

### Death of Mr. J. H. Gordon

It is with deepest sorrow we have to announce the passing away at Montreal, May 15th, 1924, of our esteemed fellow-worker, the Secretary-Treasurer and Director of this Company, Mr. J. H. Gordon, after an illness of two months.

The faithful services of Mr. Gordon, covering a period of twenty-seven years, leaves a gap that is deeply felt by all, and during his long term of service, his fairness and kindness to all has endeared him as a friend, the loss of which causes us the most heartfelt sorrow.

W. S. FALLIS.

### Passing of Mr. G. L. Wade

The following bulletin appeared during the first part of April, but has not been reproduced in the Chameleon until now:

There are times when one cannot express himself with words.

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of our good friend, Mr. G. L. Wade, which occurred at El Paso on Sunday, April 6th. Mr. Wade had been in poor health for quite some time.

As you will, no doubt, recall, he became associated with the Central Pacific District about three years ago and altogether his services with the organization covered a period of about sixteen years.

To those who knew him his loss cannot be replaced, as he was a loyal, untiring worker with a most impressive personality and faculty for making friends.

His associates extend to Mrs. Wade and her son, Gus, Jr., and other members of the family, their sympathy and join with them in mourning not only the loss of a father but also an untiring worker in the organization.

F. W. WANSNER.

The Chameleon extends to the family of Mr. Wade its sincere sympathy.

### Death of Mrs. C. S. Ragland

We are sorry to have to report the death of Mrs. C. S. Ragland, in San Antonio, Texas, on the morning of May 31st. The bereaved husband is an old representative of our Company, and we extend to him our sympathy at this time.

### Death of Joe Doyle

We are sorry to report the death of Joe Doyle, a Sherwin-Williams man of twenty-six years. Born in 1878, he came to the company in August, 1898, and died on June 27th, in a hospital in Cleveland, after a six months' illness.

## The Handling of Complaints

By J. R. STOUT

There is no phase of our work which is more important to the reputation of this organization than the proper handling and investigating of complaints.

Supposing someone were to make a lot of statements to you about a friend, which you questioned or doubted, would you say, "Well, I guess you're right," or would you take issue with that person. Well, if you valued that friendship you'd put the gloves on or go to the mat about it.

It requires no stretch of the imagination to consider Sherwin-Williams Products in the light of a friend. For it is by their sale, upheld by their reputation and favorable standing that we and our families are supported. This being a fact, what loyal employee will permit a customer to "sling mud" at any product bearing the Sherwin-Williams Label and the good, old Cover-the-Earth trade mark without checking him up and learning the correctness of his claims?

What I am driving at, boys, is this: A few days ago there came to my desk, a credit memorandum covering the return of a can of SWP, and for which the customer received credit, but the explanation simply said that the SWP was "off shade." Immediately something said within me, "That isn't a fact." And I was sorely disappointed to find that the representative had not interested himself to the extent of ascertaining whether or not it actually was "off shade"; he had simply taken the customer's word for it and, following the course of least resistance, said, "Send it back and give your customer another quart."

I'd be willing to wager right now, were there any way of checking up, that the last quart given the customer and which was apparently used with entire satisfaction, was of the same date of manufacture as the same identical 300 gallon batch as the quart of which the customer complained!

Boys, when our products are wrong, we want to know it, and we want the information just as quickly as you can get it to us. However, we don't and won't accept any reports that SWP is "off shade," or is "too thin," "has no body," or "doesn't cover," etc., unless you absolutely know it to be a fact, and I'll tell you very frankly—you or your customer will have to prove it to me before I'll believe it!

I have often enumerated the reasons why we wish to know when any of our products do not meet the standard of that product in every particular, but will restate them:

#### Action

The very day we receive a complaint which is justified and which is backed up

by facts, we issue what is known as a "Complaint and Criticism" with copies to the General Superintendent of the Manufacturing Department at Cleveland, who in turn, takes up the matter with the Superintendent of the plant in which the goods were made, also a copy to the Vice President and Managing Director of Sales, the executive head of the department at headquarters under whose jurisdiction the sale of that particular product comes, and the District Manager in whose district the complaint originated.

#### Investigation

The superintendent of the factory where the goods were made makes a thorough investigation and reports to the General Superintendent of the Manufacturing Department at headquarters, with a copy to each of the above named executives who received copies of the original complaint.

#### Control

If the complaint is justified, he immediately issues a bulletin to every Sales Division, Retail Store or warehouse obtaining their supply from that factory, giving them the dates of manufacture, together with the Rex number, so that the stock-keeper at these points may examine his stock carefully and determine whether or not he has any of the material on hand, in which case it is set aside awaiting instructions from the superintendent.

There are so many angles to this subject that space does not permit my covering them all. Here are the high points:

What does your agent think, and also the customer, when you carelessly replace a can of goods without investigation? Whether you intend it or not, it is an admission on your part that the goods are at fault and this is the way they understand it. While only a half pint may be involved in the first instance a complaint of greater magnitude may arise at some later date and you will find yourself in a greatly weakened position, with a situation doubly hard to handle because of this former laxity.

#### Matters of Policy

I appreciate that there may be rare cases where a so-called Policy Allowance may be for the best interests of all concerned. In such cases, however, you must convince your agent and the customer that the goods were not at fault, even though you may later decide to replace it. But, right here, I am going to say that no Representative has the authority to make replacements of this kind without the approval of the office.

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