
IN MEMORIAM
GEORGE A. MARTIN

IT IS with deepest regret that we advise you of the death of our beloved friend and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Mr. George A. Martin, who passed away on November 1st in Cleveland at the age of 79. He had been active until a few weeks before his death.

Mr. Martin was born in Montello, Wisconsin, on November 7, 1865, and was a small child when his parents moved to Chicago. After seven years in grade school he decided he wanted a job, and at the age of 12 was hired as a messenger by a Chicago packing company.

From the age of 12, his was a story-book career that outrivalled Horatio Alger. He said years later "I came up the hard way. I had nothing but determination and the willingness to work hard. I sought nothing and asked nothing but the same chance any other boy in America had, the chance to make good."

He ran errands in the stockyards, attended night school and often told of his next step up the ladder which was working for a pork, lard and grain speculator who took pleasure in firing him at least six times. He survived these firing waves of his boss and there is little doubt that this experience caused him, in later years, as chief executive of The Sherwin-Williams Company to take a special interest in young men and their business future.

Leaving his stockyards job of his own volition, young Mr. Martin spent several years in the brass manufacturing business in Chicago and then went to work for a small company engaged in making paint

specialties which he sold to railroads and industrial accounts. He attended night school for his education.

The young salesman failed to sell his product to one of the larger railroads which was using a Sherwin-Williams product at the time.

Undaunted, the young "paint peddler" as he often called himself in later years, sold his product to his competitor, Sherwin-Williams, and in that way became acquainted with the growing Cleveland concern which was destined to "Cover the Earth" and to become the largest paint and varnish business in the world.

The late Henry A. Sherwin, founder of the company, offered him a job and he went to work in charge of the Calumet Division of the young company in Chicago. That was in 1891.

He acted as salesman, bookkeeper and paint maker, but by 1898 Sherwin-Williams had developed rapidly and he was placed in charge of the entire western division of the concern.

In 1905 Mr. Martin was transferred to headquarters in Cleveland as manager of the Auxiliaries Department and in 1916 was named vice-president of Sherwin-Williams.

In 1922 he was elected president of the company and held that post until December of 1940, when he became chairman of the board, the position he held at his death.

He completed over 53 years of active service with the company.

Mr. Martin worked tirelessly at whatever job he had. He inspired others with the same zest for work. He was a natural leader and under his guidance the business grew to a fulfillment of his lifelong dream which he saw realized — a volume of well over one hundred million dollars which he remarked was "an awful lot of paint." He always gave the credit for this accomplishment to the founders, his predecessors, and to those associated with him. He shunned personal publicity and said that publicity and advertising were forces that should be applied to the product, not to individuals. He was a team worker. His associates had confidence in him because of his integrity, honesty and honor. He was fearless and fair.

The paint industry sought his advice and counsel and held him in high esteem. He contributed much to the industry by way of improvements and the development of prepared paints. He lived to see realized his earlier dreams of household paints and specialties popularized. He was a pioneer of quality and it remained his by-word. He lived to prove his youthful belief that it was possible to become the *largest* by making only the finest products you know how to make.

Mr. Martin's interests were world-wide and varied. He was an international figure. He served on many Boards of Directors. He loved sports, travel and the great outdoors. On his infrequent time off periods, he was a real "rancher" in New Mexico. In recent years he took great pride and satisfaction in the careers of many young American singers who had their first real chance on the Metropolitan Opera Auditions of the Air sponsored for the past

nine years by this company. He was a valued Director of the Metropolitan Opera Association.

Mr. Martin was probably one of the most active and widely traveled business executives in the nation. Only last spring he flew to the Sherwin-Williams plant in Argentina, and while in South America completed arrangements for the company's new paint manufacturing plant in Brazil.

Mr. Martin constantly inspected the company's factories, offices, warehouses and stores all over the world. He liked to "drop in" unannounced but seldom succeeded in keeping his identity a secret. Everybody knew him and he knew them. They came to love him. His memory for names of employees and their families was prodigious. He loved people — busy people. He led a busy, useful life and left the world vastly better for what he brought to it. His sense of humor never failed to brighten even the darkest day.

We have lost a wonderful friend. Our Board of Directors, our officers and fellow workers everywhere have suffered a deep personal loss.

Yet withal, we have the lasting inspiration he left with us, as a spur and guide to carry forward and to build on the principles and precepts he bequeathed to us.

And so we say, with the poet Catullus, "Ave atque Vale"—hail and farewell, to a great man and a true friend whose name and deeds will long be remembered.

THE SHERWIN-WILLIAMS CO.

Cleveland, Ohio
November 20th, 1944

Mr. Martin managed the Western District of The Sherwin-Williams Company until 1905 when he was transferred to Cleveland to head up the Auxiliaries Department, which expanded to include lead, zinc and copper mines, smelters, linseed oil plants, power plants and tin can plants. In 1916 he was appointed to the position of Vice-President and General Manager of Manufacturing and five years later he was made Vice-President and General Manager of the entire business. In November, 1922, he was elected President of The Sherwin-Williams Company and in 1940, Chairman of the Board.

In addition to active Chairmanship of the Board of The Sherwin-Williams Company, Mr. Martin was Chairman of the Board of The Sherwin-Williams Company of Canada, Ltd.

He was also a director of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, Erie Railroad, Wilson & Company, The Cleveland Baseball Company, The Metropolitan Opera Association of New York.

Famed for Youth Guidance

George Martin's associates unanimously stress the helping hand which he offered the young men of Sherwin-Williams as one of his most notable characteristics, and one of the greatest contributions of his life. And well they might, for they are living examples of men who were helped up the ladder by his youth-building activities. Perhaps no large corporation in America has so many top management men who rose through the ranks of their own organization.

He had a prodigious memory, and he used it well to keep tabs on his young hopefuls, to check on their progress, and to put in a good word for them with their superiors. Scores of Executives of the Company can remember dropping in to George Martin's office as youths . . . puzzled by the complexities of business

life . . . only to come out reassured and restimulated and with problems solved.

SUBHEAD-???

~~It was characteristic of George Martin that he was an enthusiastic booster of the Cleveland Junior Club, composed of young men at the Cleveland plants and offices. He almost never missed a meeting, even during the busiest and most traveled years of his life. The philosophy that George Martin instilled in his young proteges was Work, Play Fair, Make Every Minute Count, Think and Think Big. Not revolutionary concepts, but they built thousands of youths into successful citizens. Few Americans have done more.~~

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