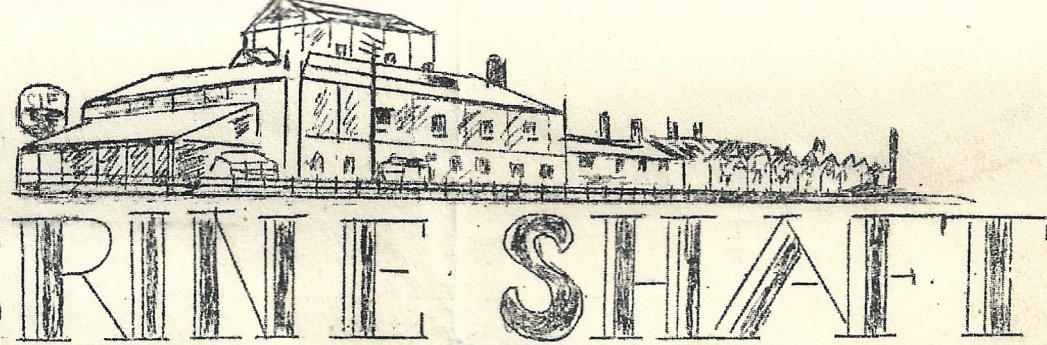

THE
BRINE SHAFT

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

The



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17th. Sept. '38.

FOREWORD.

Whilst politics is no part of this journal's concern, we cannot shut our eyes to the effect the Czecho and Sudeten German trouble must have upon business. At the time of going to press the situation is easier and it is hoped that reason will prevail and a recourse to armed hostilities obviated.

Several have written congratulating us on last week's issue and we are glad to have received so many fine contributions this week. We shall have room in No. 38 for other holiday reports and these should be received not later than Wednesday next the 21st.

A SEASONAL REMINDER.

Our lorries can only carry a certain load. It were better that these loads be made up for a minimum number of deliveries and in this connection Mr. O.D. Palmer contributes the following note;-

WE have this week come up against the fact that Autumn weather is at hand. The outcome is that our not inconsiderable motor fleet is called upon to meet the hazard of fog. Our drivers can be greatly assisted by our Reps. if the latter will use their best endeavours towards increasing the size of each individual order.

In achieving this happy condition the number of deliveries will be materially reduced. Our drivers will then have ample time to make their return journey within the prescribed legal time limit.

The districts chiefly concerned are the Midlands, Yorks. and Nth. Lancs.



9.9.38

Tooting Bee
London.

Sir or Sirs

Please send sample

of Zifta salt (carbon)
and large

This is a reproduction of a postcard card received at the Office. It was sent to London.

Here's their reply;-

Mr. Wilcock NOT in business. He only wanted samples. I gave him a list of retail stockists. He said "I usually buy ny HOUSEHOLD requirements in BULK from the WHOLESALER !

AND we had been told that only in the provinces did such people live.

A TRADE LUNCHEON.

by

A. E. Godsmark.

THERE are many ways in which our business may be 'boosted', not the least among them is that of being actively connected with a Trade function.

To start off the London Grocers Exhibition, there is held an Inaugural Luncheon. Each exhibitor is invited by the promoters of the Exhibition, provided he, in turn invites at least two guests. on payment of a nominal fee.

The writer is the Hon. Secretary of the Exhibitors Committee and is responsible for all the arrangements in connection with this luncheon.

The first job is to get hold of a suitable "Principal Guest". This year it is no less a personage than Sir Henry L French, K.B.E., C.B., who is a Director of the Food Defence Plans Dept. of the Board of Trade, the man who will control all food supplies for the Country in the event of a National emergency. Incidentally this will be the first time he has been able to address at one gathering the Manufacturer, Wholesaler and Retailer.

Having got so far, the next point is to advise all Exhibitors of the function and request applications for tickets. Here comes the first bit of Publicity. Special Note-Heading is provided, requesting all replies to be addressed to the,

Hon. Sec,

c/o Messrs Palmer, Mann & Co. Ltd.

This has been the means of getting more than one new account for the Firm.

The trials of the Hon. Sec. are now starting; it is amazing the number of National Firms who fail to read a letter properly and if they do fail to reply promptly. Having received a number of replies, the basis of a rough Table-Plan can be started. This must be in outline only, because alterations and applications will be received up to and including the Saturday morning before the lunch takes place on the following Monday. On the day, the Table-Plan must be complete, in duplicate and hand finished to accommodate between 250 and 300 people. Each table must have its individual cards shewing the name of the guest or host. An hour before the luncheon starts the Principal Guest must be met and conducted round the Exhibition. Immediately before the start Hon. Sec. must be on hand to see all people are able to find their places; that the microphone is working and all is ready for a prompt start. The guests of the Firm have to be welcomed and their comforts attended to and when the lunch is under way copies of the Speeches to be made are found and handed to the Press. By this time the Hon. Sec will realise that there HAS been a lunch, even though he has had none, and that at least 250 people (whom he hopes are BUYER) have heard the name of Palmer Mann..... AND THIS year will have USED a little of their products.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR...

May I call your attention to an item in your journal under the heading "On The Wireless". Surely the Coronation Scot" does not pass our Works etc.,

No Mr. Godsmark it doesn't, but we made it. Editors licence you know... Some noticed it and said nowt, others noticed it and said many things!

Reply to your further letter;- The suggestion to the Diectors has been made several times, but the fish don't bite. We have however secured at no trouble whatever a 'paper' from one of our Workmen and extracts are given elsewhere in this issue.

"Please Sir, May I have the day off?" "Who's funeral is it this time?"
"The fact is I want to go to see Everton play the Arsenal, I'm not such a fool as to palm off such a rotten excuse on a shrewd business man like.... Oh, Thank you, sir."

Le qu'on pense en France

J. Johnson

THERE is nothing original in spending a fortnight's holiday in France, nor was there anything original in the question which my wife and I put to every French man or woman with whom we conversed. No doubt you would have asked that same question, - Monsieur (or Madame) What do you think of the situation?. Do you think we shall have war?. But the reply was startling because it never varied; always, "Monsieur, it is inevitable", and said in a tone of absolute conviction. Yet the Frenchman is certainly not a pessimist.

Another question which we put on many occasions was; What do you think of Hitler?. Again the reply was startling, for although they condemned him as a menace to peace, everyone paid high tribute to his genius for organising the youth of Germany in particular and the German nation in general, always adding, Isn't it a pity he isn't organising "Peace" instead of "War".

A very remarkable feature, having in mind the excitability of the French was the calmness of their attitude to the belief that war was inevitable. Yet those under 46 to whom we spoke had already received Orders as to where and when to report, without further notification, if war should break out.

It was very pleasing to hear the Entente with England spoken of in such glowing terms, but somewhat disconcerting when with equal frankness, the question would be fired at you, -Why are the English always so long in making up their minds?. Then in that disarming way, so typically French, when he has put an awkward question, "You, Monsieur, I am certain you knew that England should have started arming long before they did."

As all this sounds rather doleful, let me give you one instance where we were very much amused. It was in a small shop in Dieppe. The proprietor was FRENCH and his wife ENGLISH. He had worked in England for about ten years and said he much preferred the English life, while his English wife preferred the French life, so they are living in FRANCE. He said, "If there was one thing he liked above all else in the English food, it was Boiled Puddings and Suet Dumplings etc., but he couldn't get his wife to cook them for him, so when he went to England about two years ago he went to a Lyons Cafe for dinner, but instead of ordering the "usual" he started off with Apple Dumpling, following with Jam Roly Poly, Lemon Pudding, Christmas Pudding and finished his five course meal with Trifle. He said he "was as happy as a King when he'd finished, although he was quite certain the waitress thought he was mad."

MANUFACTURERS BULLIED BY CHAIN STORES.

Mr. Stanley Jones sends us a clipping from which we give the following. Manchester branch of the National Union of Manufacturers has drawn attention of the Union to certain aspects of orders received by manufacturers from chain stores and mail order organisations. The risks associated with this type of business are not likely to be as serious for the larger firm with a varied output as for the smaller manufacturer. The latter may find a large proportion of his technical and mechanical resources occupied with a substantial contract, which when completed can be renewed only on terms dictated by the buyer. "The manufacturer is then possibly faced with the problem of accepting the new contract without profit, or at a loss, or of having a considerable portion of his factory idle while he seeks new and more remunerative business. Some trade associations are strong enough to protect their members from being forced to accept unremunerative contracts of this kind, and if manufacturers as a body were sufficiently well organised, it would be much easier for them to bargain for more equitable contracts than they are now able to obtain in many cases.

The following are the chief paragraphs taken from a 'paper' submitted by one of our workmen, Mr. Walter Booth. In order to preserve the 'colour' no alterations have been made by the Editor.

PROGRESS.

NO doubt you are interested in that little magazine, *The Brine Shaft*, which I believe is edited and contributed to mostly by the Directors and staff; well perhaps you would like a workman's pen picture of the progress of our Works since its inception at Rookery Bridge.

Fifteen years ago, in the little village of Etterley, there was a little because it was just a country village, the only sign of industrialism was 'The Bone Yard'. Most of the inhabitants earned their living as barges on the North Stafford Canal which runs very close to the village.

The first start of this now great Works was of course the boring of Brine; the first hole was bored down by the canal and brine was pumped up. There are several different methods of transforming this sparkling liquid into salt, the old method of making Bar salt which has been in use for generations, is still the same even in these modern times. Let us get back to our story and not put the cart before the horse. Before making salt before we have any works. Anyone walking towards Rookery Bridge fifteen years ago would have wondered what was going to happen on one of the fields on the right, seeing so many bricks and such large quantities of lime and just a few men digging foundations out. That was for the first Pan and chimney which was number one common pan about 70 feet deep and the chimney I think is about the same height, of course it was essential to have mortar for the building and hand made mortar is not very suitable and as there was no machinery except a mortar mill with no engine to drive it as the Crossley oil engine which was to drive it had not arrived, but this difficulty was soon overcome; a tractor was borrowed temporarily and soon the first pan was finished. I ought to mention that making the steel pan was a much longer job then, as the plates had to be unloaded at the station and then taken to Fodens to have the holes punched and then brought down by horse lorry, whereas now we have our own sidings. The next job was somewhere to store the brine, and so an engine house was built over which went the storage tank to hold several thousand gallons of brine from which the pan was fed. Now let us take a look at the stock of what we have built, one pan and chimney one engine house with tank over the top. Where, you might say are the Offices, canteens stores etc. There was none of these things only the top of a railway van, which had to serve for all purposes, even to paying out wages. Offices, not just the Directors used to come round every morning. But they did not travel in the luxurious cars we are accustomed to seeing them to-day. (!!! Editor going to say. Now where do those bars come from that we see on hawkers carts. That was the next job, we had to have a lump pan. The bars were made in exactly the same way then as now. They were sawn into small-lumps by hand saws. Mention of sawing reminds me of the first saw that was installed, there was no modern electric motors, in fact we had to sit behind it to regulate the governors of the little seven horse power engines, out of a motor, I believe and the only light we had was from 'duck lamps' and an oil lamp which was stood at the end of the saw. From this the works developed amazingly, another common pan another lump pan and various other buildings. The bore-hole that I mentioned previously was now causing trouble and it was obvious that we should soon have to have another bore-hole, and so down went number two. Now let us get to the packing department, we have now many circular saws cutting up the bars which are wrapped into our own printed wrappers. I suppose you are feeling anxious about SIXTY...

PROGRESS. contd.

A few years have passed by since we first started on those grass field. The hot-house and packing room make an imposing sight as one passes by on the L.M.S. railway, but that is not all, we have a smithy, joiners shop, fitters shop, offices, stores, our own loco and fleet of motors. It now became obvious that if we were to retain our position in the Industry we should have to manufacture our own Vacuum salt, so about six years ago was started the enormous task of building an eighty foot high vacuum plant, purification plant, power house and all the necessary warehouses. Perhaps you would like to know how this huge structure was built, weel here goes. The first was the steel work and then the vessels were put in, then the dryer was fixed, and last the brick work was put in because it would have been impossible after. It was humourous som times to see some of the people who were not used to climbing to the top to get what was undoubtedly a good view. By the time the brickwork was finished all the machinery was installed and soon was ready for the big day. Now let us take an imaginary tour and see how the SIFTA salt is made. The three vessels covered with polished lathes of contrasting shades and everywhere looks quite smart. The brine is pouring into No. 1 vessels and also the other two. Then the steam is turned on, very soon now and the brine starts to boil and can be seen through the observation glasses in the sides of the vessels. The salt then drops this is where the vacuum comes in, it is not until the salt is made and is therefore heavier than the brine that it descends right to the bottom of the plant, where it is picked up by elevator buckets and taken right to the top again and now into the Filter which separates the brine from the salt by means of air suction after which it is conveyed by belt to the Dryer, an enormous steel drum revolving all the time, the heat is provided by hot air which is obtained by means of air being fahned through a steam radiator. When the salt comes out it is perfectly dry, it is then sieved to eliminate any lumps and then put into bags, after which it is taken into the storehouse. The following day it is brought out again and put into machines where it is prepared for Sifta. Let us now go into this department and see how Sifta is packed in 1938. As we enter this room we see a very pleasing sight, over a hundred girls in the familiar blue overalls sitting on either side of long tables. An endless belt running along the centre of each table. Shall we go to the top end and see what they are doing, the first thing is the filling of the liner bag by an automatic machine which releases the exact amount required at the rate of about 1,800 per hour, so you see the girl has to be very quick. She then places the bags on the belt and are taken off and placed in the cartons, sealed and tissued and finally parcelled up ready for despatch. To cope with he ever increasing demand we have now installed a new wrapping machine which wraps about 5,000 per hour. The cut-lump dept. also has kept pace with the times now having a multiple saw, which does the work of about 15 of the circular saws. We have now come to the end of our story of the progress of our Works over fifteen years, from the days when that small band of workers, till now, we employ nearly five hundred people and I feel that Sandbach and district owes a lot to the intuition and courage of the directors of Palmer, Mann & Co. Ltd, the propriestors of SIFTA SALT.

SALT IN FRANCE.

We have been priviledged to read a letter addressed to Mr. J.A. from the Secretary to the Company in which he writes;--

"We motored down to St. Jean-de-Luz and returned via Paris and barring a punture outside Poitiers and the spare tyre valve failing outside Paris we had no trouble. But is the French driving reckless.... and are the streets narrow through villages....??, it is amazing to me that we had no accidents. An interesting point I noticed as soon as I arrived in France was that they use a kind of crystal salt and use grinders something similar to those wooden ones used over here for pepper. At the hotel I stayed at in St. Jean-de-Luz, Cerebos was served, but the pourer was at least one third full of rice."

ANY COMPLAINTS ?

9 a.m. Cable from Montreal....."SEND 30 tons Salt!"
Orders were given to the Works and the salt was in
Liverpool ready to be put on board at something to
2 o'clock the same day. The documents were posted
and returned to us and dealt with in time for them
to catch the same boat at Greenock.

10.30 a.m. Mr. Godsmark on the telephone from London. Placed order
for cut-lumps for Penge. Transport obtained at 1.30, the very
earliest a lorry could be at the Works. The salt was delivered
in Penge at 8 a.m. the following morning.!

NEW YOU MATHEMATICIANS.

A prize is to be given at a school to the bowler with the
best average for the Season. Prior to the beginning of the
last match there are two bowlers, A & B which have each had
a remarkably good season, and they have both taken 28 wickets
for 60 runs. In this final match A takes 4 wickets for 36 and B
and B taken one wicket for 27.

It looks fairly obvious that as A's average for the day is
9 against B's 27. A should win the prize, but it is found that
over the season A took 32 for 96, average 3, whilst B took
29 for 87 - also an average of 3.

Mr. G.H.Davies sends us this item and remarks, "Appearances are
deceptive, once more, aren't they?"

(No doubt everyone will be able to say why this should be!)

CORRESPONDENCE.

We acknowledge with thanks communications from Mr. Godsmark,
Mr. Davies, Mr. Daly, Mr. Blake and Mr. Culshaw

Mr. Culshaw has submitted for consideration a contemporary
journal of a size and shape which he considers more convenient. We have
considered this, but it would mean an alteration to our machine and so
for the present we must carry on with the foolscap sheets.

Letters asking us to pass on to Mr. G.H.Davies the congratulations
from several Reps, on the fine effort which won the Calendar competition,
have been received.

LABORATORY AND AMBULANCE ROOM.

The taking of these interiors was no easy job. The position of the
doors prevented the photographer from including all the contents of the
rooms, but the pictures give a good idea of what has been done.