

Cleveland

Dec. 24, 1924.

W. J. Bland

San Francisco

## History of Jap-A-Lac

Dear Mr. Bland:-

I am giving you here a bit of Jap-A-Lac history as requested in your wire. Some of the facts are a little faded by now and it is very difficult to get dates that we can be absolutely sure of.

### JAP-A-LAC HISTORY

Jap-A-Lac was originated by the Glidden Varnish Company between 1895 and 1897. At that time the company saw the advantages of combining a stain and a varnish together and selling it to housewives as a household product for patching up old and discolored woodwork.

The work of educating the public to the use of a product of this kind was started about the year 1898 and by 1900 distribution had become pretty general with dealers all over the United States. Very little advertising in national magazines was used up until 1900, in fact, there was practically none, yet the fame of Jap-A-Lac began to spread at that time through one housewife passing on word to the next. Sales grew, and grew beyond the expectations of the company, and it was about at this time that the management began to appreciate what a wonderful product they had developed and what a marvelous opportunity they had to give the public a new product that was really wanted.

In 1901 and 1902 small quarter page and eighth page ads appeared in the Delineator, Designer and Womens' Magazine. These were the three leading womens' publications in the field at that time. Immediately Jap-A-Lac sales began to jump by leaps and bounds, and in 1905 the Glidden Company decided to put on the biggest national advertising campaign that had ever been started for any product in the world, and consequently, in the May issues of the Delineator, Designer and Womens' Magazine four color four page ads appeared on Jap-A-Lac. This ad was the most expensive single advertisement ever printed. It cost for one insertion in these magazines Fifteen thousand dollars.

During the year of 1905 the Glidden Company spent sixty thousand dollars in national advertising. There are still many men in the organization that can remember the tremendous impression that this big advertising made, not only upon the consuming public but on the whole publishing and advertising fraternity. The Glidden Company were dammed up one side and down the other for spending fifteen thousand dollars in one advertisement and the publishers who accepted the ads were all but boycotted by competitors and many other advertising men who recognized the tremendous benefit that the Glidden Varnish Company had obtained with this advertising.

Even preachers took this advertisement as their sermon the Sunday after the ad appeared and preached against such terrible waste. Those who were interested in this tremendous campaign can well remember the Glidden Varnish Company's answer to this, which took the form of their using a similar four page advertisement in the following year, May 1906, in the same magazines, and for which they paid eighteen thousand dollars. That same year the Glidden Varnish Company spent two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to advertise Jap-A-Lac.

This answer had a quieting effect upon critics, especially upon the advertising managers of other publications and competitors of Jap-A-Lac. It was during these years that Jap-A-Lac reached the height of its popularity, and it was not until then that competitors began to enter the field, consequently, Jap-A-Lac had the lead and dominated the field as a household specialty. It was also at this time that additional lines were added to Jap-A-Lac, such as Porch and Floor Paint, and many other useful products around the home.

Since that time there has been a continuous advertising program on Jap-A-Lac. Through the last two decades Jap-A-Lac has held its own as the best known household product. Today Jap-A-Lac means as much to the housewife as it did twenty years ago and even with the tremendous amount of competition that there is in the field, it is surprising to know that Jap-A-Lac sales have not been materially affected.

The entire advertising fraternity as well as all publishers, owe a debt to Jap-A-Lac and the Glidden Varnish Company for the work that they did and the money that they spent to teach consumers, dealers and other manufacturers the advantages of national advertising.

Yours very truly,

of  
THE GLIDDEN COMPANY

GSS:J