



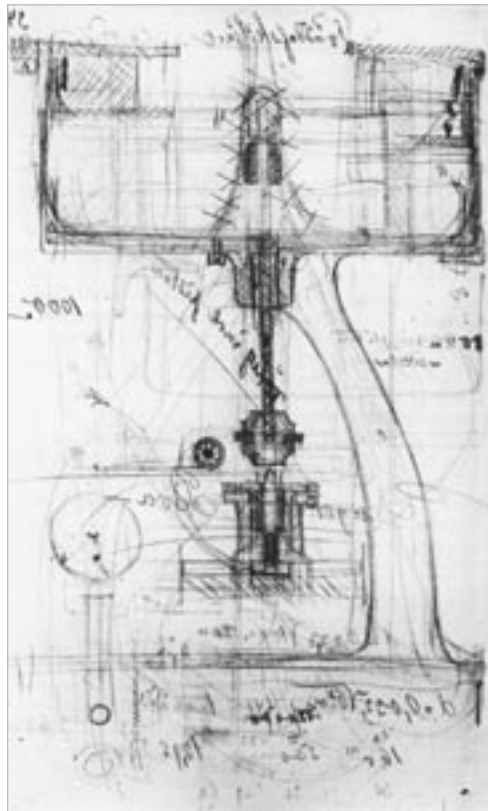
# Reflections

A history of DeLaval



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**Preface**

Let it be stated right from the start: Gustaf de Laval did not invent the centrifugal separator. He perfected the idea, and together with his business partner Oscar Lamm, he created the embryo of an international organisation.

But, like all good ideas, it didn't come out of thin air. Isaac Newton wrote: "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." The separator and, to an even greater extent, the milking machine, were not created out of nothing. There were many others working on similar ideas at the same time.

This is not to knock de Laval off his pedestal. But this is a history of a company, and a company is the result of the efforts of thousands of individuals. The great idea was the beginning, but without the inspiration and planning and sheer hard work of innumerable others, the company would never have grown and prospered.

Writing about the great medieval cathedrals of Europe, Ingmar Bergman, the film director, described how they were built by large numbers of creative, but anonymous artisans. This book is dedicated to the large numbers of creative and often anonymous individuals who have made DeLaval what it is today.

Two former employees who should not remain anonymous are Gottfrid Eriksson and Göran Sandström. Having worked for the company for more years than they would care to remember, they felt a strong desire to pass on to others what the organisation has meant and still means to them. This book is a result of what can only be described as their abiding and contagious affection for the company.

| 1983

| 1993

**Introduction**

A book about DeLaval's historical background and development has never been written before. There is a distinguished two-volume history of Alfa-Laval from 1983. But that was written before our part of the company that was working with milk producers separated from the part of the company supplying industry.

Does this justify another book?

There are many people around the world who have spent a large part of their lives working within or in close co-operation with the company. Talk to them, and before long they will tell you that DeLaval is not just "another company". In fact, before the organisation split in 1993, people often used to comment on the special atmosphere in the Agri part of the business.

This book is an attempt to explain that special something.

One explanation is that we have only one customer group. While separators were, with time, sold to hundreds of different groups of customers, we have always sold milking machines to just one category of user: the milk producer.

And indeed it was to farmers that Gustaf de Laval first sold his separators back in 1879. By following the changing needs of the milk producer – and how we have listened to and reacted to those needs – this book will give you some idea of what makes DeLaval special.

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How the separator brought it all together ►

