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Coronet



THE WINDSORS IN WONDERLAND

*The Inside Story of
the Duke and His Duchess*

That Million Dollar Sandwich

by JACK DENTON SCOTT

Bill Rosenberg has made a fortune with his factory-catering service on wheels

A STAID BOSTON CITIZEN got so stirred up recently about a feature story in a local paper that he tracked down the man who was the subject of the article and threatened to punch him.

"Everyone knows that the favorite American sandwich is the hot dog," the irate Bostonian cried. "And you come out with a statement that the ham sandwich is." He snorted. "It's unpatriotic to talk like that!"

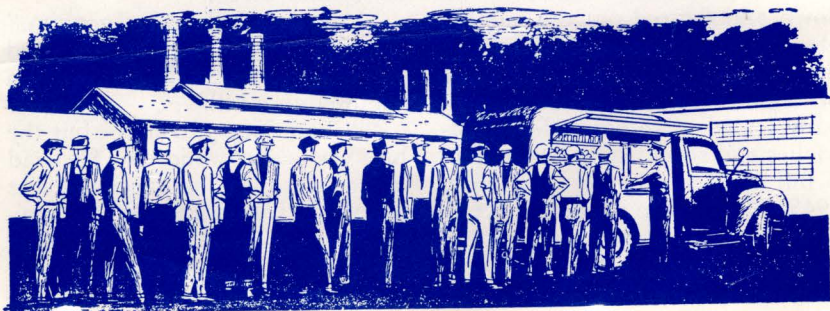
The man accused of being un-American because he pulled the hot dog from the top spot as America's favorite is tall, burly William Rosenberg. Before the argument was over, however, he convinced the irate hot-dog lover of two major points: (1) he thought the hot dog was indeed a fine and tasty item; (2) but the ham sandwich is really the favorite of most Americans.

Bill Rosenberg knows the tastes of Americans because he has reached

them through their stomachs. Nearly every day of the week he feeds a million people. Yet the people don't come to Rosenberg. He builds wheels around his restaurants and takes them to the factories of New England, so that the working man can get a decent meal at a reasonable price.

Bill remembers that the whole thing started one March morning in 1946. At 4 A.M. he walked into the kitchen of his home in Boston, Massachusetts, picked up a loaf of bread, slipped out two slices, lathered them with butter, added a generous piece of ham, applied a thin coat of mustard, and came up with something that has netted him a million dollars.

From that one ham sandwich has come a \$5,000,000-a-year business called Industrial Luncheon Service, Incorporated, which in turn has sprouted ten corporations, a managing company and a realty com-



pany. That same sandwich has also put 150 Rosenberg restaurant trucks on the road, built 25 in-plant cafeterias, employed nearly 600 people, and added vastly to the health and comfort of the American factory worker.



Before Rosenberg constructed that fated sandwich, he had some living to do. Back in 1936, he was a truck driver for an ice-cream company. He did so well that the front office made him manager of what they considered a slow store in New Haven. It didn't stay slow.

At 21, Rosenberg was a top lad in the ice cream business: he kept 26 trucks busy with deliveries. Then, when World War II broke out, he went into the shipyards at Hingham, Massachusetts. Before long, he and that ham sandwich were to make news.

As many of the other workers did, Bill brought his lunch to the yards. But when it came eating time, his coffee was lukewarm, the sandwiches were dried out, having been made the night before.

Bill also noticed that production slipped when the men went across the street for a hot cup of coffee. Being a methodical fellow he sat down and figured out the number of wasted minutes, and decided that this time could be salvaged and production increased if the company would serve hot coffee, sandwiches and snacks right on the job.

Bill worked at the yard until 1945. Then in the company of two energetic young men he went to Connecticut again, the state where his good fortune had begun. There

they put his theories about industrial lunches into practice. The first week they took in \$500. In three months, Bill and his partners had raised the weekly figure to \$5,000, and were going strong.

Studying the industrial situation and transportation problems in various sections of the country,

Bill then selected an area near Boston, his home base. In January, 1946, he cashed in some war bonds, borrowed a little, bought a truck and rented a small building in Dorchester. As adviser and silent partner, he took in accountant Harry Winokur. Bill's brother Leon filled out the organization.

Each morning at 3 o'clock they shook themselves out of bed and started making sandwiches, including that famous first one. They also bought an ancient slicing machine, and worked up to 15 hours a day to keep abreast of the dribbles of small orders that came in. Pretty soon, they became discouraged; small sales from transient and sometimes insolvent sources would never develop into anything permanent.

Then one summer day Bill came rushing into the little headquarters on Quincy Street.

"I thought the heat had got him," Leon recalls. "His face was puffed and red. he looked like he had been running up a hill."

Bill had done just that—but the hill was called Success. He had landed his first big account, the Tubular Rivet and Stud Company, with 1,500 employees.

Three months later other accounts came to them. They expand-

ed, then opened a branch in Providence, Rhode Island, which quickly supplied food service for four large textile plants. Now Bill decided to expand again.

He bought a 44,000 square-foot building on Hancock Street in Quincy and started sprucing up. An architect redesigned the building, taking ingenious advantage of every foot and using modern design and equipment. New automatic-wrapping machines with a brain, germ-killing ultraviolet-ray lamps, stainless-steel work areas, conveyor-belt sandwich operations—all these made headquarters of the Industrial Luncheon Service the most efficient of its kind.

Close to 150 trucks with uniformed drivers carry the food to every industrial section of New England and the Albany area. The meals on wheels leave their starting points at 6 A.M. every morning except Sunday, follow a precise route, serve breakfasts, luncheons, mid-morning and afternoon snacks in plants, factories and office buildings, and on construction projects. The trucks are reloaded at strategically located depots where supplies of hot food are kept ready.

IN THE BEGINNING there wasn't much variety to the menu. Then factories like the Government arsenal at Watervliet, N. Y., the Telechron Department of General Electric, Bird and Son, Loraine Manufacturing Company, Tubler, Rivet and Stud Company, Pneumatic Scale Corporation, and others made a larger menu a must. Now Bill's drivers serve more than 40 kinds of sandwiches, beef and lamb stews, chicken and pizza pies, spaghetti,

cold salads, chop suey, and Rosenberg's jumbo sandwich, the "spunky roll"—an entire loaf of bread filled with an imaginative variety of fillings.

"Food is more than slapping meat and potatoes on a plate or putting a piece of meat or cheese between two slices of bread," Bill says. "Everything must be fresh and clean. The service must be good. And you must use seasoning and butter."

Not only are 4,000 doughnuts a day made right on the premises of Industrial Luncheon, but thousands of pastries, cookies, buns and rolls are also turned out daily.

The boss of the kitchen is head chef Daniel Tarullo, who recently returned from Europe where he studied food-preparation techniques. New and intriguing dishes and sauces are always turning up in the building in Quincy, and New England workers often find the big trucks dispensing dishes so unusual that the wives are apt to catch it when the well-fed males return home at night. Several upset spouses have called and had heated talks with Bill Rosenberg about the situation. He hasn't come up with the solution yet, but he's working on it. Perhaps lessons in cookery for customers' wives may be the answer.

If ham is the favored sandwich, then coffee can be considered the top drink. Even during the wilting days of August, Rosenberg's coffee is a brew in which time and thought are ingredients.

About four tons of coffee are poured weekly into the silvery-hued 100-gallon coffee makers which measure ten feet by three feet. Bill, and Harry Winokur, who by that

time had become a full partner, dreamed up the design and the giant tanks came into practical being. Some 25,000 gallons of coffee are brewed each week.

At the Mid-Century Jubilee of Progress baked-bean dinner served on Boston Common, Bill offered his coffee-making services free. Sighs of relief greeted his offer, and the company served 12,000 cups. Some 25,000 cubes of sugar and 136 gallons of cream went along to the dinner in three Industrial Luncheon trucks. Bill and six of his supervisors handled the entire job.

Success hasn't touched Rosenberg in any evident way. His father works as food buyer "because he likes to be around people." He claims his son hasn't changed from the days when he was a truck driver.

"Success hasn't gone to his head," the father says, and the result is good management. Bill likes to taste all the new dishes he sells. "No matter what's in them," he says, "if they don't taste good to me, they don't leave the shop."

To be successful, Bill believes you must develop the personality that makes people want to work for you. Employee relationship is important, he says. Those in Industrial Luncheon Service who are willing

to work soon become key personnel.

In four years, starting with nothing except the knowledge that people had to eat, Bill developed a business with a \$2,000,000 a year income. Now it's close to \$5,000,000. He came up fast, and he takes those who work along with him.

Bill likes to tell the story of a friend who went Communist. "He had the belief," recalls Bill, "that Americans were a put-upon people, and had to strike to save themselves and the rest of humanity."

"I usually didn't do much listening: I was too busy working. Then one day I brought this man to Quincy, sat him down in this office and gave him the facts."

"I asked him where else in the world could a guy like me, with no education and no special training, work himself into the position where he owned a \$2,000,000-a-year business before he was 30 years old. I took him in the plant and showed him what we did, told him what I paid the people working for me. I introduced him to the 600 employees, then went back to the office and showed him my bank account."

Bill Rosenberg grins in recollection. "When I got through with him, I lost Russia a stooge and gained America a capitalist!"



Reunion

A TOUGH SERGEANT stepped before his platoon after a fouled-up drill. "When I was a little boy," he said in a gentle voice, "I had a set of wooden soldiers. But one day somebody stole them and I was heart-broken. My mother sought to comfort me, so she told me, 'Don't cry, son; you'll get them back some day.'"

He paused and looked the rookies over with icy eyes. Then he stormed: "Mother was right! By golly, I've got 'em!"

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