

# protection you can throw away Disposable facial tissues story

Prior to World War I, European manufacturers developed a product called creped cellulose wadding. It was a cotton substitute made from processed wood pulp. Ernst Mahler, head of Kimberly-Clark's research, technical and engineering department, and James C. Kimberly, second vice president for manufacturing operations, discovered creped cellulose wadding while touring pulp and paper mills in Germany, Austria and Scandinavia in 1914. Mahler took the idea back to the U.S. and trademarked the material under the name Cellucotton.



World War I provoked cotton shortages abroad and in the U.S. Mahler traveled to Washington D.C., where he convinced the U.S. surgeon general that Cellucotton would be an ideal substitute for surgical cotton dressing in treating war wounds. He also had developed a flattened form of Cellucotton that was thin yet held its form - like a piece of cloth. He suggested that this product could be used as a filter in gas masks.

## World War I Ends, New Product Emerges

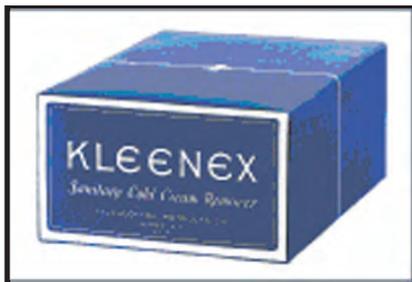
The army expressed interest in the gas filter product, and K-C scientists continued to experiment with it. The end of the war in 1918 brought about an end to the gas mask project. With a surplus of Cellucotton, K-C needed to find another commercial application for the material. In the



early 1920s, C.A. "Bert" Fourness conceived the idea of ironing cellulose material to make a smooth and soft tissue. With much experimentation, facial tissue was born in 1924 with the name Kleenex. The name most likely was derived from the word "cleansing" which was shortened to "clean," while the capital "K" and the "ex" ending were adopted from Kotex, which had been introduced four years earlier.

## Cold Cream Remover for the Stars

Connecting the growing use of cosmetics by American women with the disposable cleansing tissue's properties, K-C positioned it as a clean, convenient replacement for the unsightly "cold cream towel" that hung in many bathrooms. A package of one hundred 6" x 7" sheets sold for 65 cents.



In 1925, the first Kleenex ad appeared in the Ladies Home Journal showing "the new secret of keeping a pretty skin as used by famous movie stars whose complexions are always under close inspection, whose faces are exposed to glaring lights and to heavy makeup constantly." In 1927, the ads began using famous stars of stage and screen for testimonials and endorsements. This series included Jean Harlow, Irene Dunne, Gertrude Lawrence, Helen Hayes and many others.



## Handkerchiefs You Can Throw Away

At the same time, Mahler, who suffered from hay fever, had been using the tissues in place of a handkerchief. He convinced K-C's advertising group to also position the tissue as a way to avoid spreading germs. In 1929, K-C's ingenious Pop-Up box for dispensing interfolded Kleenex tissue was introduced.



The product came into its own in 1930 when letters from consumers supporting the product's use as a handkerchief swamped K-C. After additional research, the company switched its advertising strategy to "the handkerchief you can throw away." Instead of being a product primarily for women's use, it now served men, women, young and old alike. Sales of Kleenex doubled the first year of this new campaign.

## Evolving to Meet Consumers' Needs

Ever since Kleenex tissue went on the market in 1924, it has been the No. 1 brand of facial tissue in the world and has become a genuine American icon. Along the way there have been many packaging innovations including a distinctive quadrant design singled out by the Museum of Modern Art in 1949, in an exhibition called Modern Art in Your Life, an attractive upright designer package and the most recent oval-shaped packages to name a few. K-C continued to improve the landscape of facial tissue by introducing product extensions such as its Kleenex Cold Care line of products, and recently the Kleenex Anti-Viral facial tissue. This new-to-the-world product innovation kills 99.9% of cold and flu viruses - within 15 minutes.\*



To learn more about Kleenex products, visit [www.kleenex.com](http://www.kleenex.com).



Source: *Shared Values: A History of Kimberly-Clark*

\*Begins working immediately, ultimately killing 99.9% of cold and flu viruses in the tissue within 15 minutes. Effective against Rhinoviruses Type 1A and 2 (Rhinoviruses are the leading cause of the common cold); Influenza A and Influenza B (causes of the flu); Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV-the leading cause of lower respiratory infection in children).