibilities of managing the company which included becoming involved with the manufacture of shoe polishes. She would remain a Director of the company and she was thanked for her devotion by Dr. Simon.

At this date also, Mr. H. E. Hadley, who had recently joined the company, was appointed as Secretary. The directors at this meeting approved a proposal that Hermann Simon be appointed as Chairman of the Company.

In March 1947, Mr. Cyril Lawton, who had been released from service with the Royal Air Force and who had become Dr. Simon's first employee in 1938, returned to the company. His primary task was to set up a small paint laboratory to assist in the exploitation of the market for paints which Dr. Simon was anxious to encourage. In Germany he had produced a chlorinated rubber paint which had outstanding weather and chemical resistance and he felt that this would be an ideal product for use in the British market and should be vigorously promoted. The product was called Chlorinated Rubber Paint, Green.

In conversation with the Bostocks (who were also directors of Lotus Shoes) Dr. Simon realised that the shoe industry was already facing bonding problems with the use of rubber resin compositions and other raw materials developed during the war (but for other purposes). This problem applied particularly to the manufacture of shoe soles. Adhesives currently available on the market would not perform this task adequately. He was aware that, in the U.S.A. during the war, work on synthetic rubbers had made impressive progress. It was necessary to obtain more information about the progress made and, possibly, form an association with an American adhesives manufacturer who was already exploiting this market. In early June it was learned that an American company, Angiers Products Inc., of Massachusetts, was looking for a British company to manufacture their adhesives under license. Following discussions between Angiers and Evode it was agreed, on the 30th. June, that adhesives, initially for the shoe trade, would be manufactured by Evode and distributed to the shoe trade solely by Vik Supplies Ltd. This agreement was signed and sealed in September.

Following the signing of the agreement information on formulations, manufacturing processes, sourcing ingredients etc. began to arrive at Stafford from Angiers. Plans for constructing a two gallon churn based on the information received were passed to a local engineering company and in December 1947 Mr. Lawton tried to produce an adhesive based on the information.

The results indicate what can happen when attempting to introduce an unfamiliar process based on enthusiasm and primary ignorance. It was a disaster from the beginning. The first attempt was to make a rubber solution that used scrap, crepe soles rubber supplied by Lotus. The strips of rubber, measuring 1 inch by 6 inches, were much too large for the design of the machine to cope with successfully and eventually, as the solution thickened, these pieces of rubber became jammed between the mixing arms inside the churn and the load on the electric motor driving the machine caused considerable damage which was deemed too costly to repair. The problem was partially corrected by installing a more powerful electric motor and fitting the churn with a car starting handle which could be used to provide human assistance whenever the electric motor could not turn the mixing arms.

A number of rubber solutions were made in this manner for trials at Lotus and an application was made to register the trade mark "Evo-Stik".

The Directors report for the year ending 1947 shows a satisfactory increase in the profits.

On 9th. February 1948 Dr. Simon reported that negotiations had been completed for the use by the company of offices at 10, Stratford Place, W1 as a London Office for Evode Chemical Works Ltd.

English Waxes Ltd. was incorporated into Evode Chemical Works Ltd. on 19th. February by agreement with the Board of Trade and would, from 1st. March 1949, handle the sales of shoe polishes, creams, adhesives and cements to Lotus Ltd. and its subsidiary companies.

At the 15th. AGM held in March 1948, Dr. Simon announced that Mr. Elias Peake had been appointed as a full time chemist and that his first assignment would be to fly to the USA to visit Angiers to discuss the problems Evode had met with the churn which had been built to their design. His discussions with Angiers appear to have been successful and he returned with what was now regarded as the correct engineering specification. From these drawings a number of 250 gallon churns were produced.

As works chemist Mr. Peake was responsible for the production of adhesives made to the formulations provided by Angiers. However he first had to carry out a considerable amount of work

on these formulations in order to utilise raw materials available in this country, having just emerged from a long and costly war and imports of any kind were drastically restricted. This is a problem which will become apparent at a later date when Evode began to appoint Licensees. In these early days he was able to provide enthusiasm and showed wonderful ability to improvise his way out of many difficulties which frequently occurred. His relationship with many of the workmen employed in the factory was unique and he was greatly respected for his authority and knowledge and he played an enormous part in establishing the adhesives division of the company.

At the same time at which Elias Peake was appointed the employment of Mr. John Arnott was announced and he would become a member of the Polishes Department, beginning his employment with the company on 1st. May. Dr. Simon had considered that, for some time, it was necessary for the company to establish a permanent London Office with a Manager who could make contact with architects and authorities responsible for overseas contracts for building work. Mr. Eric Barnes was appointed as an Export Sales Manager to oversee such work, his aim being to ensure that these companies would include the use of Evode products in their specifications.

Following the cessation of hostilities Dr. Simon had been visiting the Continent to renew his contacts with business acquaintances. He was confident that Evode now had many products in its range which could be exported or, in conjunction with the appropriate partner, be manufactured overseas. It was necessary to find enthusiastic agents or licensees who could sell and distribute these products or, where necessary, to manufacture them to a given specification. The first partner to be appointed was Tito Pereira De Sousa in Lisbon, Portugal who would manufacture and distribute building chemicals, particularly "Mellitol".

A meeting of Directors was held on 4th. February 1949 at which Mrs. Hildegard Ruth Simon was appointed as a Director of the company.

At the 16th. AGM held in June it was reported that business in 1948 had been, on the whole, satisfactory with the exception of the section of the company which handled polishes. Changes in sales policy would have to be considered. The proposition was to arrange distribution of the products to the retail trade and abandon that of supplying to the wholesale trade as had been the policy in the past. Sales of polishes were now being handled by English Waxes Ltd.

The manufacture of adhesives had now been mastered and was progressing well. As the company had extended the range of products being manufactured it was felt that now was the time to change the name of the company to reflect this fact. Accordingly, at an Extraordinary General Meeting held on 14th. June 1949, it was proposed that the company name should be changed to Evode Ltd. The suggestion was adopted.

In late 1949 the company had advertised for the employment of polish workers. This was misinterpreted as Polish workers. There was a considerable enclave of such nationals in the Stafford area having been settled in the district after the war had ended and they having expressed the desire not to return to their country of origin due to the political situation. Under these circumstances Mr. Ted Wojulewicz was interviewed, accepted and joined the company on 2nd. November. He was the first of many Polish people to be employed by the company and, by 1955, the bituminous emulsion factory was being operated entirely by a Polish labour force with Ted at their head.

Although an Export office had been established and some products were being sold to overseas companies it was accepted that employing people with the marketing and language skills to serve these markets would be a very expensive exercise. Dr. Simon was aware that if it was possible to establish contact with a suitable foreign partner who could reliably manufacture a range of products made by Evode to the company specifications it would be possible to enter into a licensee arrangement with that company. This would generate royalties for the company but also engage people native to the market who knew how it worked and with the necessary language skills.

Consequently the first company to enter into an agreement of this kind with Evode was Evoy Osakeyhtio which was managed by Mr. Emmanuel Walden in Finland. The agreement was signed on

16th. December 1949, laying out terms and conditions of the license, covering the manufacturing process of specified adhesives, a range of protective paints and building chemicals and formulations. Technical help for the production and uses of these products was offered by Evode when this was required. As Evode grew and progressed the number of overseas licensees and wholly owned subsidiaries increased. It has already been pointed out that, when Evode took the license from Angiers Products Inc. to manufacture adhesives, problems arose trying to source raw materials in the UK. This aspect also became a considerable problem with the licensees in overseas markets. and will be expanded upon later.

During the lifetime of Dr. Simon 13 licensees in Europe were appointed to manufacture a range of adhesives, paints and building chemicals, 12 were given the rights in countries further afield and two wholly owned subsidiaries were established in Ireland and Canada.

A considerable document has been produced incorporating all of these companies, and this can be consulted on the Evode History Project website.

Chapter 7

Post war growth

The move back to Glover Street had taken place in 1946. Evode had grown into the space available but, as the company became larger, there was now a critical shortage. The increase in the volume of orders together with the new range of products being made were beginning to create production problems. Office accommodation was situated in an old house and the horse stables which had been built around 1920 for the original shoe factory owners. Only Dr. Simon had a small office to himself large enough to contain a desk, a filing cabinet and a safe. A number of alternative sites had been examined over the past three years including a wartime ordnance factory in nearby Stone, airfield buildings in the village of Hixon which was relatively near and others within a ten mile radius of Stafford. It is possible that some of the sites inspected were not suitable for purpose or that a Board of Trade Development Certificate could not be obtained. An offer for land in Crayford in Essex was not accepted.

The possibility of Evode moving out of Stafford must have created great concern for Stafford Borough Council because, being aware of the situation, the company was offered a nine and one half acre site, a former brickworks, freehold, in the parish of Marston, Stafford. This was in Common Road, opposite to the common itself.

As has previously been pointed out in order to “Anglilise” Angiers American formulations it was necessary to introduce, as far as possible, raw materials which were available in the UK. This caused problems and a considerable amount of work for the laboratory technicians and required a considerable period of development to establish and prove that the resulting products could perform as they were intended to do. The upshot of this work was to develop an adhesive based on Neoprene rubber which was stable and effective. Thus Evo-Stik 528 Impact Adhesive was introduced to the market. It was now an accepted fact that “sewn on” soles were now being replaced by those which were “stuck on” using products similar to those produced by Evode. Due to this the turnover of the company had improved by 45% over the previous year.

The activities of Evode Roof Waterproofing Contracts Department were steadily improving. Dr Simon always inspected the sites of any very large roofing contracts with Mr. Colin Williamson who had been appointed the manager of the department in 1948. The large variety of roofing structures being inspected and accepted for coverage by the company required careful choice of waterproofing specification and Dr. Simon’s early experience in Germany with bitumen emulsions resulted in the Evode “built up” system acquiring a first class reputation.

The increasing sales of the new adhesives developed by Evode into the shoe industry led to the appointment of Mr. E. H. Beaumont in September 1951 to launch these products into other industries. He came to the company with a considerable technical knowledge of the adhesives industry and a wide experience of marketing to the industrial sector. He concentrated his activities on promoting Evode adhesives into the motor car, shipping, building clothing and leather industries and any others in which the use of adhesives could be contemplated. He also travelled to Europe to investigate potential uses of Evode products there.

In October of that year an agreement was reached with Dr. Egon Meyer for Evode to manufacture, under license, a range of specialised paints and chemicals. These products had been patented in Germany, in particular a metal primer which the company called “Evoled”, which was claimed to give a major advantage over competitors in the field.

It was also in this year that Evode Industrial Division was formed.

On 17th. January 1952 fire destroyed a two storey building at the entrance of the Glover Street factory. The ground floor contained a large number of rolls of bitumen impregnated hessian whilst the upper floor, which housed the laboratory, had stocks of inflammable adhesives, paints and solvents. Fortunately most of the technical records stored in the laboratory survived the fire but a considerable number of valuable pieces of equipment were destroyed. Nevertheless, within 24 hours, the laboratory had moved to temporary accommodation in a building on site known as the "Tile House". It is believed that a steam boiler was once housed in this ornately tiled building. It was probably used to drive machines used in the original shoe factory.

The 19th. AGM was held on 18th. February and the Chairman placed on record the gratitude owed to Mr. J. J. E. Forman for the efforts he displayed ensuring that the fire suffered by the company had not spread to the more vulnerable part of the factory where adhesives were made. At the same meeting the capital of the company was increased to £50,000 by the creation of 42,900 shares valued at £1.00 each.

The Board of Trade issued an Industrial Development Certificate on 17th. December allowing Evode Ltd. to develop land in the Borough of Stafford at a site covering 64,750 square feet to erect a factory, offices and a laboratory. This site was, of course, located in Common Road where the Evode factory was established.

In January 1953 Dr. B. S. Jackson joined the company as a chemist and he went on to become head of Evomastics Ltd.

On 25th. March 1953 a conveyancing agreement between Evode Ltd. and Mr. T. B. Follows was signed for the purchase of 9 acres and 37 perches of land in Common Road, Stafford for the sum of £6,500. This plot of land had formerly been a brickworks and on site were two disused kilns, a brick chimney and various derelict buildings.

Thomas de la Rue, the manufacturers of "Formica" melamine based, laminated sheeting had been seeking an adhesive to bond this type of sheet to wood and agreed to carry out a number of tests using Evo-Stik household adhesive. After numerous practical trials requiring many formulation changes, lasting over several months Thomas de la Rue expressed satisfaction with the product. Evo-Stik 528 Household Impact Adhesive now entered the domestic consumer market with the recommendation that it was the adhesive to use with "Formica" sheet.

By the end of 1953 appropriate packaging and sales promotional material had been organised and, by agreement with Thomas de la Rue, Evo-Stik 528 Household Impact Adhesive would be distributed to retail and hardware stores using twelve major timber merchants.

During the latter half of 1953 building and site development at Common Road had been progressing. In the early months of 1954 the erection of the new factory had reached the stage that transferring the production of adhesives from Glover Street could now take place. The layout of the adhesives factory and the site development progressed as planned in 1955 and 1956. Product advertising was now also being increased in the national press and in the Do-It-Yourself journals.

In December 1954 the Board of Evode Ltd. and that of Vik Supplies Ltd. reached an agreement whereby selling the products made by Evode would be mutually beneficial.

Following on from the contacts in Europe made by Dr. Simon and Mr. Beaumont over the past years, five more companies entered into an agreement to manufacture Evode products under license. In Eire on 1 June 1955 Evode Industries Ltd. was incorporated.

At Common Road the completion of a further two buildings for the manufacture of polish products and those based on bitumen enabled their manufacture to be transferred from Glover Street.

The first range of products was manufactured in September. The press releases in the journal which covered this section of the industry, "Architectural Design", indicated the growing usage of these types of products in the building industry.

At an extraordinary General Meeting held on 1st. March 1955 it was agreed to increase the capital of the company to £100,000.00 by the creation of 50,000 shares valued at £1.00 each.

In this year a number of new employees joined the company who were to influence the growth and progress. These included Mr. J. H. Briant with a brief to develop a range of mastics and sealing compounds, Mr. E. A. Duligal to introduce a range of decorative paints and speciality coatings and Mr. V. Vohralik who joined the company as an adhesives development chemist and later rose to become managing director of Evode Ltd.

At the 23rd. AGM held on 6th. March 1956 Evode Industries Ltd. was incorporated in Eire having a manufacturing facility in Swords, Co. Dublin. The principal shareholders were Mr. A. F. Buckley as the Chairman, holding 51% of the shares, Dr. Simon as the managing director and Mr. Godfrey Bostock. On 18th. April Evomastics Ltd. was incorporated and in July, at a meeting of Directors, it was resolved that capitalisation of £40,000.00 of the undistributed profit reserve of the company should now take place.

On 18th. April Evomastics Ltd. Was incorporated into Evode Ltd. This company was formed from the Mastics Division of Evode Ltd.

During the middle of 1956 the office and laboratory building at Common Road was completed and ready for occupation. Therefore equipment and the relevant personnel were transferred from Glover Street. The move was not in fact completed until the end of 1957.

In December of this year it was announced by Lotus Ltd. that Vik Supplies Ltd., which was a subsidiary company of Lotus, would assume a closer association with Evode Ltd. in order to broaden the range of adhesives which it offered to the shoe industry. The offices of Vik Supplies would be moved to the new administration building of Evode Ltd. in Common Road. This company came into existence in 1912 initially concentrating on the production of wooden heels for shoes. As time passed the company grew offering a wide range of rubber adhesives, solvent mixes, cleaners, activating solutions and toe puffs. After the end of the war, when Evode Ltd. had acquired and mastered the technology of manufacturing synthetic based adhesives, Vik Supplies relied upon the expertise of Evode to provide shoe adhesives capable of bonding the many new resin/rubber soling products now coming into use in the footwear industry.

On 1st. March 1957 the 24th. AGM was held in the newly built offices of the company. Reference was made to the company accounts for the past year and it was pointed out that, while company profits were substantially the same as the previous year, there had been a considerable increase in turnover. However these profits were offset by the increased costs of shift production and overhead expenses. The costs of the new buildings and machinery had been financed from the liquid position of the company funds and, therefore, expenditure in the forthcoming financial year would be one of consolidation.

As previously stated closer co-operation between Vik Supplies and Evode was now taking place and the staff and executives of this company were now housed in the new offices of Evode Ltd. Amongst them was Mr. B. C. Preece who had been a member of the staff of Vik Supplies for some time and continued to give similar devotion to Evode Ltd. for many years to come.

Chapter 8

Prelude to becoming a Public Company

1957 saw Evode Ltd. reach its 25th. anniversary and a presentation was made to Hermann Simon on behalf of the staff and factory employees to mark the occasion.

In October 1957 Mr. Barrie Liss, the husband of Dr. Simon's eldest daughter, Marion, was appointed Personal Assistant to Dr. Simon. He subsequently worked within the Evode Group in various capacities for 37 years and at one time was Joint Managing Director of the Evode Group of companies.

At the 25th. AGM held in March 1958 the Chairman stated that, due to the Suez crisis, progress had been restricted and costs had risen. Consequently a certain amount of reorganisation within the company was necessary.

Mr. S. B. Knowlden joined the company in June to take the post of Export Sales Manager with an office in London. He was to be responsible for the appointment of overseas agents who would sell and distribute Evode products on a commission basis and would come under the direction of Mr. Beaumont. The combined contributions now being received by the company from licensees and agents were a substantial part of the company turnover.

In September at a General Meeting of the Directors it was proposed that the share capital of the company should be increased to £200,000.00. Following this, on 17th. December, an offer was made to Lotus Ltd. to purchase the balance of the Vik Supplies Ltd. shares.

Work commenced on the building of a new laboratory block. The original building, which was used as a canteen, was extended and an upper floor was added.

In 1959 English Waxes Ltd. went into voluntary liquidation and was then immediately incorporated as a new company of the same name.

In October of this year land which was leased to Evode Ltd. near to Glover Street was offered to Thermo Accoustic Products Ltd. for a period of two years and three months at a rent of £690.00 per annum.

Evode Ltd. was now administering the Vik Supplies business. Some of the companies to which products were sold were falling behind in their settlement of accounts. Mr. David Williams was therefore authorised to establish proof of debts against those concerns which had failed to meet their obligations and file bankruptcy petitions against debtors of Vik Supplies Ltd.

At an extraordinary General Meeting of Directors in 1960 it was proposed that the share capital of the company be increased to £300,000.00 by the creation of 100,000 preference shares at £1.00 each.

As the volume and scope of the company business grew Dr. Simon spent a considerable amount of his time travelling to foreign countries visiting licensees, potential customers and agents. Although letters and telephone calls were cumbersome, John Forman was able to keep Dr. Simon well informed.

The site at Common Road was now progressing from the point of view of erecting buildings to accommodate the various types of products being made. One such was the adhesives factory on which work had now commenced and would soon be in a position where it could be occupied.

Simvic Ltd., a finance company which was formed to deal with the hire and leasing of machinery, came into being at this time.

The company continued to grow and in the early months of 1961 Sales Conferences incorporating the sales staff of the various divisions of the company were held. These included those of Vik Supplies Ltd., Building Chemicals, Surface Coatings and the Adhesives Division. At the end of the 1960/61 financial year a memo was sent to all representatives by Dr. Simon congratulating all those of the sales forces who had made a contribution to a record sales year.

In late August of this year the Surface Coatings Division moved from the premises in Glover Street to Common Road occupying the factory which had originally been built to accommodate the manufacture of adhesive compounds. The new adhesives factory had been completed in late July together with the garage which serviced cars owned by the company and the maintenance building which housed the personnel who looked after the manufacturing equipment.

As is appreciated in a development of the kind which Evode was in the process of undergoing, budgets have to be constantly kept under scrutiny and very little is achieved at the original cost projected. Dr. Simon, therefore, wrote to all of the Buildings Chemical representatives advising them that conversion of the Paints Division to Common Road and the building of a new varnish kitchen had cost the sum of £15,000.00. Thus a greater effort was required from all involved to increase the sales of the paint products made by the company.

The beginning of the year 1962 was not a happy one for the Simon family. Fifteen months earlier, Hildegard had been diagnosed with breast cancer. She died on 7th. January aged 53. Her funeral and cremation were held at the crematorium at Bushbury, Wolverhampton. It was a great shock to the family. Dr. Simon was in mourning and wore a black armband for 12 months but did not withdraw completely from the company.

Dr. Simon had plans to float Evode Ltd. as a public company, but before this could be done it was necessary to divest, from the Evode Group, the loss making company English Waxes which made a range of polishes mainly for shoes, based on the original products made by Spic & Span. The retail market for shoe and furniture polishes was very competitive and did not warrant the high investment needed in 1962. It was therefore decided to sell the company.. Polishes and polishing cloths were taken over by The Prestige Group and the shoe polish business was acquired by Kiwi.

In June of 1962 the leasehold premises occupied by Vik Supplies Ltd. on Sandon Road were partially destroyed by fire. Consequently the operations of this company were to be transferred to a new factory extension to be erected on some of the surplus land owned by Evode which was adjacent to the present factory. The completed factory was estimated to cost £150,000.00 and it was expected to be available for occupation by the end of 1963.

The Paints Division also began operations on this site during the course of the year and Evode (Northern Ireland) Ltd. was formed to compliment the activities of Evode Industries in Eire.

On 6th. February of that year Warburg Registrars announced in the national press that Evode Holdings Ltd. had made an application to the Stock Exchange for permission to deal in 1,400,000 shares of the company. Employees were given priority in the application for shares which were then made available to the public.

During the course of the year the company was floated on the Stock Exchange and became Evode Holdings Ltd., which had approximately 2,000 share holders many of whom were employees of the company. The plans were to sell 575,000 Evode 4 shilling shares at 20 shillings per share. 1,556,747 shares would remain in the hands of Dr. Simon and others giving them a 73% controlling interest in the company.

On 18th. March Dr. Simon addressed senior members of the Evode Group Management Committee stressing the importance of all management to strive for improvements and greater efficiency due to

trading conditions becoming more difficult. Since May 1962 a firm of consultants had been engaged in studying the organisational relationship within the company. Dr. Cabot of this firm had now completed the basic work and would address all senior personnel on his programme for the future.

Sometime in late 1963 photographs of the original home of the company, Glover Street, were taken and it was evident that the buildings were now deteriorating rapidly. However those which had been occupied in the preparation of polishes and chemicals as well as the offices could still be recognised.

At the annual dance of the company held on 27th. December at the Borough Hall in Stafford, a presentation was made to Dr. Simon which came a surprise to him. He was quite unaware that a painting of himself had been prepared by Mr. John Bird, the Publicity manager of Evode Ltd., from a portrait taken earlier in the year. Additionally a painting of the old office block in Glover Street, which had been commissioned from Mr. David Lewis, member of the College of Arts in Stafford, was given to him by his old friend Mr. John Forman. In doing so Mr. Forman added the words that when you reflect on this painting you will not only remember the toil, tears and sweat which were our fairly regular companions in those days, but also the small band of your loyal friends who have remained with you throughout fair weather and foul and whose regard for you is high.

At this gathering of the staff of Evode a custom was begun by Mr. Forman, which exists to the present day, when Dr Simon was presented with an inscribed badge in commemoration of his 25 years service with the company which had been specially prepared for Mr. Forman, who also adopted the badge as an emblem of this period of service, he being the vice chairman of the group and Dr. Simon the Chairman. Mr. Cyril Lawton, who was the first employee to be engaged by Dr. Simon, also received a badge to recognise 25 years of service. Today there a many of the past and current employees of the company who have joined this august band and these badges are worn with pride, together with the "25 Year Club" ties, at the annual dinner held for this group.

Dr. Simon had always borne in mind the welfare of the people who worked within the Group and, during the year the Evode Pension Trust Ltd. was formed and, in memory of his late wife, Hildegard Ruth Simon, he set up The Hildegard Simon Memorial Trust Ltd. This trust, using the personal financial resources of Dr. Simon and Messrs. James and Godfrey Bostock, was set up to help any of the Evode employees who found themselves temporarily in financial difficulties through unforeseen problems of health, bereavement or similar circumstances.

The "Meetings of Directors" which has been quoted on many occasions in this biography was replaced by "Meeting of the Group Management Committee". At a later stage the title of this group was change to "The Board of Management".

Chapter 9

Overseas developments and changes to the management structure of Evode

In order to take advantage of the new technologies and chemicals being introduced into the market Evode developed and introduced a number of novel products for the adhesives industry among which were Evo-Stik Resin “W”, a polyvinyl acetate based product for use on wood products and a One Way Wet adhesive, a neoprene rubber based product which did not require the substrates to be bonded to be left open for the solvent it contained to evaporate.

Dr. Simon had always been active in exploring the possibilities of introducing Evode products into markets overseas. To this end he collaborated with The Electric Reduction Company of Canada, a subsidiary company of Albright and Wilson, Oldbury, England, to form Ercona Adhesives of Canada which, as a partly owned subsidiary of Evode, would manufacture and distribute a range of adhesives within Canada. Another acquisition was Cox & Wright, founded in Rushden, Northamptonshire in 1947, where it manufactured machinery for the shoe industry, it having previously co-operated with Vik Supplies Ltd., giving it a complementary role in the activities of the Evode Group.

For some time the company had been active in Ireland, participating in the manufacture of a range of adhesives in a factory owned by another company. In 1968 Evode Industries was formed and became a wholly owned subsidiary of Evode Holdings. In September of this year it became a wholly owned company in its own right. In this period also the building contractors, Sandy & Co. Ltd. was acquired as a partly owned associate. Another addition to the Evode Group of Companies was the purchase of Allweather Paints Ltd. This company was formed in 1947 and in 1962 it acquired Agraphite Ltd., a manufacturer of chlorinated rubber paints, which was of interest to Evode. The Evode Paints Division was subsumed into Allweather Paints Ltd. to form Evode Allweather Paints.

While these acquisitions were taking place an internal reorganisation was felt to be necessary in order to make the company organisation more efficient. The Merchant Sales Division was launched, Evo-Stik Industrial Division and the Evo-Stik Marketing Division were formed into the Industrial Division and the Buildings Chemical Division became the Buildings Chemical & Bitumen Division.

An old friend and long standing colleague of Dr. Simon, Mr. Edwin Beaumont, who had served in the London office as the sales director and had supervised sales to overseas companies decided to retire from the boards of Evode Ltd. and Evomastics Ltd. To honour the occasion a retirement luncheon was held in March 1968.

At this time the number of overseas licensees appointed to make products manufactured by Evode was considerable, seven were located in mainland Europe alone, with a further wholly owned company in Ireland and a partially owned subsidiary in Canada. As Evode found when they took a license from Angiers Products Inc. considerable time and effort was required to produce adhesives made with chemicals available in the UK or could be economically purchased and using the equipment existing or acquired by Evode. When negotiating the license with these companies Dr. Simon had undertaken to support them with technical help in order to make economically efficient products suitable to their markets and for the methods of use in their markets. These licensees required considerable servicing.

While the expertise of the Evode chemists and marketing personnel had always been at their disposal, a dedicated person or laboratory had never been available within the organisation. The intention was to pay periodic visits to licensees to advise them on the type of equipment they had to manufacture the

products, to discuss the availability of raw materials, which had to be tested and approved for use at Stafford and to understand how the products were used in the various markets which differed quite considerably from the UK practice. Dr. Simon and the Technical Director Vasec Vohralic were quite aware of these problems and, in order to provide an improved service to these overseas associates, the Licensee Laboratory was formed which would be dedicated to the needs of these companies which generated a considerable revenue for Evode.

Previously a special department called The Licensee Co-Ordination Department had been established in order to keep the overseas companies aware of the activities at Stafford. Every quarter, in a publication called Evode International, they were updated on current prices for the products being sold in the UK, availability of raw materials, new products and methods of manufacture, product sales successes in specific countries and industries, new customers, design of new product labels used on Evode materials, product data sheets and any other information which could be of help to them. It was also regarded as a media for licensees to contact each other where they could be of mutual help.

The management structure of the company was re-organised. The Board of Management was replaced with The Board of Directors, The Group Co-Ordination Committee, was abolished and replaced by The Operating Group for Sales, Factory and Canteen. This latter move was considered appropriate as the canteen of Evode Ltd. at Common Road was opened.

By the year 1969 Werner & Mertz, the licensees in West Germany, had taken the decision not to renew their arrangement with Evode Ltd. It has to be admitted that they were a very competent company in the manufacture and sales of those products licenced from Evode and probably felt that they had sufficient knowledge and expertise to become independent. Simson B.V., the licensee in Holland, consequently formed Batu Chemiewaren Produktions to sell products into the West German market and this company became a partly owned associate of Evode Ltd.

In the middle of 1970 Dr. Simon was obliged to enter hospital for surgery to repair a damaged Achilles tendon. He returned to his office relatively quickly on 25th. July but it was some weeks before he became fully mobile. In this year also, on 30th. October, he celebrated his 70th. birthday. For that occasion a bust of himself, commissioned from Stuart Osborne of Stafford, was unveiled and presented to him by Mr. John Forman in the presence of his family.

As Chairman of the Evode Group of Companies, Hermann Simon was a much travelled man. During the period 1970-1971 he attended a Board Meeting of Ercona Adhesives in Toronto, visited the licensees, Evo-Mex in Mexico, passed through Brazil to visit the licensees in Argentina, Chemotecnica Sintyal and then flew to South Africa. While in this part of the world he spent a weekend at "Treetops", made famous because this was the place where Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh were staying when her father died and she became Queen. He followed this with a visit to Nairobi and spent time on safari around Murchinson Falls in Uganda. Some of the travel in this area was by flying from grass runways in a DC3 aircraft, known to the British in World War II as the Dakota.

He combined a visit to the Dutch licensees, Simson and Batu in October 1971 with a trip to Ferrara in Italy which was the home of Evode's Italian licensee Ditta Fratelli Zucchini. The purpose of these festivities were twofold. They celebrated the seventieth birthday of Mr. Giovanni Zucchini, who the doctor had known for many years, and also it was the Fiftieth Jubilee of the association of the two brothers Zucchini, Giovanni and Alfredo. Time was also taken for Dr. Simon to visit the Building Exhibition in Bologna where Zucchini had an excellent stand.

While the doctor was on his travels matters were not stationary at Stafford. As previously stated Evode had decided to abandon the business of manufacturing shoe polishes and the remainder of "Dove" polish was disposed of. Evacor Resins Ltd. was formed as a partly owned associate in collaboration with an American company the Terrell Corporation. The company manufactured resins based on polyamides which were used for bonding a wide range of substrates. In Canada the Dickinson Robinson Group acquired a controlling interest in Ercona Adhesives Ltd. which had

previously been owned by Albright and Wilson. The Evode Group retained their share capital in the company and at a later date it was renamed as Drecona Industries Ltd.

1972 saw the end of a long and happy relationship between Hermann Simon and John Forman. He retired at the age of 62 after 39 years of service. The occasion was fittingly marked. (See JJEFA autobiography).

The pace of change continued at Stafford in 1972. 4.438 acres of land adjoining the Common Road site was purchased from Stafford Borough Council for the purpose of building a Sports and Social Club. Re-organisation of the companies within the group was also progressing. Evode Waterproofing Systems Ltd. which sold and applied roof waterproofing materials, mastics and sealants was formed and established a contracting service to apply these materials. Cox & Wright (Pneumatics) Ltd. was formed and Louis Holt (Chemicals) Ltd. was acquired. This company complimented the interests of Vik Supplies Ltd. within the shoe industry and it was bought to increase the market share in footwear components. At a later date the two companies were merged. Sadly, on the day that Evode acquired Louis Holt, a fire destroyed the factory where they were based in Enderby, Leicestershire and a new factory had to be built. Evode had for many years done business with Colin D. Bailey (Pty) Ltd. in South Africa. This company was acquired as a partly owned associate.

This year also saw the transfer to Stafford of the role played by the London Office. It was felt that its main function now was export business consequently the office was closed. Mr. Tony Knowlden, the export manager, came to Stafford. A new company would be established called Evode (Export) Ltd. based at Stafford. Mr. T.Q.D. Dunlop was appointed as the Managing Director reporting to Dr. Simon. The existing Export Sales despatch department was incorporated into the new company and, in due course, export sales staff and supporting technical staff were added to this facility.

As with all dynamic, private companies matters did not stay the same for very long. The year 1973 saw quite a number of changes and developments.

Evode Inc. was incorporated in the United States of America. This company was set up to market and distribute Evo-Stik Flashband, which was a bitumen based aluminium tape used in the building industry, within the United States. At a later date a separate distribution company known as the 3E Corporation was established. In France Dia-Prosism, the Evode licensee, took the decision to relinquish its manufacturing license. In its place Evo-France was formed initially as a sales company but it had an option to manufacture Evode products at a later date.

Drecona Industries Ltd. Canada, which had been a jointly owned company between Albright & Wilson and Evode and latterly with the Dickinson Robinson Group was acquired by the Evode Group as a wholly owned company. It became apparent that the licensee in Japan, Sale Tilney, wished to end its contract with Evode Ltd. as a manufacturing licensee. A study was therefore carried out to assess Evode's future participation in the Japanese adhesives and mastics market.

At Stafford changes were also taking place, both internally and externally. Sandy & Co. (Contractors) Ltd. was sold. The Industrial Adhesives Division (which also incorporated the Evo-Stik Industrial Division and the Evo-Stik Marketing Division) was renamed the Industrial Division. The Building Chemicals and Bitumen Division also became the Building Division. Evomastics Ltd. was no longer operational.

In the New Years honours list for 1974 Dr. Hermann Simon was appointed Commander of the British Empire for his services to Export. This award made him extremely gratified to have become a British citizen in the country of his adoption. He attended Buckingham Palace on Tuesday 15th March for the investiture and receive his honour from Her Majesty The Queen. In accepting the honour he was adamant that this award was not only a recognition of his work but that of all of his colleagues at Evode. At that time he was Chairman or Managing Director of eighteen companies and in addition to having gained a doctorate in Chemical Engineering at Stuttgart University he also held the honour of MInstBE and had been the Chairman of the British Rubber and Resin Adhesives Manufacturers Association, of which he was a founder member.

It was during this year that the current Conservative Government was confronted with a strike by workers in the coalmines lead by Arthur Scargill. Many of the electricity power stations which provided power to industry and the home consumer were fired by coal and shortage of coal led to electricity being rationed and available to all at very limited periods. This led to the “three day week” when products could be made only when power was available. The prices of many of the raw materials used by Evode in the manufacture of adhesives and sealants fluctuated by the day if not by the hour. Laboratory staff spent a huge period of their time recosting products due to this situation. Without the available power staff found it impossible to work and on some days manufacturing could only be done at weekends. Consequently people found themselves attending work on a Saturday or Sunday. Distribution of the products which could be made was also significantly restricted due to the effect which the situation was having on the availability of petrol and its consumption by the traffic fleet.

Nevertheless, Evode maintained its policy of continued research and development to introduce new and improved products to the market and constantly updated the equipment on which these products were made. Amongst these new products which were launched in 1974 were Thermaflo hot melt adhesives in slug form to facilitate assembly operations, Evo-Stik Polka, a unique double-sided pressure sensitive adhesive in dot form for use in the newspaper industry and design studios and Evo-Stik Hi-White Ceramic Tile Adhesive range for the professional and DIY markets.

With the “three day week” resolved re-organisation within the group continued. The Building Division became the Building and Consumer Products Division, E.H. Management Services was formed as was Evode Vel-Tex Ltd. Some companies which Evode regarded as superfluous to their present requirements were disposed of, these being Cox & Wright and Cox & Wright (Pneumatics) Ltd.

Chapter 10

End of an era

It was evident that, within the Stafford community, Dr. Simon was an extremely busy person as, during the course of his life, he was the President of the Stafford Chess Club and the Stafford Chemical Society, he was Chairman of the Stafford Rangers football club and he was responsible for founding the Cement Admixtures Association in the UK. All of these offices he thoroughly enjoyed, as he did travelling around the world to visit the companies which he had established as licensees or were owned by Evode. On one occasion, after attending a meeting at Drecona Industries in Canada, he was the proud possessor of a certificate stating that he had travelled at Mach II returning to England on Concorde. On the same flight he met Sir Arnold Weinstock, who was at that time Chairman of English Electric Ltd. which had a considerable presence in Stafford.

The company was always interested in innovative ways of applying adhesives in professional markets. To this end Evode co-operated with Crossley Carpets of Halifax to develop a product called Silvaseam. It was a hot melt adhesive which was applied in a thin film onto an aluminium foil and was used to bond sections of carpet together. A low electric current was passed through the foil to soften the adhesive film which would then stick to the carpet. In this way many acres of floor covering were laid in diverse locations. It was as an offshoot from this development that Evode Coatings Ltd. was formed.

The situation concerning the company's involvement with overseas activities continued to develop. As previously reported, Dia-Prosim decided to withdraw from the licensee arrangement in France and Evo-France was formed. In order to compliment the activities of this company the Evode Group acquired another company in that country which was Societe Chimique Emfi, SA, based in Hagenau in eastern France. This company would manufacture and distribute Evode products in that country, the technology being applied from Stafford. The Group Board also took the decision to withdraw from the market in West Germany and sold off Batu Chemiewaren KG.

The development of products within the laboratories produced a host of technical information on both adhesives and sealing compounds. Dr. B.S.Jackson, who was the Director of Research for Evode Holdings, put together and published a book which was an amalgam of papers written by the development staff. This was called "Industrial Adhesives and Sealants".

Despite the fact that Dr. Simon was responsible for the appointment of all of the overseas licensees and, in 1968, had come to the conclusion that a dedicated Laboratory was required to oversee their requirements, headed by a person responsible for liaising directly with their personnel, the decision was reached between the MD of for liaising directly with their personnel, the decision was reached, between the MD of Evode Export and the chief chemist of Evode, that this activity should be taken away from the Licensee Laboratory and Evode Export and the Evode laboratories would assume responsibility. Consequently no single person would be in direct contact with any of the licensee companies and their technical requirements would have to be dealt with as time permitted by the Evode laboratories.

At this time royalties in the region of £100,000 were being realised from these companies. It is an unfortunate fact that the relationships between the licensees and Evode, which had previously been of the highest standard, quickly deteriorated, these overseas companies taking the attitude that their activities were no longer important to Evode. The chemists who had staffed this dedicated laboratory were dispersed throughout the company.

Evode AG was formed based in Switzerland to handle financial arrangements in Europe. For similar reasons Evode GmbH was formed in West Germany.

Evode Waterproofing Systems Ltd., which had been formed in 1972 with its main office on the Common Road site, was moved, in 1977, into a property which was leased from Servomatic Ltd. in St. Albans Road. This company became Evode Roofing Ltd, and launched a new product called "Tekurat". At the same time the Evode Vel-Tex Ltd. company was renamed Evode Joint Sealing Ltd. and Evomex SA in Mexico was sold while Furniglass Ltd. was acquired. The products made by this company were partially contributory to those already in the Evode range, these being wood dyes, varnishes and wood polishes.

A [house magazine](#) edited by [Dr. Barry Jackson](#) was published between the time January 1969 and August 1980. This publication carried information about people who had joined Evode and their positions within the company, overseas visitors, whether from licensee companies, agents or associates, which company within the group they were visiting. The activities of existing employees was described including the visits made overseas by Dr. Simon and others and the territories and companies they visited. Launches of new products were described and orders received by the company for existing products, from whom and where these products would be used. The details included in these publications have proved invaluable in putting this history together.

Dr. Simon was a convivial person, well known to and well liked by his large number of employees. Although his life deteriorated during this last year he maintained a working involvement with all companies which, for some years, had been under the overall management of his son, Andrew, who joined the company in 19-- as Corporate Planner and he was now Chief Executive of the Group.

It came as a shock to learn that Dr. Simon died, aged 78, from pancreatic cancer on 8th. September 1978.

The funeral and Thanksgiving service were held at the Borough Hall, Stafford, the town in which he had spent half of his life, on Friday 15th. September. He was extremely proud of his British nationality and the award of the C.B.E. with which he had been honoured by the country of his adoption.

At the funeral service the eulogy for Hermann Simon was presented by his long time friend Mr. Frank Winfield. This is such a moving and forthright address, expressing the personality and outlook of Dr. Simon throughout his life and the attitude he adopted to his family, friends and fellow workers, it is fitting that it is reproduced in its entirety as part of the biography.

After the service held at the Borough Hall his body was buried in a grave located at the Crematorium, Blackheath Lane, Stafford.

Following his death there were also many tributes and obituaries which appeared in widely diverse publications including the Stafford Rangers football programme for Tuesday 12th. September, for which he acted as Chairman many years previously. The daily "Times" paid tribute to him in the publication of Thursday 14th. September. As previously reported the company house magazine, The Evodian, had been produced for many years and in the publication for February 1979 a "Farewell to a Founder and Friend" was included.

EULOGY

By Mr F S Winfield at the funeral and thanksgiving service for Dr Hermann Simon C.B.E.

Held at the Borough Hall Stafford, on Friday 15th September 1978

Hermann Simon, Your Worship the Mayor, Rev. Stein, the Simon families, Pauline, Evodians and those close friends who have found time to come and cherish the memory of the man who lies here this afternoon and, perhaps, those of you who do not know me except as a friend of Hermann's, I stand here today in God's light, and in the ever-shining light of a most passionate father and a wonderful friend.

We called you simply 'THE DOCTOR' and I shall not list the honourable titles after your name, for you lying there, in your constant modesty and simplicity, would possibly rebuke this lonely speaker. Yet - his family weep, and we are left to mourn our wisest and most loveable loss, but - should Hermann's family have so long a life, so simple and without return of problems, what a beautiful wonderment they inherit.

In Hermann Simon there was, as we all know, no wilfulness - just peace and, if there was a will, it would be to contribute only modesty, simplicity and a breadth of his family's horizons. He was such a man - ingenious, yet simple. For 25 years or more I knew him through Edwin (Beaumont) and I knew him well and like so many, I felt, rather than saw, his quiet conscience and confidence.

I saw him watch over his family, grieve his wife. But only as one, the simple man and in a simple manner is permitted to see, what to me was an intellectual enigma, to be touched by his love of music, of opera and of the cultural arts. Sometimes he led, but certainly he never lectured.

So, in recent years, I found myself wanting to ask "why does the hair go grey when the brain remains verdant green?" - many of us celebrated his seventieth birthday and felt it quite natural that we should bring more grandchildren to his eightieth, and many of you will feel the same. He gave life and he lived it well. I say this because talent is but the pen of the heart and messenger of the soul. Hermann would thus consider what he wanted, what was best for all, yet his decisions were always given with charity and a quiet faith, and a quiet grace.

Who could deny that this is not just a compliment, but an everlasting truth. I come here today, not just to praise him but to say "farewell" on behalf of us all.

Nor can I dwell on his youth before he joined us from Germany as an immigrant. When I first met him only his soft accent and his direct words indicated his native land. It was insight of what we now call a 'holocaust' which, perhaps, brought him to us, yet intellect was always to me his constant companion. He was of a silent yet enquiring mind and, inspired in his own field of chemical knowledge and research - thus - his Doctorate and why we gladly called him " Dr SIMON" - DOCTOR, FATHER, GRANDFATHER, CHEMIST, GERMAN, COMPANION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE - simple yet faithful, generous and yet, quietly, a leader of men. Does it take all of this to be 'A DOCTOR'? Did he know that the spiritual perfection of man consists in his being a highly intellectual human being? And he was. One who knows all that is capable of learning, that such knowledge is obtained not by virtue, or by piety, but through constant enquiry and constant research. For the beginning of wisdom is created by that small group of men who desire it and admiration is created by those of us who are employed in its service. Thus - many of us who sit here this afternoon understand. We talk of acorns growing into oaks - I truly believe that when once we discussed Company growth, and I was the youngest present, in a very small building - what was then the 'Gas Works area ' of Stafford - he would have found it incredible that his factory , like his friends, and through so many friends, associates and colleagues, would eventually become a multi-national complex, a leader in its field with factories and Licensees across the world.

I talk of Evode being a leader in 'its field' because that was all that Hermann Simon possessed on that particular day - a playing field - but, like oaks, those buildings grew and will continue to grow. That is why we call it EVODE OF STAFFORD - a company growing on its credibility, on its knowledge and its founder and now, at last his children have taken over, together with their close associates and colleagues and Hermann will watch his oak and see new acorns on it, new grandchildren, new fields to development and, eventually to conquer.

Yet Hermann had a very simple confidence in the chemically based complications he used to introduce, and the man who was confidence in himself eternally gains the confidence of others. Yet, we watched as this quiet confidence seemed to say 'don't be too sure of yourself until the day you die' and, perhaps, this accounts for this quiet simplicity and mythology for I am 'just the singer - and not the song'. This man understood Goethe, adored Wagner, the opera, found time for the classical, ballet, admired the arts, surely I talk to you of a paradox, but - remember you his friends, gathered together in this farewell, that this quiet confidence and his own loyalties were shown and open for all to see.

I remember when once we has retired to his private office, after an argument about a certain sales area of Evode across Great Britain, and I thought a certain salesman, well, might be replaced, we fought the good fight and I lost. It was his loyalty to his eighty salesmen, his Sales Director, his Sales Manager which won me over and, perhaps, with the wry humour he possessed he said to me before we went into lunch "USE MY PERSONAL WASHBASIN BUT - REMEMBER YOU CAN ALWAYS WASH YOUR HANDS, BUT YOU CAN NEVER WASH YOUR CONSCIENCE" - not just a philosophy but, indeed, the words of a philosopher and a willing philanthropist as many of us know. His charity seemed never-ending, blending at the same time with an intolerable, an incredible tolerance and feeling for humanity and those with whom he worked. And so as Hermann Simon passes, so it was our business meetings lessened - they lessened a lot. His overseas business developed and he took part. That is why I mention a mind which remained a verdant green. I know that he encouraged a desire to sit in on meetings at the works in Stafford, in the Boardroom. To some it may appear strange that he, the wise, after his seventieth birthday, asked advice at these meetings. Yet I believe I understand his continued philosophy - " It is better to ask the way ten times than to take the wrong road once" was what he said.

And, perhaps, I have said enough - what a fine cultural inheritance he leaves to his children and to their children. What fine memories to all of us. What an example and what a fine memory he leaves to his closest associates at Evode. I envy you. I grieve for his children and I grieve for their children and I grieve for all of you too. But, the deeper the grief, the less words can express it. He will leave some of you feeling very much alone and Dr Simon would agree it is not good to be alone - even in Paradise, even though there will be those who, perhaps, stand waiting.

But, dear friends, and dear family, I could talk of this singular friend all day, and could still have wondrous things to say. I came to speak for him, to say farewell, to wish that we could cast such a fine shadow over our lives as obviously, and without disguise, and always look to the simple side of what he calls 'nature'. So I am going to leave you with a Testament which goes back to the years 1250:

HE NEVER MET A MAN IN WHOM HE FAILED TO RECOGNISE SOME QUALITY SUPERIOR TO HIS OWN

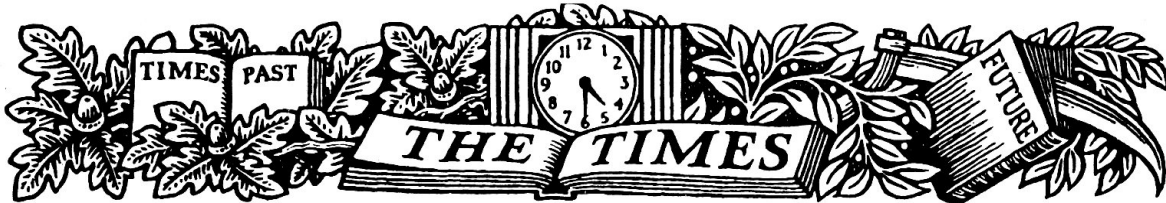
IF HE WAS OLDER	- HE SAID THE MAN HAD DONE MORE GOOD
IF HE WAS YOUNGER	- HE SAID THE MAN HAD SINNED LESS
IF RICHER	- HE SAID HE HAD GIVEN MORE TO CHARITY
IF POORER	- HE SAID HE HAD SUFFERED MORE
IF WISER	- HE PAID HONOUR TO HIS WISDOM
IF NOT WISER	- HE JUDGED HIS FAULTS LESS SEVERELY

Take this to your hearts - I can say no more but, gathered here today, we say 'FAREWELL, DEAR FRIEND, UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN'

Dr Simon was more than a scientist, his interest in the well being of others and his strong feeling for truth and justice, combined with discipline, enthusiasm and the will to succeed, ensured that from the beginning he built around him a loyal and able team of people. Through their joint efforts the company grew.

Obituary

A biography of Dr. Hermann Simon CBE



Thursday, September 14th 1978.

Dr Hermann Simon, C.B.E. Chairman of Evode Holdings Ltd., who died on September 8 aged 78, started his business career manufacturing bituminous materials, building chemicals and surface coatings.

A doctor of chemical engineering he was born in Germany and came to Britain shortly before the war. He joined Spic and Span Polishes Limited in 1938 as a director and chemist. As a result of his influence the company embarked upon a diversification programme, adding to their range of polishes, which were sold under the name of 'Dove' chemically based waterproofing products. Subsequently, the company's name was changed to Spic and Span Chemical Products Ltd, and later to the Dove Chemical Co. Ltd.

During World War II Dr Simon developed, for the government, methods of gas proofing and waterproofing food stores and waterproofing emergency water storage tanks and his company was commissioned to implement these systems.

The company also developed a concrete additive, Evo-Set, which enabled the Air Ministry to continue to lay new runways right through the winter months.

The name of the company was eventually changed to Evode Chemical Works Limited and Dr Simon became its Chairman and Managing Director in 1945. The company started to manufacture adhesives in the early 1950s and its impact adhesive 'Impact' became the brand leader.

Under Dr Simon's guidance, and in no small measure due to his personal enthusiasm and drive, his company grew from employing six people in a small rented building to an international group of companies manufacturing adhesives, materials for the shoe industry, and a wide range of products for the building and civil engineering industries.

Today, Evode's headquarters in Stafford are set in some 26 acres of freehold land. The Group employs over 1,000 people. Its products are sold in virtually every country in the world and Evode has subsidiary companies in France, Canada, U.S.A., Germany and Ireland as well as partly owned companies in Mexico and South Africa.

Dr Simon travelled extensively overseas on behalf of his company, and in 1974 was created O.B.E. for his services to British Exports. He was President of the British Adhesive Manufacturers Association. He played both hockey and chess of county standard and was for many years president of the Stafford Chess Club

A widower, Dr Simon leaves a son Andrew who is vice-chairman of Evode Holdings Ltd., and two daughters.

Obituary

Stafford Rangers Football Programme

Tuesday 12th September 1978

We were all extremely sad to learn of the death of Dr Hermann Simon at the weekend

Dr Simon was an extremely well known person in Stafford, and a very much respected President of the Club both in 1973 and 1975. Our condolences are with his family at this time.

There will be a one minute silence at the start of this evening's match and the players will wear black armbands as a token of respect for Dr Simon.

Obituary

Extract from The Evodian February 1979

FAREWELL TO A FOUNDER AND FRIEND

A tribute to Dr. Hermann Simon, C.B.E. on behalf of the employees of Evode Limited, by Ron Dale and Lionel Fletcher. Ron is the Chairman of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staff, Administrative, Professional and Sales Force Bargaining Unit, whilst Lionel is the Senior Convenor for the Transport and General Workers Union. Both are long serving employees - Ron will reach the grand total of thirty years and Lionel sixteen in April this year.

'On behalf of the employees of Evode Limited, we would like to add our tribute to the many which have been forthcoming following the death of our Chairman, Dr Hermann Simon.

Those of us who worked with Dr. Simon in the early days of the Company remember with affection the enthusiasm and singleness of purpose with which he inspired employees in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Following the Company's transfer of premises to its present site and the resulting expansion, employees were inspired by his ability to adapt quickly to the changing circumstances of national and international commerce.

His obvious belief in the strength of the family life concept was reflected in his relationships with his employees, all of whom regarded themselves as part of

the 'Evode' family. Despite, or perhaps because of, his international reputation and commitments, Dr Simon became part of the development and prosperity of Stafford and always remained a Staffordian at heart.

Probably because of his early experiences in Germany, Dr Simon was, in an era when patriotism seemed unfashionable, fiercely proud of his adopted country, and when awarded the C.B.E. for his services to British export, maintained that the honour was achieved by each of his employees as much as by himself.

He was known and revered as 'The Doctor' by all employees and despite the success and acclaim which followed in later years Dr Simon always retained what Kipling called the common touch. It was this innate respect for humanity which was reflected in all his actions and which endeared him to us.

Dr Simon had all the instincts and bearing of the old-fashioned concept of an English gentleman and his passing sees the end of an era. We would like to convey to his family our deepest respect and sorrow for their loss which is felt by us all.'

Obituary

Barrie Liss's speech
'25' Club Dinner 5 May 2000

This is the 36th Annual Dinner of the Evode '25' Club and it is my pleasure to welcome members and their guests.

The 12 new members (more about them later) and our Guests of Honour, Alan & Mary Webb and Andrew & Kathleen Simon - a very warm welcome to you all.

This THE 1st Dinner of the Millennium, also marks the centenary of someone whose memory is dear to all Evodians.

He was the founder of the Company as we know it today and he was the 2nd member of the '25' Club.

On the 30th October 1900 Hermann Simon was born in the small country town of Mainhardt in Germany.

His father was a Doctor looking after a rural community, and young Hermann sometimes went along with him in the pony and trap.

He enjoyed his childhood and learned much about life. When serious schooling started he went to live with his uncle and aunt in Stuttgart. He was a good pupil - an all rounder and he soon shook off the country bumpkin image with which his cousin teased him and they became lifelong friends.

In 1917 towards the end on World War 1 Hermann Simon joined the Mountain Cavalry - having learned his initial horsemanship as a country boy.

After the War he went to university to study chemistry. It was the time of the great depression - German money was worthless. Dr. Simon told me that he once lived for a whole month on one American Dollar.

It was also at university that Dr. Simon was introduced to cigars. He told me that one of his professors always smoked a big cigar because it sharpened his awareness of specific poisonous fumes.

Many of you will remember, the doctor with a large cigar in his hand!

Some will remember that each day he would read all the post that came into the Company. It was taken to him in a series of departmental baskets.

Later in the morning, when the mail had been distributed to the various offices, recipients knew which particular letter The Doctor had dwelt on, because of the lingering cigar aroma!

Early in his working life, Hermann Simon went into industry, and with a partner, established a Bitumen and Paint manufacturing plant in Berlin.

He married Hildegard Leiser in 1932 and they lived a moderately comfortable life in Berlin where two of their three children were born, Marion in 1934 and Petra in 1935.

This was a time of growing anti-Semitism! For Jewish people in Germany the 1930's was a decade of anxiety and extreme unpleasantness.

Dr. Simon, his wife and daughters left Germany in 1938 and War was declared a year later.

The family settled in Stafford where Dr. Simon had been offered a job as the Chemical Director of a very small company set-up by the Bostock brothers to make polish for Lotus shoes.

Ironically - with the declaration of War - Dr. Simon was interned in the Isle of Man for approximately 9 months.

He was never bitter about this period in his life. He understood the anxiety of Britain at War with the Germans and not having sufficient time or information to sort out the Good from the Bad. The consequence was that most aliens (as they were called) were interned.

Dr. Simon's case was taken to the House of Lords and he was released after it was realised how valuable his knowledge as a chemical engineer was to the British.

The rest as they say is history.

There were products manufactured for densifying, waterproofing and setting concrete that enabled airfield runways to be laid. There were paints for camouflage and gas proofing. Coatings for sealing Nissan Huts, flat roofs and water storage structures.

There were products that revolutionised tiling, the shoe industry, adhesives applications. Products that were eventually manufactured in and exported to most parts of the world.

The War ended in 1945. There were 2 celebrations that year. The other was to mark the birth of Andrew Simon whom you all know. He was born in Wolverhampton which is why I think the Doctor was an ardent Wolves supporter.

In recognition of his Industrial achievements, Dr Simon was given one of the countries highest honours when he was made a Commander of The British Empire. - Very well deserved and satisfying for a man driven by evil from the land of his birth and who made a very significant contribution to his adopted country in defeating that evil.

We all have our memories of the Doctor, as he was affectionately known:

Short in stature, black hair, well tailored suit, often a cigar, voice modulated by an accent, 1/2 moon glasses over which he looked at you quizzically, a smile starting at the corners of his mouth, and often a twinkle in his eye!

When you spoke to him he was interested in what you had to say. He never ever forgot and he would surprise people with the little (often personal) things he remembered.

He practised what today might be called "Management by walking about". His frequent visits through the laboratories and factory were welcomed by most and feared (probably with good reason) by a few.

The words that were often used to describe him were:-

He was a very fair man.

A disciplinarian.

An unusual combination of a good scientist and a good businessman.

He was thoughtful, - he was generous.

He was a gentleman.

Anecdotes about Dr Simon abound. All who knew him have a story to tell. They would fill a very large book.

Dr Simon was the Chairman of the Group he founded and was active in its running to within 2 weeks of his death at the age of 78

Dr Simon was a much loved person. All members of the '25' Club share in the memories of this man who touched our lives.

This being the centenary year of his birth, I ask you to stand and drink a toast "to the memory of our founder"

"TO THE DOCTOR"

Personal memories contributed by employees and taken from their person memoirs.

EILEEN ARNOLD

I did the invoicing the for chemicals side of the business, another girl Sibyl Howe did the invoices for the Dove Polishes then Marjorie checked them. We had no gadgets for counting up, it was all done by hand, but Dr Sieman was so clever he could just look down the page and add it all up, he was a marvellous mathematician, One day Majorie made a mistake, an invoice was £1,000 out, as the invoices came to thousands of pounds, it was an easy mistake to do, but Dr Sieman sacked her on the spot, she pleaded for her job, and then her husband came to the factory and pleaded too, but Dr Sieman (sic, Ed.) said that if one mistake had been made, then other mistakes could happen too.

DON BRADLEY

One morning a large Jaguar car was parked at the rear of the building. On investigation I saw a smartly dressed man leaving our raw material store carrying a poly bottle. I questioned our storeman who said "Oh that is the Doctors chauffeur he had come to collect the Doctor's Teepol" He explained that he came every few months to stock up on washing up liquid. I replied that if it was another satisfied customer, well done and keep up the good work and left.

I remember one funny incident when I had only worked in the department for a week or so. One morning I was met by Dr Simon who was as usual taking his walk about to keep up with things. It as a custom which was always appreciated by all employees. He said "What are you doing in here?" I explained my transfer etc., to which he said "Well you had better move quickly because there is a problem right behind you" I turned to find a poly pump repeat filling with the new operative not knowing what to do. I hit the air supply and stopped it. On turning round I saw the Doctor some ten yards down the gangway with a wry smile on his face and with a nod of his head he move off. At the time I thought that I had passed my initiative test.

CHEBBY BUTLER

Evode was also where I met my wife (Clare) and its on this note and with her permission that I finish on this final story. It was on a Friday (The Day the DOCTOR usually walked round) that Clare and her friend Jenny were coming back from the canteen and Clare decided to run on and hide behind the Fire Door in the Stores from Jenny and then jump out on her just a childish prank, at that moment the Doctor came through and saw Clare and said to her "What are you doing" nothing else Clare's reply was "HIDING DOCTOR" no more was said but on passing Clare's friend Jenny she said that the Doctor was laughing to himself (how nice).

NANCY CARR

There were two cats on the payroll; Auntie, the factory cat who slept among the rolls of Hessian, and George, the office cat, who I once remember sleeping on the mat outside Dr. Simon's office. The doctor carefully stepped over him saying "Are you waiting to come in?" Happy days.

MAURICE CHARD

Greater than the fear of awkward customers, however, was the fear of finding the dreaded 'report to HS' on a letter in ones mail; the Doctor always read both incoming and outgoing mail during the early years. Failure to report satisfactorily in person meant serious trouble.

AVIS COOPER

Dr Simon was a lovely chap, he'd been in England for some years, and they interned him during the war which was sad, he would come round each week, he never just swept through the factory he would stop and talk to everyone individually he must have been tired out by the time he got to the end of the factory

Dr Simon came through the factory, he said he hadn't realised that we had got married on Saturday, and if I popped up to the office later there was a present for me. He gave me a £5 note I thought that my ship had come in. We bought a rug and a pair of blankets. He then told my husband off for not telling him that we had got married and he told him there would be something in his pay packet for him. He had a 6d pay rise. Joan Emburton organised a collection and I bought a canteen of cutlery.

PATRICK COUNSELL

I particularly remember Dr. Hermann Simon, the Managing Director at that time (sometimes called 'The Doctor' or more irreverently 'the Old Man'). He took a great interest in everything that went on in the company and was a frequent visitor around the premises. Sometimes this caused consternation and a hasty resumption of work if people had been talking or larking about. I recall one occasion when he said to us "Gentlemen, are you discussing chemistry or politics?" We hastily replied that it was the former as we had no interest in the latter!

His Green Internal Memo's were things not to be taken lightly if you received one, and you did your best to answer his questions. He had a special feature on the internal telephone system whereby he could give a long continuous ring (and I believe, interrupt existing conversations). This was the bane of the lives of some of the senior managers who frequently had their meetings etc. interrupted by his questions. Nevertheless, I think everybody felt that he was genuinely interested in the welfare of his employees as well as the progress of the Company and he would often ask questions to show his care.

CLIVE DAVEY

It was usual for the hourly paid and weekly staff at Christmas to receive a bonus of a weeks wage. One particular year, a few days before Christmas a lorry was being loaded with cartons of polish, one of which happened to be dropped at Dr. Simons feet just as he was passing on his rounds. It was claimed that the bonus was suddenly halved at the last minute because of this incident, though I was never able to substantiate this. It could have been as the result of a poor company performance that year as was reflected by the monthly staff bonus I enjoyed in later years.

DON FERGUSON

Our first job was to open all the incoming mail, separate into appropriate departments, and pass it on to Dr Simon who would read it all - and comment where appropriate!

He also required an approximate value of the orders received and cheques each morning. I recall one occasion he asked "how much money?" I replied "only £2,000", he said "What do you mean, only £2,000 - the difference between having £2,000 and owing £2,000 is £4,000" I have never forgotten that to this day.

DOREEN HAYNES

I can still recall my interview, and strangely enough, enjoyed it. The only fear I had was when Dr Simon passed a file to me which contained copies of correspondence high-lighting all the mistakes! Can you imagine this happening

these days? Anyhow I decided to give it a go and I thoroughly enjoyed my 10 years (1958-68) working for Dr Simon.

It soon became apparent to me that he was quite amused by most people's reaction to him. He read people very well. I remember one incident when a male employee brought the mail into Dr Simon's office and he placed it on the wrong side of the desk. I can still see the 3 or 4 wicker baskets being thrown across the office!

During my time with Dr Simon, only one thing irritated me and that was he always blew his cigar ash across my desk onto my lap!

BOB HORNE

At Evode all mail was in fact 'vetted' by Dr Simon or more often by Mr Forman, who was a stickler for the correct spelling of 'Evo-Stik' and any letter with the wrong spelling was promptly returned to the sender.

BARRY JACKSON

Shortly after joining the Company I found myself involved in working on a number of topics, initially bituminous emulsions, then polishes as well as building chemicals. As Elias Peak was now becoming more and more involved in the production of adhesives, some of the experimental work was handed over to me. I can recall Dr Simon in a somewhat agitated state asking me to investigate a serious problem in late 1953 which was causing him great concern. Considerable quantities of household adhesive were being returned due to the product having turned to a black colour in the tins. Mr. Peak was trying to minimise the cost of this disaster by recycling as much as he could and I set about the investigation of what was causing the discoloration. I found that a chemical reaction was taking place between one of the constituents of the adhesive and the iron in the tin plate container.

We used labour from our own factory as well as subcontractors for roof waterproofing, and until 1955 all large waterproofing contracts were inspected by Dr Simon before the work started. It was felt however that it was not right to have the Doctor clambering up and down ladders and over roofs at 55 years old and so he stopped doing this.

One has to remember that in the early days, because of financial considerations, every ounce of raw material had to be converted into a saleable product. Elias had the ability to take decisions often when considerable financial risks were involved to get products out through the factory gates. I (Barry Jackson) can remember him in the factory at Glover Street being told by the foreman that a batch of adhesive was slightly out of specification for one reason or another. Elias said: "give me the orders" and he went through them and sorted 10 or 12 out and said: " fill it out and send it to those customers, because they never test it". The failure here is, that Elias was not bothering to find out why it went wrong in the first place and trying to get it put right. It was unfortunate. that for one reason or another

Dr. Simon seemed to have an instinctive intuition when Elias had been involved in anything which was a risk to the company. Barry Jackson recalls that we used to send the Hycar Rubber (used to manufacture household adhesive) to Universal Grinding Wheel Co. and they would soften the rubber by storing it in one of their furnaces for a short time. Unfortunately one night they overcooked the Hycar and next morning phoned Elias to explain what had happened. He told them not to worry, he would use it and to send it. When the Universal lorry arrived in our yard Elias looked out of the laboratory window and saw a faintly smouldering mass of charred rubber and said: "My god, I hope the old man does not see this". At that precise moment, by some unknown instinct, the window of the Doctors office shot open, his head appeared through it and a voice bellowed: "Mr. Peak come to my office now".

Now company cars were like gold dust in those days, - even reps provided their own car. So in order to evoke pity from Dr. Simon he bought himself this bicycle which had flat tyres and he solemnly pushed it from where he was lodging up the Eccleshall Road down to Glover Street, as he crossed the yard the 'Old Man' would chortle from his office window, "Wouldn't it be better if you bought yourself a nice little car, Mitter Peak?" Elias would push his bike sullenly to the shed. On this particular day, at about the usual time in the morning, I suppose 8.30, the scene paused and shimmered, demanding some plangent event to kick-start it back into action. It happened! A lone figure appeared silhouetted against the rising sun, Elias appeared over the horizon pushing this dilapidated bike amongst all this broken glass and Dr. Simon of course was still there and so was John Forman, all blackened, and the Dr. turned to Elias and said "where were you when the fire was on Mr. Peak?" and Elias said "what fire?" that apparently was more or less the end of his bonus for that year not knowing there had been a fire and not helping to fight it.

RON JOHNSON

Such as the day I came to cycle home for lunch only to find my bicycle had gone missing. I spent all lunch searching every nook and cranny without success. Mid afternoon, Dr. Simon arrived on one of his many visits, walked into the factory and retorted in a loud voice "WHAT IS THAT?" Low and behold there was my bicycle secured to the roof rafters. "That's my bike, thank you for finding it" I replied. The Doctor saw the funny side of it, but it was never repeated.

CATE JONES

The Doctor used to come round now and again to see how well the polish was setting, he didn't really stop and chat. His children were very young and still had a nanny called Rhona who had auburn hair. Petra went to the Madam Le Gatt ballet school in London and when I worked in the Packing Department I used to send the parcels to her which had little ballet tights, cardigans and hats. I used to baby-sit for the children at the Doctors house and go on errands, I was a mad-head on a bike then!

During the winter of 1954 there were snow drifts which were quite deep. The men carried our bikes as we walked along the fence to get to work, then they cleared to road for Doctor Simons car, they had just finished when the snow plough came!!

CYRIL LAWTON

During the first few months most of my time was spent with Dr. Simon working in the Laboratory'. His office/Laboratory contained a desk, a bookcase, which he had brought over from Germany, and a wooden bench. A gas supply had been provided and this was connected to a 'Bunsen Burner' and a gas ring. The other laboratory equipment consisted of a set of weighing scales (second hand from a local chemist), a few Woolworths saucepans and test tubes, beakers, thermometers etc. The most valuable

item of equipment was a set of German Hydrometers (which he had also brought with him) and no one but himself used these until he was sure they were in 'safe hands'.

The procedure he followed was to write his formulations in a laboratory note book using code numbers for each raw material

As soon as any raw materials were received at the factory Dr. Simon or Mr. Forman would rush out and obliterate with paint the chemical name and substitute the G Number (code number). Dr. Simon was very insistent that his formulations were kept secret and that Mr. Forman and I always referred to the raw material code numbers. This was not always easy, especially if you were manufacturing something with G400 in it. Then you went to the cold water tap and took what you wanted! When we later took on factory workers it became nearly impossible much to Dr. Simon's great annoyance to get them to refer to G448 and not Portland Cement was difficult.

Until our first workman arrived it was Dr. Simon and Mr. Forman who produced everything in the factory. They wore white coats with towels wrapped round their heads working away over the powder mixer in a choking cloud of cement and lime dust making "Mellitol"

Dr. Simon decided that his new house in St. Johns Road should have the loft fire proofed and I was nominated to carry this out. which I did using a stirrup pump to spray on the solution. Unfortunately I was somewhat over enthusiastic and the impregnation solution started to come through the ceiling much to the annoyance of Mrs. Simon. Next morning the Dr. had a few choice remarks to make concerning my workmanship.

ALWYN LOFT

No training was given, we just talked about the products, later we went to the Royal Oak (the Why Not) where we were booked in, John Forman and Eric Barnes joined us for dinner and after we sat in the bar talking and drinking. Next morning back at Glover Street as we were leaving about lunchtime, Dr Simon held out for my coat, I said that it was all right but Dr Simon replied "No, you are our guest" We left about midday and got home about 5-6 o'clock.

NEIL MACDONALD

It had been decided that we would travel by road on the day in question. The Doctors' Daimler, with the faithful Simms at the wheel, duly arrived at our house in Sandringham Road just before eight o'clock. My wife and (then) two young boys stood at the door and waved us off, with Dr. Simon in the front passenger seat and with me in solitary splendour in the back.

I was offered the Financial Times to read as we sped down the M6 I felt very important, sitting in a chauffeur-driven limousine with the FT! Somewhere near Corley Services Dr. Simon produced a brown paper bag. He said that he had picked some apples that morning and asked if I would like to have one. I said I would indeed like to have one and in no time we were both munching away. Then came the problem, what to do with the core! I could hardly stuff it in the ashtray, could I? Neither did it seem appropriate to open the window of a Daimler, no less, and chuck the offending item onto the M1.

So I sat back and watched to see what Dr. Simon would do with his core. He simply ate it, pips and all! I was left with a rapidly deteriorating apple core in my hand until we reached the car park at BRE, when I was able to at last to ditch the offending thing under the Daimler.

EDDIE NEWMAN

One of the memories I still have was during my early days at Glover Street, we had to produce emulsions for some of the adhesives to be made in the next few days. Sometimes we tried to get in front by more than one day, so I used to work on Easter Monday and Whit Monday. On these days of course the factory was closed to all other production, I used to work alone (illegal!) and make extra emulsions. Dr. Simon used to walk around in those days, and he used to bring Andrew (his son) with him, leading him by the hand. He used to say "Mr. Newman you look after him while I go to the office" I used to stand him by the stirrer that mixed the emulsion to give him something to watch, hoping that when the emulsion inverted it would start spilling over him, but as usual, he always had an Angel watching over him, in three years he never got splattered once, (I got the splashes!)

BETTY PARKER

The girls downstairs were always singing especially when the daily programme of "Music while you work" came on the radio. They would turn up the volume but this annoyed Dr. Simon if he was dictating. He would immediately reach for the internal phone and shout "please switch off the wireless, I am at the dictating"! Well, - we didn't have "Soundproofing" and it was difficult to concentrate, but I liked the music too! Needless to say - silence reigned!

The view from our windows was not very special - just mounds of coal for the Electricity Generating Station but we didn't have much time to spare for gazing out! We always seemed to be busy. I would only have to stop typing for a few seconds and Dr. Simon would open the door and say "are you finished"! There would always be more dictation.

Although Dr. Simon was a hard task master he was always very fair and I enjoyed working for him. When he was not travelling away he was in the office early (we dare not be late!) He saw all the mail which came in and read most of the out-going mail in those early days. I can look back on some amusing moments. Dr. Simon's English had improved greatly whilst he had been away but when I first began taking dictation there were times when I could not understand him, He asked me to write to London for Sauerkraut and Pumpernickel. I'd never heard of these before. With John Forman's help I got over that hurdle. Then there was the first time I was asked to write for tickets for a Ballet in which two Russian dancers were appearing - Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin - - "Who? Can you spell that please Doctor" In mock disgust he would say "have you not heard of these famous dancers?" Then he would laugh and help me out!

There were times, of course, when he would become angry! Especially when he had been 'cut-off' during a telephone call.

HARLEY POWELL

I started in the Twinstik Dept. Previously I was a milkman. My first meeting with the Doctor was when I ran into the back of his Roller with my milk float and when I first met him as an employee on his Friday factory walkabouts that was the first thing he remembered, and from that day on he called me Mr Milkman!

I remember when one of the lads I worked with in the Twinstik Dept. Had a financial problem due to a marital break up, the Doctor on his usual walkabout noticed that he was not his usual self and asked him, he took him to one side and the next thing he has a cheque and was able to pay the company

back at £1 a week. I also remember when me and Fred woodman were doing a Fire Duty which entailed a walk about after working hours, we were checking the offices and happened to pass the Doctors office we went in and decided to play at being the "boss" I sat down at his desk and put my feet on the desk, took a cigar out of his box (did not unwrap or smoke it) and pretended to smoke it and to give orders. Whilst doing so the Doctor walked in, he pointed his finger at the door, not saying a word we fled. We worried the next day thinking we were for the chop, but never a word was said, and the next time the Doctor came round he just looked at me and pointed his finger at the door, smiled and walked out.

ANDREW QUINEY

I always remember Dr Simon without fail walking around the whole factory week by week to see what was going on in the production and laboratory areas, normally Fridays. He would come over and talk to you about specific aspects of the job you were doing at the time. In his way he generated a lot of respect from people who worked for him. He also gained enormous respect, because he started out on the shop floor and guided the company through its prosperous years until his untimely death.

PERCY SMALL

By far my best client was Swansea Council, but at one time I had an order for roof treatment to a large block of flats for more than nine months, and seemingly little chance of getting it done. Hearing that Dr Simon had said that after five o'clock his door was always open, one day I set off to see what could be done. Quite a journey in those days, there and back in a day. No motorways then.

As I walked down the corridor to Dr Simon's office, Mr Foreman, who I had not met before, was waiting to urge me on. How he knew what I was there for I don't know. After knocking on his door, I explained my trouble to Dr Simon who rather rounded on me by saying I was blaming him. I replied that he was the boss, so who else was there? He went out and left me standing there, only to return after some time. He gave me £200 in cash, wished me a safe journey home. Now at 85, one of my most abiding memories, £200 was a fair amount of money in those days.

GRAHAM SPEARMAN

I was sitting on the steps by the Paints QC lab next to Cliff Stanley's office (Site Safety Officer) with a group of others including Eric Klepacki, John Cochlan and Peter Mellor, smoking a cigarette and drinking a coffee, Eric and John were also smoking. Up strolls Dr Simon, spots me, and has a fit, starts waving his cane at me and shouting, "did I want to burn his factory down!" I had no idea what he was going on about. The Paints factory was by then a non-flam area manufacturing Polytex and Primers and cutting Flashband. Unfortunately the flammable petroleum sign was still on the side of the wall just above where I was sitting. Eric and John had been standing up and seen the Dr coming and had extinguished their cigarettes. Fred came our and spoke to Dr Simon and then 'phoned Personnel to explain. The whole thing quietly died down. I was 18 at the time and had to put up with an enormous amount of ribbing off everyone, including John and Eric, for months after.

JOHN TALBOT

Dr Simon used to walk around the factory saying "Hello" one day when I was about to go upstairs in the lift in the Mastics he joined me - as he said "I own the factory so I can use the lift and come with you!!" He recognised me in town one Saturday night and offered to give me a lift home. He used to offer me a lift home from work, well, to town anyway as I didn't like to go all the way

Then there was another fire, the Black Monopol in the downstairs Adhesive, it was the biggest batch they had made, it ignited and went up. Everywhere was black, smoke covered everything and was coming up through the false floor it was as black as the ace of spades, someone had to turn the machine off so in I went, of course we didn't have breathing apparatus in those days. Again the Doctor took us all out for another meal, and another good night was had!!

STAN THOMAS

I will try and pay tribute to Dr Simon and describe something about the 'Glover Street' days.

First of all Mr Hadley, or H.E.H. as was known, (was a bachelor) came in late on Monday morning on the Birmingham train and left on Friday afternoon (living in digs in the week) H.E.H. was a great teacher with a great deal of first rate commercial experience behind him, liked a pint in the evening too - but that's another story. He taught me more in the accountancy sphere than I felt I'd gained elsewhere. Mr Hadley's office was across the yard from the main offices and was generally marooned in isolation by a large puddle, due to the drains into the river 'backpounding'. He used to be a great one for telling jokes, sometimes much to the annoyance of JJEJF (John James Ernest Forman) and the embarrassment of Sheila Banks, he also used to burst into song - to such an effect in the summer that, Dr S. Had been known to open his office window and shout 'stop de noise' H.E.H.'s hobby was 'stocks and shares' and occasionally he would come over to accounts in the evening with a wad of dividend payment tickets about 4 inches thick and tot them up on the adding machine.

One day at Glover Street, there was all hell let loose, everyone was looking for the VASHER file which Dr Simon wanted urgently as he had to see this man in the afternoon. He kept repeating 'Vasher, Vasher, what is wrong with you!' I do not know when the penny dropped, but he was after the personal file of Mr Washer, a roof waterproofing supervisor.

One of my main reasons in deciding to 'write' these lines about Evode was to take the opportunity to make my tribute to 'The Doctor'. He may have been the Boss and he would let you know it at times, but you always sensed you were in the company of a 'big man', who could put all the status to one side and be human and considerate when justified or required. I was slightly in awe of him, but enjoyed working with him, I think in mutual respect.

To make the point ~ a few 'Doctor' stories **

After a long stretch of overtime of many days, I overslept and did not get into work until about 10 am. As soon as I came through the gates, I bumped into Dr S. (returning from his private toilet downstairs) 'You had better come up to the office' he said gruffly. I was in no mood for this and thought 'don't start on me mate' but I held back from experience.

When I followed him into his office, he asked me to sit down and have a cigar, which I refused (a bit big for me), then he offered me a cigarette, a cup of coffee followed. He said he had asked me to go up to the office to say a personal thank you for the amount of work I was doing. I don't know ... Mischief - kindness - or what?

One of my duties was to look after the detail and make royalty payments in respect of those products which were made under licence, exchange rate mechanisms - the lot, in those austere days - no computers. With Mr Hadley going home weekends, and Saturday discussions and account research fell to me, so I often provided management statistics. On one occasion, Dr S. was going to U.S.A. To visit a manufacturer from whom we were licensed and required figures going back to the year dot. I told him it would take days and there were other things to do - all I got was to be told he definitely could not proceed without them. After a couple of days, on the Friday evening he was enquiring re the figures, I said I needed more time and it was finally decided he would come to Glover Street about half an hour before leaving on Sunday. He came in the yard at the appointed time and I gave him the figures in an envelope. He stood by my desk and said 'Mr Thomas, I do not use my own cheque book

unless I am forced to, but today is an exception. Here is a cheque for £100, and you are to tell Mr Hadley you are having a few days off to take your wife out'. Off he went to the States.

During my time looking after the accounts there was another incident which reveals how considerate Dr Simon could be. Doctor had asked me to do some

research into a project I was busy with the accounts at the time and asked my assistant, Geoff Leedham to do the job. He duly gave the finished article to me and I handed them to Dr Simon in due course. When I was with Dr S on another matter he complimented me on the figures Mr Leedham had produced, so I told him I had been busy on the accounts and that Mr Leedham had done them. As I was going out of the office with more jobs to do, Dr Simon said send Mr Leedham up with those things and I will express my appreciation of his work personally.

I have one more story concerning Dr Simon which I think is worth relating, above all.

Late one afternoon there was a meeting in Dr Simon's office, three very senior members of the staff were present - it was concerning a certain Sales debt (I can still remember the name of the account). After a while I was summoned - although not over accounts anymore, I did maintain a brief on Credit Control - and Dr Simon brought me up to date on the proceedings of the meeting so far. Where upon I told Dr Simon that he had got hold of the wrong end of the stick on this one and that the true story was a little different than that outlined to me. He blew up - how dare I say such things 'go home and I will deal with you in the morning'. Off I went.

In the morning I was sitting at my desk wondering if I'd be allowed to say my goodbyes when, a shadow appeared over the desk, I looked up to see Dr S standing there. 'Sir' He said 'I usually make people come to my office, but I come to you to apologise, you were right - I have spoken to the other gentlemen'.

NELLY TINKLER

When they started to make adhesives, the Doctor asked about eight of us to stay behind one night. He had made the first batch of adhesive and the tables were covered in tins which we filled with the adhesive which was in a jug, the tins were 4/5 of a pint and it took us until 9 o'clock, then the Doctor took us all over to the pub. He was a really nice person. I remember one day at Glover Street after they had loaded a lorry up as it went round the corner the load slipped and it all fell off right in front of the Doctor!!

JOHN TURNER

One scary moment in the mid 1970's is still fresh in my mind, I was in the lab with a colleague, and as usual I was being cheeky, this resulted in me being pinned up in the corner and roughed up a little, during this activity we became aware that we were being watched. The Doctor was standing in the doorway taking a keen interest in the proceedings. We were both red faced expecting the worse, but, thankfully the Doctor was in a good mood that day, and his main concern was his mistaken belief that a young lady was being mistreated, as long hair was the fashion then, he had mistaken me for a girl. On learning that I was not, he decided that things were O.K., and off he went with nothing more said!

One of my last memories of the Doctor was the Christmas dance at the Top of the World, a night spot in Stafford's town centre. The Doctor had decided to turn comedian, and armed with a sheaf of papers he stood up on the stage and proceeded to read jokes out with no emotion or timing, everyone laughed for whatever reason, and as usual we had a great evening out.

On return from holiday in 1978, I was told the sad news that the Doctor had passed on, no more were we to see his tours of the works, or him arriving for work in his Rolls Royce with 'HS 6666' number plates, with Stan the chauffeur at the wheel. His death seemed to mark an end of an era.

MYRA WALL

I used to sometimes wait at the bus stop in Marston Road. One morning this big posh car pulled up and the driver asked me if I wanted a lift, it was DR. Simon, I felt so proud going through the gates in such style!! I didn't realise he knew who I was.

DAVID WARD

During lunch time most of us ate our sandwiches in the laboratories. It was rumoured that this could produce instant dismissal if seen by The Doctor. Of course it was bound to happen and one day he appeared at the far door, sandwiches were hurriedly hidden. The Doctor was an astute man and knew exactly what was going on and from a distance began to issue a staccato rebuke that only Germans can do. Eventually he saw what we were playing Chess and his tone instantly changed to one of gentle inquiry, even offering free membership to the Stafford Chess Club!

E WASHER

Dr Simon visited a water tank in Rugby one day during heavy snow to find two frozen 'mites' trying to work with a brazier to dry the paste, and expressing such surprise that they weren't at the pictures that afternoon, and he wouldn't go away without leaving them with some cigarettes, which were in short supply at that time. Another time, some years later after the war, the Doctor visited them at the water tower at Stoke, it was a bank holiday Monday, and the Doctor arrived in his first new Humber car. When he saw the 120ft climb that was required to speak to the workmen, he managed to persuade Mr. Forman that it would be a good idea to climb to the top of the tower to get Mr. Washer down so that the Doctor could speak to him.

FRED WAYGOOD

A most interesting occasion just after joining the Company happened one Friday evening. I was returning to London from Stafford Station and was just in time to board a crowded train. As I stood in the corridor, Dr Simon came along. He recognised me, couldn't remember my name and invited me to join him for a meal in the restaurant car. There followed a most interesting hour or so as the train made its journey to Euston. He told me of the early days of Evode and the occasional struggles. We parted when the train arrived, he on his way to visit a daughter in Stuttgart, and then to licensees of the Company in some other part of Europe. As I made my way to Barking to visit my mother, I was quite elated - I had only been in the employment of Evode for a few weeks, and had been invited to dine with the Chairman of the Company.

BOB WHITEHOUSE

About 4 pm the Board members arrived in the laboratory and I started the presentation. Many questions were asked and we rapidly passed 5 pm when everyone normally left. About 5.30pm, still in the middle of some discussions, Pauline was pushed through the door of the laboratory dressed in

black plastic bags covered with balloons and stickers (I believe that Dave Ward and John Bennett were the key culprits). Dr Simon asked what was happening and Mr. Vohralik (Technical Director) explained that we were getting married the following day and this was a traditional "good luck" event at Evode. Dr Simon turned to me with a straight face and said " I assume you will not be demonstrating these products tomorrow!" Extremely embarrassed and nervous in the presence of these senior executives, I could only stumble out with some inane comment; then the whole laboratory broke into laughter. The next day at our wedding we received a lovely telegram from Dr. Simon wishing us luck and prosperity.