



Jean C. Caldwell
1878-1933

Founder of the
Jean C. Caldwell Fund in

The New York Community Trust
909 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022

In 1950, the Will of Jean C. Caldwell established the Jean C. Caldwell Fund, to be administered by The New York Community Trust for charitable purposes.

For some men, the desire to succeed continues to drive them, even after success has been attained; for others, one success is enough to be enjoyed.

Jean C. Caldwell and Robert J. Caldwell were brothers and business partners, with quite different goals and lifestyles. Both men were financially successful in their early years. Robert went on to achieve international distinctions that included membership in the French Legion of Honor. Jean Caldwell chose a life of quiet, comfortable retirement.

Both were the sons of John Armour Caldwell and his wife, Margaret, who came to the United States from Scotland in the middle of the Nineteenth Century. John Caldwell was a civil engineer who specialized in building water supply systems, a profession that involved frequent moving — from Mexico City, where he installed the water system, to Los Angeles, where he brought the water by pipeline from the Owens River Valley. Then the family moved to Louisville, Kentucky, where Robert was born. In 1878, Jean was born in Salt Lake City, Utah. And eventually the family moved to Brooklyn, New York. A third son, Armour, had been born in the meantime.

The family settled in the Bay Ridge section, a rural hamlet separated from the rest of Brooklyn by open

fields and farmlands. Here the Caldwell boys were educated. Robert received a degree from the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn. Although Jean did not graduate there, he, too, attended Brooklyn Polytechnic.

For some years the brothers went their separate ways. Then, in 1910, with sixteen years of business experience behind him, Robert established a cotton manufacturing mill in Connecticut and persuaded his brother Jean to join him. Three years later, in 1913, the two men built a second mill, located at Danielson in the eastern part of Connecticut, taking advantage of the water power provided by the Quinebaug River. The mills proved to be highly profitable ventures. Several others, in Connecticut and Canada, were built in quick succession. By the end of World War I, Robert and Jean were prosperous business men in their middle forties. They each now had time and money enough to follow their individual inclinations. Soon they separated again to live completely different lives.

For round-cheeked, dynamic Robert Caldwell, work was his avocation. He had always loved to travel, and beginning in 1919 he spent more and more time in Europe, representing the United States as a special consultant in industrial and economic affairs, and as a guest of the French government in assisting in post-war rehabilitation. International relations involved him throughout the Twenties, and he was decorated with honorary orders awarded by grateful countries for his interest and contributions.

Easy-going Jean, usually seen with a pipe between his teeth, entertained no such interests. His ambition, according to family legend, had always been to retire as soon as practical from the hectic pressures of industry and commerce and to live a life of simplicity and ease. During the Twenties, Jean withdrew from active participation in his brother's companies and became an expatriate, living in France. While his brother became well-known in the capitals of Europe, Jean lived quietly in a home on the Riviera.

The slow tempo of life on the beautiful Riviera, with the blue Mediterranean washing its shores, suited Jean perfectly. He was entirely contented — or thought he was. Then, somewhat to his own surprise, the middle-aged bachelor found his thoughts turning to romance. He had met the young and attractive Alice Jennings, and his determination for singleness weakened rapidly. The couple were married and were quite happy for a while. Old habits of life, however, proved too difficult to break, and after a few years they made an amicable decision to part. Mrs. Caldwell moved to Paris and remarried. Jean had no regrets. In his typically affable live-and-let-live manner, Jean made provisions in his Will for his former wife "in memory of the happy years we spent together."

Alone again, Jean settled into his former routine and continued to enjoy the natural beauties of the area he had chosen to make his home. He was fifty-five years old when he died there on February 8, 1933. His Will provided a life income to his mother's sister, Lillian Cook, until her death in 1947. So that others might benefit for countless years to come, he requested that his estate then go to the New York Community Trust, to be administered for charitable purposes.



The New York Community Trust is a publicly-supported community foundation which provides centralized management for many charitable funds. New York's major banks serve as trustees. Trustee for the Jean C. Caldwell Fund is The Chase Manhattan Bank.