



Enders M. Voorhees
1891-1980

Founder of the
ENDERS M. VOORHEES FUND in
The New York Community Trust

THE NEW YORK
COMMUNITY TRUST



During World War I, Voorhees served as a second lieutenant at Camp Custer Second Officers' Training Camp, and then as a first lieutenant and adjutant of the 73rd Field Artillery at Camp Jackson.



Enders Voorhees,
Class of 1914,
Dartmouth College

Back in civilian life, he became assistant comptroller for the United States Rubber Company, and then general auditor and assistant to the president of the Ajax Rubber Company. He learned industrial engineering with William A. Harriman & Company and Sanderson and Porter, and in 1927, began a ten-year association with the Johns-Manville Corporation, first as general auditor, and then as secretary-treasurer and vice president.

Enders Voorhees was an intriguing, complex man, always sure of himself. He was essentially self-made, with the help of a good start from his Aunt Sarah, who left everything she had to him and charged him with making sure that everyone in the family was taken care of. Throughout his life, he honored her wishes.

On September 15, 1923, Voorhees married Blanche Pauline Andrews. Unfortunately, they could not have children of their own. But soon after their marriage, they met Dr. Ross E. Savage. At the time, Savage was divorced and raising two children alone. Over the next couple of summers, Savage and Voorhees became friends, vacationing at the same Massachusetts

When Enders Voorhees was offered the position of secretary-treasurer of the Johns-Manville Corporation, the president asked him if his salary would be satisfactory.

"No," said Voorhees. "What would be satisfactory would be a salary three times as much."

"Why, that's more than I'm making!" said the president.

Voorhees replied calmly. "I'll tell you what. I'll make a deal with you. I'll work for you for two years for nothing. At the end of that time, if you don't think I'm worth it, I'll quit and you won't owe me anything. But if you think I'm worth it, I want every penny that I've asked for."

Two years later, Johns-Manville paid Voorhees every penny.

Enders McClumpha Voorhees was born on April 28, 1891 in Amsterdam, New York, northwest of Albany in the heart of the beautiful Mohawk Valley. The son of James and Margaret Voorhees, he was the youngest of five children.

After high school, Enders enrolled at Dartmouth College. He graduated in 1914 with a bachelor of science degree in business administration, and then worked his way through Europe. He returned to Dartmouth to take some courses at the Amos Tuck School of Finance, and then went to Boston to begin his career.

His first job was as a junior accountant in the certified public accounting firm of Hollis H. Sawyer & Company. At the same time, he attended Boston's Bentley School of Accounting, and a year later, he went to the Philippines as an auditor with the Pacific Commercial Company, an exporting and importing firm.

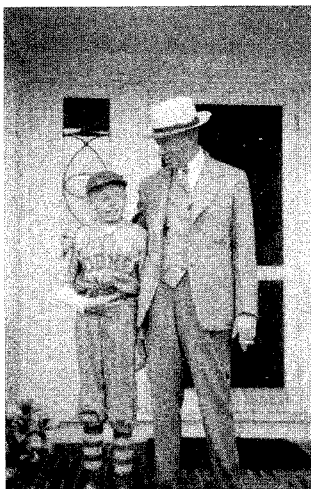
resort. Eventually, Enders and Polly took Savage's two children, Priscilla and John, into their home.

Priscilla's memories of "Aunt Polly" are glowing: she wore beautiful clothes, had beautiful taste, ran a wonderful home, had a sweet disposition, and was surrounded by many friends who understood and loved her. "They did an awful lot for us," Priscilla remembers. "It really was a wonderful life."

After the children were grown, Voorhees and Polly moved to an apartment at Fifth Avenue and 77th Street. Around 1940, he bought a summer home at Cape Vincent, on the New York side of the St. Lawrence River. The area reminded him of the Mohawk Valley. "I felt," he said, "that I was coming home."

He named his Cape Vincent home Pennywise, and it was there that he kept his boat and indulged his love for fishing on the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. Most of the local fishing was for small-mouthed bass, but each summer he packed up his gear and headed into northern Ontario for a couple of weeks to the Ristigouche Salmon Club. He brought his catch home with him, and there were frequent dinners of poached or steamed salmon, which he helped cook, for friends.

*Enders with his ward,
John Savage, at the
Voorhees home in
Long Island.*



In 1937, Enders began a 19-year association with the United States Steel Corporation that would bring him to the pinnacle of corporate success. In January of that year, he was elected to the board of directors, and in April became vice chairman of the finance committee. He was elected chairman of the finance committee the following year—the corporation's chief financial officer—a post he held until his retirement in 1956.

Although he disliked publicity and never was comfortable seeing his name in print, *Fortune* magazine, for one, took note of his career frequently, from as early as 1934 when he was with Johns-Manville, through repeated mentions in the 1940s and 50s. Shortly after World War II, *Fortune* characterized U.S. Steel and the men who ran it with the following statement:

Today the head of the U.S. Steel Corp. is Ben Fairless, a man of strong principles, straightforward ideas, and a powerful grasp of the business of making and selling steel. But the leadership of the Corporation is a triumvirate. When Myron Taylor retired, power passed to Fairless, Stettinius (who succeeded Taylor as Chairman of the Board), and a comparative stranger, Enders M. Voorhees, who became chairman of the finance committee. When Stettinius left the Corporation his place was taken by Irving S. Olds. And though Fairless has emerged as the leading figure of the three, the Corporation is not a one-man show.

James Voorhees, Jr., Enders's nephew, saw a different side of the picture. Seven months a year he lived in a condominium complex in Clearwater, Florida, that was developed by the U.S. Realty Corporation, a subsidiary of U.S. Steel. Many of his neighbors were retired U.S. Steel executives, men younger than Enders, who had worked under him. To a man, they expressed the opinion that Enders *was* the corporation.

While Voorhees's job was the number three position behind the president and the chairman, he had arranged it so that he reported directly to the board of directors. A chain of command like that is highly unusual in a large corporation, but as James noted, "that's the way he was—and that's the way he got it. It was going to be that way, or he wouldn't work for the corporation."

Harvey Molé met Enders in the summer of 1950, when Enders arranged for Molé to head up the U.S. Steel Pension Fund. They became close friends and business associates. "I've often thought that he's probably forgotten more than I'll ever know," said Molé. "He was a very able financial planner, and one of those people you couldn't work with without learning a great deal."

Molé put it very succinctly: "There was no problem paying the bills in any company he was handling."

After his retirement as chairman of U.S. Steel's finance committee, Voorhees continued as a director, member of the finance committee, and consultant until 1965. He also served on the boards of the Electric Bond and Share Company, Istel Fund, Johns-Manville Corporation, Lazard Fund, and Schlumberger Limited.

Outside of his family, his greatest personal financial commitment was to the Voorhees Technical Institute, a trade school, which has since been absorbed by the New York City Technical College of the City University of New York. He felt strongly that people who could not attend college should still have the opportunity to develop their talents. Too often, he believed, people's lives turned sour because they were never given any skills with which to get ahead. Enders was chairman of the Institute's board of trustees until the late 1960s, and remained a trustee thereafter.

In 1950, in tribute to his mother, Enders donated a substantial sum to Dartmouth College for the Margaret McClumpha Voorhees Memorial Scholarship Fund, which annually awards a full four-year scholarship to an incoming freshman.

"His generosity was unbelievable," recalled Ann. "My father lost everything in the crash of '29, and I never would have gone to college if it hadn't been for my Uncle Enders. He was the most supportive person I ever knew in my whole life. If you were a Voorhees, there was nothing he wouldn't do for you."



Enders and Polly at their Long Island home in 1937.

Enders Voorhees died at his home in New York City on April 13, 1980, just two weeks shy of his 89th birthday. His wife Polly died August 2 of the same year at age 93.

Voorhees's generosity lives on because of the fund he created in The New York Community Trust in 1973. Set up to respond to future needs of the City, today the Ender M. Voorhees Fund makes grants that deal with a range of issues, including supporting substance abuse programs for youth, exposing children to the arts, registering people to vote, and helping the homeless find food, jobs, and housing.

The New York Community Trust
is a community foundation, helping
New Yorkers achieve their charitable
goals and making grants that
respond to the needs of our City.

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