

BAKELITE CORPORATION OF CANADA LIMITED

By W. A. CAMPBELL

When Dr. Baekeland was granted his patents in 1909 there was in Toronto a partnership between Dr. Vandelinde, eminent rubber chemist, and Dr. Cohoe, Professor of Chemistry at McMaster University. They operated a company called "Chemical Laboratories Limited" to produce fine chemicals. They secured a license to produce resins from Dr. Baekeland and built a plant on Van Horne Street.

This new plant under the name "Plastics Limited" produced at first the old "Solid A" soda catalyzed resins from which they made only asbestos-filled molding compounds. Later, they produced the No. 1 varnishes and undertook coil impregnating in addition to the molding operations which had been practised from the beginning.

ON THE MOVE

Bakelite production continued on the Van Horne street property from 1910 to 1916 when the plant was moved to Junction Road and Weston Road. During this period (1911-1915) Mr. Harry P. Mills came with the company. He was later associated with the Bakelite Corporation in Europe.

After about one year's operation in the last named location, Plastics Limited was moved to Weston, Ontario, where it was housed with the Vandelinde Rubber Company.

About this time, probably in an effort to increase business or to forget past errors, the name of the business was changed to "Electrical Hard Moulding Company Limited." This title persisted from 1918 until the beginning of 1920.

In June, 1919, W. M. Davidson—the present Manager—and his associate, J. B. Rathbun, had taken over the company and on November 1 of the same year T. B. Jones, the Mechanical Superintendent, joined the organization.

Under the new management the plant was moved to Mount Dennis and production of varnishes and resins continued as formerly. The still room foreman and chief (and only) operator, George Wort (Old George) trusted firmly in the dairy which watches over the destiny of all resin makers and turned out of his ten gallon still any required amount of whatever was needful. By following a fixed routine and holding his mouth in a certain way, somewhat more than half of the varnish was good.

Early in 1920 Mr. Davidson arranged with the Cutler-Hammer Company of Milwaukee that the company should produce C-H cold mold compounds. The relatively large production of cold mold products, together with the few hot mold parts permitted the plant to operate for about 18 months. In the late winter of 1922 the company went into liquidation and ceased operation till May, 1922.

CHANGE AND DISASTER

At that time the late Harry Corey interested Dr. L. V. Redman in the affair of the company which was reorganized under the title "The Electroplox Company of Canada Limited."

In this set-up Mr. Corey was President and General Manager, Mr. Davidson—Manager of Sales, Mr. Rathbun—Factory Manager. At this time, too, Miss Jeffrey, who is still in the office, joined the force. In July, 1922, Mr. Davidson joined the organization as chemist.

In addition to the production of cold and a very small amount of hot molding compound, August, 1922 witnessed the first real attempt to produce laminated products on a commercial scale. The impregnated paper was imported from Formica and pressed in Toronto. The finished product left much to be desired.

On November 13, 1922 the plant was completely wiped out by fire and in the