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Centre Trust
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SUGGESTIONS PLEASE

We want every intelligent person to help us to improve the way in which the Works is run. Suggestions are encouraged at all times, whether they have to do with improving the comfort or safety of employees; with the production methods or means by which materials can be more economically used; improvements in machines or method of working and any other useful suggestions.

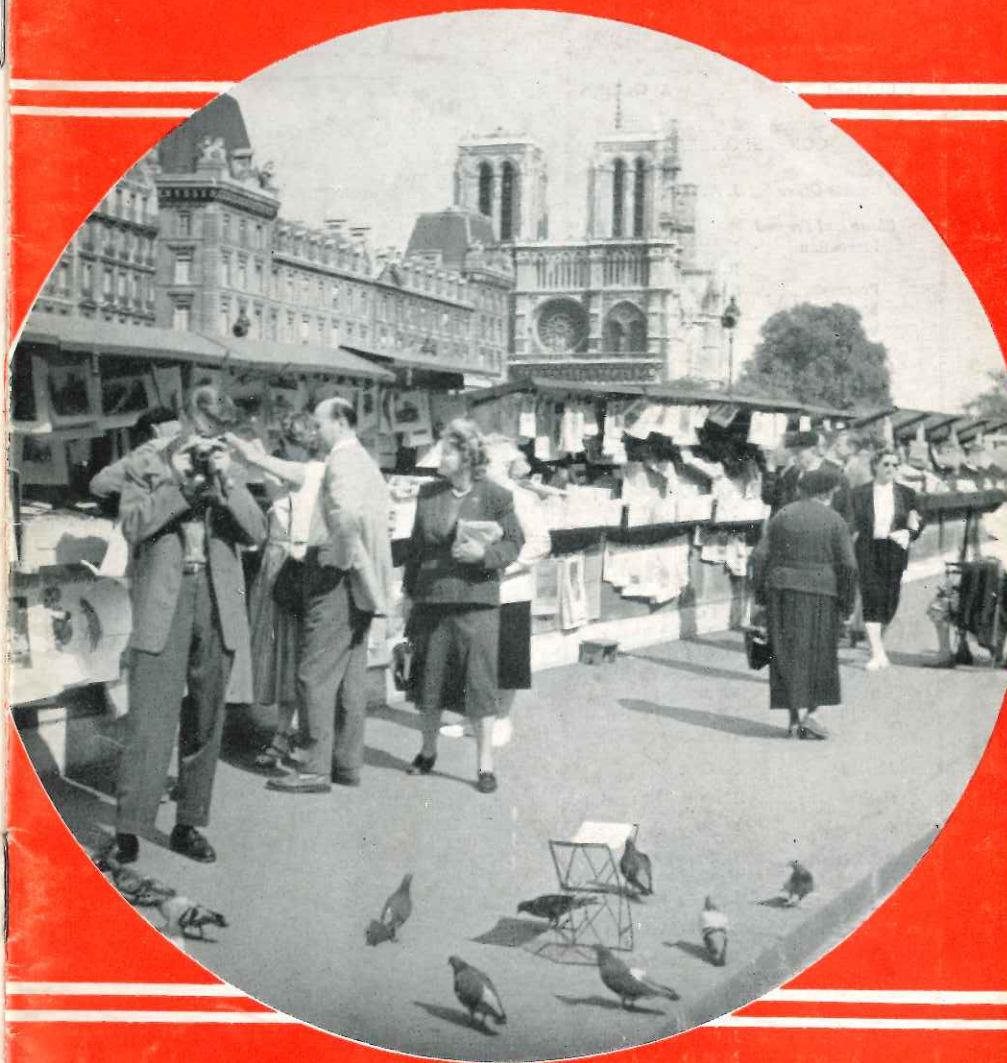
There is a generous scale of awards for all suggestions adopted.

Suggestion forms are available at each gatehouse.

CASH IN ON YOUR IDEAS

Produced and published by Teamwork Magazines (Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd.,) 25 Catherine Street, London, W.C.2. on behalf of and in collaboration with Chance Brothers Limited, Smethwick.

Chance COMMENTS



JULY — AUGUST 1957

3^D

THE MAGAZINE of Chance Brothers Limited, Smethwick, published in alternate months for the interest, entertainment and information of all employees of the firm.

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EDITOR A. OGDEN

CORRESPONDENTS

Accounts Office	J. ALLEN
Blown and Pressed Inspection	F. O'CONNOR R. TURTON
Process Making Warehouse	S. STOCKIN A. SUTTON MRS. A. KEYS
Buying and Stationery	MRS. M. FLOOK
Flat Glass Making and Warehouse	R. E. EVANS A. FARDELL
Seven Storey Laboratory	MRS. W. RUSSELL
Maintenance and Construction	
Boiler Shop	R. TIMMINS
Carpenters	P. FOSTER
Electricians	E. A. WHITEHOUSE
Garage	H. F. COSNETT
Gas Plant	J. WHEATLEY
Millwrights	W. JOHNSON
Old Hall Stores	MRS. N. O'RIORDAN D. R. KIRKWOOD
Mixing	N. GREEN
Optical	MRS. E. HOLLYHEAD
Pyrometry	N. WALKER
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Wages, Pensions	A. E. CARTWRIGHT
BRANCH ESTABLISHMENTS	
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THIS MONTH'S COVER

We go to Paris for this month's cover picture and this delightful photograph illustrating Colin Rigg's article "Paris in the Spring" is by courtesy of the French Government Tourist Office, London.

VOL. 9, No. 3

JULY—AUGUST, 1957

DIAL 222

THREE short blasts each of twenty seconds duration from Chance's steam bull breaking the silence of the night spells trouble for someone.

Perhaps you just turn over and think no more of it, but, not so for the members of our fire-brigade; the warm bed must be vacated and clothes hurriedly put on.

Simultaneously with the bull warning, sounds the internal sirens; blasts of thirty seconds duration call those who are working to join their colleagues, and together they form a team to fight the ravages of fire.

At the present time, fire is essential to glassmaking, and however well controlled, generates its

own hazards, therefore, a works fire-brigade comprised of keen and efficient staff is essential to the continuity of employment for many people. Chance Brothers can boast of such a fire-fighting team. Many of the present members joined the brigade during the early days of the war, but its full age is well over one hundred years. Its present strength of thirteen men are ably led by Chief Officer Flook and should he not be available at the crucial moment Sam Clive steps into the lead. Internal transport lorry driver Albert Sheppard is leading fireman. The boys get together on Thursday evenings for two hours intensive training. Their training differs to that given for normal fire-brigade instruction as addi-

Les Roberts and Albert Sheppard rewinding hoses.



tional knowledge and special techniques are needed for dealing with tank furnace bursts. By the way, next time you hear that the fire-brigade was called to a burst tank they will be "cremning" the vital spot by playing water on the flow of white hot metal.

One of the essential qualifications of a good fireman is that of speed in handling equipment. Our "one man hydrant" expert is Bert Bagnall for whilst competing in the Smethwick and District Industrial Fire-Brigade Association competitions, he has won three diplomas for speedy drills.

Since 1948 the brigade have also gained awards in "four men hydrant drills," "four men hose cart drills" and the "two men hose cart drills."

L. to R. Horace Bagnall, Les Roberts, Tom Flook, Sam Clive, Bert Launchbury and Bert Bagnall.



The photographs on these pages were taken at the Smethwick and District Industrial Fire-Brigade Association competition which was held on our recreation ground on Saturday, 15th June.

What part can we play in preventing fires?

Quite an essential part! Firstly we must avoid smoking in areas containing inflammable materials. Cigarette ends not completely extinguished often provide the spark that starts many a fire. Prevention of fire leads to continuity of employment.

Fighting a fire can only be effective if the brigade can get to action in the shortest possible time. Therefore, we can play our part by keeping the forty-six hydrants and fourteen fire equip-



Les Roberts competing in the contest.

ment boxes located round the works free of obstruction, and we must not forget to leave fire breaks when laying out stock piles. The Chief Officer will always advise on these two important points.

With the event of the production of Fibreglass new fire hazards have to be met and additional equipment has been made available to deal with any outbreaks of fire peculiar to the new plant.

The considerable extensions that are going on in the works call for additional strength to the

brigade. Being a volunteer member of a works fire-brigade is good fun and any fit young man who would like to serve may obtain details from either Mr. E. R. Flook, the brigade chief, or from Mr. W. E. Barrett who is responsible to the Board for fire precautions.

Finally, the brigade is standing by, their equipment is ready, all that is needed is your co-operation and when a fire threatens our economy DIAL 222, and report the location of the fire.

L.G.B.

Operation "Fibreglass"

SHORTLY after the publication of this issue of *Chance Comments*, production of Fibreglass will commence at Spon Lane works and this will be a home coming as it were, as the industrial development of Fibreglass was originally carried out at Chance Brothers, Firhill works, at Glasgow in the early thirties.

When it was announced early in the year that No. 9 furnace Blown and Pressed division was to become a production unit again for the manufacture of Fibreglass, the news was received with considerable enthusiasm, for no one likes to see a furnace and building like No. 9 lying idle.

Outside the Maintenance and Construction department very few people realised what major alterations in the works would be necessary before the new project could be brought into operation.

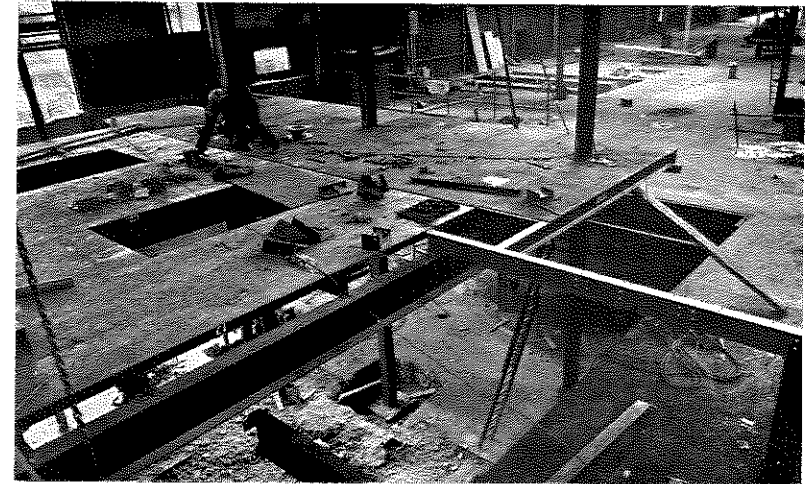
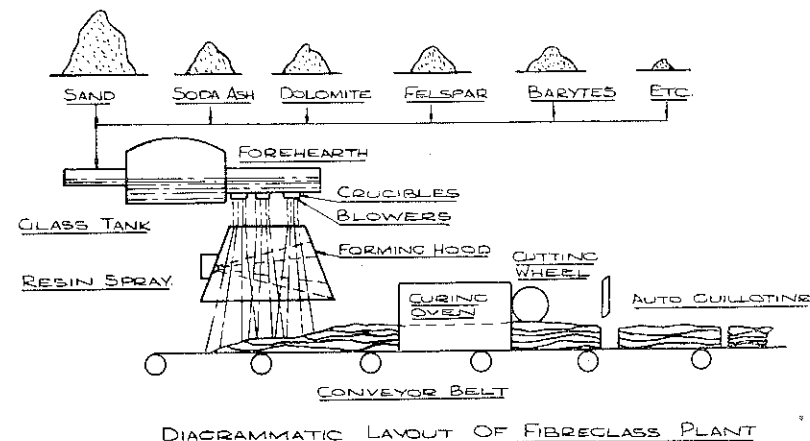
Fibreglass has many uses including thermal insulation and sound control in buildings. One of the products we shall manufacture will be the popular Cosy-wrap which no doubt you have seen on sale in the larger stores. This is supplied in handy rolls for laying between the

rafters in the roof of your house and can be very easily laid.

The sketch below gives an elementary diagrammatic layout of a Fibreglass plant.

Briefly and simply, the process for producing Fibreglass is that the glass melted in the tank furnace flows into a forehearth and then into alloy bushings which are heated electrically to keep the glass in a highly fluid state. The glass is withdrawn from the bushing holes by steam blast and the emerging stream of glass from each hole is shattered into fibres of varying length up to a few inches and diameters averaging .0006" or less. The fibres so formed build up into a thick mat on a moving conveyor. For certain products resin or bitumen emulsion is sprayed on the falling fibres. The mat so formed passes through curing ovens, crushing rollers and finally is guillotined to length and packed.

As the plant we are installing at Spon Lane had to include all the latest developments and could therefore not be a copy of the plant at Fibreglass Limited, St. Helens, it was necessary for our engineers to visit St. Helens works



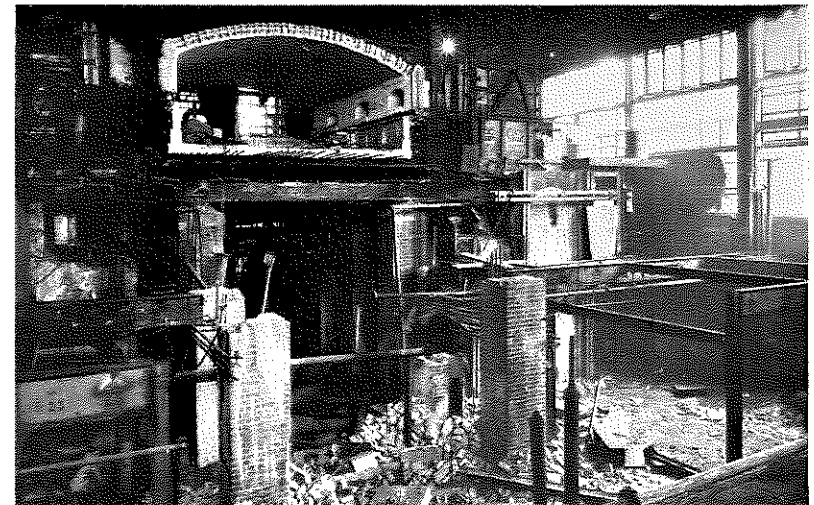
Demolition of working end of the furnace.

to co-operate with them and new drawings had to be made for every part of the plant. To enable this to be done, a temporary additional drawing office was set up in the old Lighthouse offices and after many late nights and headaches, drawings were completed and orders placed so that the real work of construction could begin.

It was known before a decision was made to install the unit at Spon Lane that about eighty per cent of the product would be despatched by rail and this additional load could not be handled on our existing sidings. This meant that the laying of additional sidings and the

continued overleaf

Laying the platform for furnace forehearth.





The old millwrights and D.R.M. shops being demolished to make room for sidings.

erection of a new rail loading building would be necessary.

In addition to extending our own sidings it was necessary to negotiate with the British Transport Commission for additional cross-over points from the main line to be laid so that our increased rail traffic could be moved in and out of the works expeditiously.

Most of you will appreciate the difficulty of finding space on our works for new buildings and the construction of the sidings and loading bay necessitated the demolition of the Diesel house, D.R.M. shop, the General stores, the Millwrights and the Pressed Process buildings. It was most opportune that the Maintenance and Construction department had just moved to their new home in the Austinlite building.

The Diesel engine is rehoused in the E.P.P. building and the tricky electrical change over was accomplished without interruption of power to any of the departments.

The General stores is rehoused in the old Lighthouse Grinding room and Pressed Process has moved into No. 22 building annexe. Warehouse space has

been provided by transferring the tubing stocks to the old Lighthouse Machine shop.

The process demands high pressure steam and we were fortunate in having at our Glasgow works a boiler which was originally used in the production of glass fibres. This has been installed in what was the old Blown and Pressed Mould shop. The boiler which has been converted to fully automatic oil firing, will supply steam at 200 lbs. per square inch pressure for the new plant.

Although No. 9 furnace was available, it was not suitable as originally constructed and this meant a rebuild of the working end and the construction of a special forehearth. Future expansion has not been ignored in the layout and design of the project and provision has been made for a second production unit to be installed at a later date.

The basement of No. 9 house contains many pits and it has been necessary to install new steelwork for the furnace as the existing structure would not allow the construction of the forming equipment.

The main items of plant are the forehearth and bushings, forming hood and

conveyor, ramp conveyor, papering conveyor, accelerating conveyor, preheating oven, curing oven, crushing unit, guillotine section, packing and wrapping section.

To supply the emulsions for spraying on to the glass fibres a chemical plant has been constructed alongside the main process unit. This embraces bitumen melting tanks, mixing tanks, emulsifying tanks, circulating tanks and pumps.

Equipment is being installed and alterations carried out to the fabric of the building to reduce the fire risk which is associated with a Fibreglass plant.

Although the greater part of the product will be despatched by rail, special vans have been constructed to cater for road transport and No. 9 warehouse being some distance from the loading bay, special covered trailers have been designed and manufactured to carry the product between these two buildings.

Incidental to the main task of constructing the plant the problems of supplying suitable services of gas, steam, water, electricity, etc., have been quite considerable. The diversion of services

from the areas of the demolished buildings and some of the temporary hook ups have at times caused certain members of the Maintenance and Construction department to retire to bed with fingers crossed and an anxious ear for the telephone.

Many queer names have come into being over the years at Chance Brothers and soon we shall be hearing new ones. One will be "Doctor Knives"; these have no connection with our Medical Centre but are part of the crushing section of the Fibreglass plant.

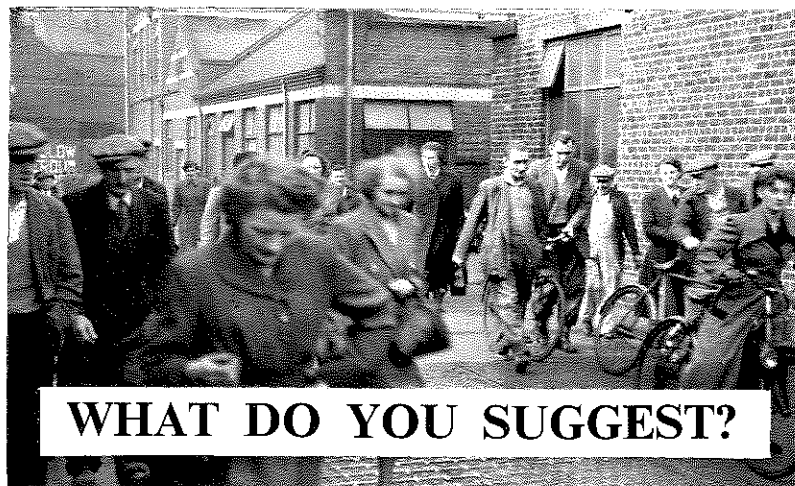
Now the plant is nearing completion and we are proud of the job we have done but we now have the important task of maintaining it in such a manner that it will give maximum production with minimum "down" time and so add to the prosperity of our Company.

Finally, thanks must be expressed to the staff of Fibreglass Limited who have co-operated with our engineers on the design and construction of the plant. They, with us, can feel proud of having taken part in "Operation Fibreglass."

J. R. CHEETHAM.

Sidings and loading bay building in course of erection.





£83 Awarded in Two Months

The Suggestions Scheme committee was particularly busy at its May and June meetings as thirty ideas resulted in awards and the total amount distributed was £83 5s. 0d.

Tom Lloyd receives £24

Three ideas submitted in the same month by Tom Lloyd of the Millwrights resulted in his receiving a total of £24 tax free. For designing a filter pan to reduce the wastage of emery on the grinding machines in the Pressed Process, he received £19, and for recommending the fitting of air lines to the emery pumps in the Pressed Process to avoid the building up of emery he was awarded £4 10s. 0d. His third idea concerned a design for a template for drilling plates and whilst this was not original, it reminded management that templates were not being used for a certain purpose and he received a nominal award of 10s. 0d.

£11 10s. 0d. award

W. R. Ball of the Rolled Plate was awarded £11 10s. 0d., for a suggestion concerning the fitting of two arms behind the existing arms for cutting narrow widths of rolled plate glass. He rightly claimed that his idea would reduce waste.

A fiver for W. Hollyhead

For recommending that an ultimate stop should be fitted to the electric lathes in the Blown and Pressed division to prevent over riding of the limit switch, W. Hollyhead received an award of £5.

A Glasgow man has a good one

J. Armstrong of the Glasgow works recommended that a saving could be effected on the electric supply if a warning light were fixed to the electric hot water immerser as a reminder that the supply should be cut off at week ends. For this money saving idea, he received £4 10s. 0d.

A summary of other winning ideas

Space will not permit the usual report on each idea and the following is a brief summary of suggestions that have resulted in awards being made:—

J. H. Poulson, D.R.M., the water control on the Rolled Plate machines, £3 5s. 0d.

S. Cox, Rolled Plate, greasing on the Rolled Plate lehrs, £3 5s. 0d.

J. H. Poulson, D.R.M., Rolled Plate cutting arms, £3 5s. 0d.

T. Piddock, Gas Plant, bricking up unused poke holes, £3 5s. 0d.

R. Dickens, Millwrights, semi-rotary machine for spectacle moulds, £3 5s. 0d.

H. Link and S. Kerr, D.R.M., fitting key in Flashed Drawn rollers, £2 5s. 0d.

R. J. Allmark, Rolled Plate, marking plate attachment to cutting rods, £1 15s. 0d.

W. Watson and H. Thomas, Rolled Plate, the provision of a table for marking up export packing documents, £1 15s. 0d.

A. Burford, Rolled Plate, additional baffle to windpipe at No. 3, £1 15s. 0d.

L. Woodyatt, Rolled Plate, a device for cutting off wire in Rolled Plate, £1 15s. 0d.

G. E. Ross, Boilers, a wider coal chute on the north side boilers to avoid damage to the chute, £1 15s. 0d.

A. Whitehouse, M. & C., concerning safety on the suction plant, £1 0s. 0d.

G. Catchpole and L. E. Nicoll, Rolled Plate, a guard to prevent the risk of windows being broken by packing cases, £2 0s. 0d.

E. G. Nelson, Mixing, alterations to the soda ash conveyor belt to reduce wear, £1 10s. 0d.

H. Link, D.R.M., concerning safety on the Flashed Drawn tank, £1 0s. 0d.

R. Moody, Rolled Plate, the fitting of leather sleeves to the slings on No. 1 crane in the interests of safety, £1 0s. 0d.

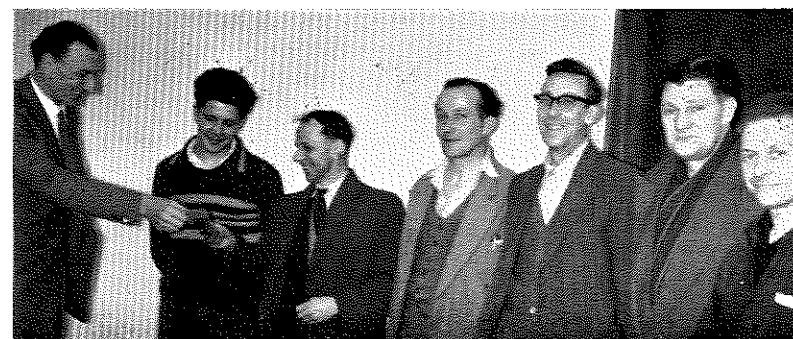
For putting in suggestions which were not original but which reminded management, the following received 10s. 0d., each: K. J. Fletcher, Laboratory; F. A. Clifton, Millwrights; J. Brennan, Rolled Plate; T. Piddock, Gas Plant.

For submitting ideas which were not adopted but to which the suggestors had given much time, thought and trouble, D. G. Botfield, M. & C., received an award of 10s. 0d., and E. Armfield, Blown and Pressed, received an award of 10s. 0d.

These suggestions are under consideration

53591	W. Chrimes	Clay Mill
53592	B. Jones	Rolled Plate
53620	A. Jones	Optical
53676	F. A. Bodley	Rolled Plate
53696	R. J. Allmark	Rolled Plate
53701	W. Hollyhead	M. & C.
53708	L. E. Nicoll	Rolled Plate
53709	A. E. Hadley	Rolled Plate
53710	A. Jones	Optical
53711	R. Moody	Rolled Plate
53713	E. Bishop	No. 7

The monthly line-up for Suggestion Scheme awards.



Chance Beauty Stakes

THE June heat wave cheered everybody up and it was lovely to see so many of our young ladies coming to work in gay and cool summer frocks. There are pretty girls galore employed by Chance Brothers and competitors in the holiday resorts beauty competitions have nothing on the "Miss C.B.'s."

Here is a selection of attractive girls from three departments. In our next issue we shall publish photographs from other departments; the Glasgow works have intimated their intention to be included and surely we can expect entries in the beauty stakes from the offices, Rolled Plate, the Laboratory, Fiesta and the Malvern works.

Fortunately we are under no obligation to decide whether one group of girls is any more attractive than another. If our readers could dissassociate themselves from a bias towards their own department, they must agree that it is not possible to make any distinction—they're all so nice!

This month's teams are:—



Foot left : Optical—left to right, Evelyn Cotton, Hilda Vanheer, Marjorie Berrill, Tina Washington.

Top right: Micro Warehouse—left to right, Barbara Taylor, Dorothy Paddock, Janet Miller, Sylvia Carr.

Foot right: Blown and Pressed—left to right, Ann Stevens, Joan Hill, Margaret Mills, Alma Keys.





From all Departments

MOSTLY PERSONAL

Blown and Pressed

The Cathode warehouse welcomes Ann Stevens, Margaret Mills and Lily Forsyth who have joined the carton makers team recently.

Marie Jones and Mrs. Gamble of the Pressed warehouse are away ill at the time of going to press and we hope they will soon be fully recovered.

The Cathode section extends deep sympathy to Bill Bowen on the death of his wife on 7th June.

Fiat Glass

The Rolled Plate warehouse extend sincere wishes to Ray Baynham for a quick and complete recovery from the illness which has kept him from work for some weeks and necessitated attendance in hospital for observation.

Harry Phipps of the warehouse is in hospital at the time of going to press with a serious illness and everybody hopes that things will go well for him.

Arthur Potter retired on 7th June. Arthur first commenced work at Spon Lane in 1899. We all wish him a long and healthy period of rest. Our photo-

graph shows Arthur receiving his long service award.



graph shows Arthur receiving his long service presentation gold watch from Mr. C. J. S. Newman.

Glasgow Works

At the Annual General Meeting of the Glasgow works recreation club, the following were elected office bearers for the ensuing year—*President*, G. H. Gordon; *Vice-President*, J. Crawford; *Secretary and Treasurer*, J. McCusker; *Departmental representatives*, A. McKnight, G. Newlands, I. Blakey, P. Provan and W. Elliott.

The annual bowling competition is now under way and there are fifty-four entrants for the Newman cup.

A welcome is extended to Catherine Scott and J. Gillmore who have joined the wages office staff recently.

The works were sorry to hear of the recent deaths of two pensioners Ralph Shearer and John Cunnion.

William Bremner, our foreman joiner, retired at the end of June and we are sure that his many friends at Spon Lane will join us in wishing him a happy and long retirement.

William first came to the Firhill works in 1916 and during his long service he saw the works develop from about three acres, one third of which was occupied for production and warehousing, to its present size of six acres of which four acres are occupied with buildings. He took part in the erection and alterations of all buildings and he also erected many exhibition stands for Rolled Plate products.

One of his recollections is of brick-layer Jimmy Paul who kept a goat which used to wander freely in the works. When the late Mr. Lindsay Foster advised Paul to tether his goat for safety, Paul replied that he could not see the reason for doing so as the works was

full of goats less sensible than his! It came as no great surprise when the goat got its horns caught in a joiner's ladder and hanged itself.

London Office

Early in June we held our exhibition of Fiesta glass. The visitors included exporters, retail store buyers, representatives of well-known business houses in and around London, friends who sell our products or from whom we purchase goods. All were most complimentary about our wide and varied range of glassware. One visitor was heard to say that he liked "Swirlux" design better than "Nightlight"—what's in a name!

The new Intaglio Ruby and Blue cut glass received a warm welcome and we sincerely hope that it will find its place in the overseas markets, particularly America.

Malvern

Audrey Parsons has now completed ten years service at the Malvern branch—the fourth employee to meet this target in the short history of these works.

We were pleased to welcome Freddie Banks back after his illness.

Molly Ulett is now on the sick list and we all hope she will soon be better and back at work again.

Maintenance and Construction

The drawing office congratulates Richard Dasher on his marriage on

William Bremner retires from Glasgow Works.



1st June, and wish him and his wife every happiness.

Valerie Hood left the Maintenance and Construction office at the end of May due to ill health.

Offices

The buying and printing office staff had an enjoyable outing on the evening of the 24th May. Calling first of all at the Malvern works for a quick look round, the party proceeded to the Star Hotel at Upton-on-Severn for a meal and social evening.

The export department congratulates Bill Bennett on becoming a father to his second son.

Robert Kidd has been appointed to the position of overseas representative and we extend him a sincere welcome.

The offices are glad to see Mrs. Lane back in harness after her long illness.

Max Van Beek continues his travels in search of business and by the time these notes are in print he will have returned from a visit to Israel and Greece.

The typing department was sorry to lose Pat Telling after four years service with the firm and we wish her every success in her new employment.

Joan Teague has had to terminate her services with the Company owing to ill health. She has been replaced by Olwyn Billington.

Shortly after going to press with our previous issue, we learned of the death of Frank Tatton on the 2nd May. Frank retired last autumn.

The office cleaners held their annual outing on Whit Saturday and this consisted of a coach tour to North Wales and back to Hereford for lunch. On the return journey a call was made at Stourport for supper and fun and games.

Optical

The Optical department expresses sympathy to James Smith on the death of his wife recently.

Len Lancaster has been away ill for some weeks and we are pleased to learn he is making satisfactory progress, as is Mrs. A. Lee who is at present at a convalescent home following her treatment at hospital.

We were sorry to lose the services of Brenda Stanton who left the department in June.

Jottings of shorter items and employees' contributions

AMERICA'S FIRST INDUSTRY WAS GLASS MANUFACTURE

Three hundred and fifty years ago there small ships of British settlers landed at Jamestown on the James river in Virginia. That settlement in 1607 marked the beginning of the British Commonwealth. It was here too in the year 1608 that our forefathers introduced and operated America's first industry—glass manufacture.

This year America celebrates the 350th anniversary of its birth as a nation by sponsoring the Jamestown Festival, a year long panorama of commemorative events—pageantry, ceremonials, parades, public addresses, music and drama, exhibits of art and history entertainment. We in Britain first became aware of this great occasion by the publicity connected with the building and the sailing of *Mayflower II* and Her Majesty the Queen and Prince Philip will be visiting Jamestown later this year to share in the celebrations.

An important feature of the festival is an exhibition centre and it is not without some pride that we can say that most of the glass for the permanent buildings bears the Pilkington trademark. This material was shipped to the United States towards the end of last year and comprises 1,185 square feet of plate glass and 1,250 feet of sheet glass. The glass provided for the show cases for the British exhibits involved another fifty-seven square feet of sheet glass and 575 feet of plate glass.

A big attraction will be the restoration of the glassworks erected by the colonists in 1608 on what they called Glass-house Point. Here glass will be blown and fashioned by craftsmen in full mediaeval costume.

A magnificent framed decorative plaque (size 37" x 52") in polished plate glass and illuminated by edge lighting has been presented to the exhibition by the British Flat Glass industry. The inscription on the plaque is:—

1607—1957

Presented by the British Flat Glass industry to commemorate the Jamestown settlement and the introduction of glass making in 1608 as America's first industry.

SUMMER SNAPSHOTS

Take your camera with you when you go on holiday and enter your snapshots in our holiday photograph competition.

Prizes will be awarded for (a) the best landscape, (b) the best personal, and (c) the best general subject.

Entries should be sent to the Editor before 30th September, and each entry must be clearly marked with the sender's name and department.

The only rule is that photographs submitted should have been taken by employees during the year 1957.

BOUQUETS

Congratulations are extended to Mr. and Mrs. Walter Chance who celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary recently and to Mr. and Mrs. R. Forsyth (Blown and Pressed), Mr. and Mrs. T. Russell (Library), and Mr. and Mrs. A. Ogden (Personnel), who have celebrated their Silver Wedding anniversaries.

Congratulations are offered to Kevin Moore of the Machine Shop on attaining his majority, and to Edwin Morris, Drawing Office, who has also reached his twenty-first birthday and became engaged to Margaret Beckett.

A bouquet to Civil Defence Officer, Horace Newey on being elected a Fellow of the Institute of Civil Defence.

CONVALESCENCE

The Provident Society continues to bear the cost of employees who require convalescence. A recent beneficiary was G. F. Banks of the Malvern works who stayed two weeks at the Lady Forester Home in Llandudno. During his stay he wrote the following interesting letter:—

"For the benefit of any employee who has been ill, as I have, and needs rest and good food in plenty, I would recommend a stay at this Convalescent Home. There are facilities for games, reading room, billiard room and rest room, outside golf, bowls, etc.

The place is centrally heated, plus large coal fires which keep the whole house warm and comfortable. One can get a bus at the gates to the pier every twenty minutes, and trips once a week at very much reduced rates to places of interest help to pass the time. I must say all the staff are extremely helpful and very charming at all times. There are in addition to ordinary staff, Matron, Sister and two nurses, all these are fully trained people. The surgery is open every morning and evening for medicine prescribed by the doctor who visits each week and is on call at all times in emergency cases.

We had a visit from the Trustees during my stay. Lord and Lady Forester had just returned from Africa and they spent a day at the Home and had a chat with every individual in the place. Someone suggested more easy arm-chairs; they had a little meeting on the spot and voted about £500 for this purpose. When they had dinner with us I was asked to thank them for coming along, etc., not much in my line, but I made the grade, (I think).

I enjoyed being there and I wish to thank the firm for making my visit possible."

MOTOR CAR INSURANCE

The Company's Insurance Brokers, Spencer Yates and Curry Limited, have arranged with a firm of Lloyds Insurers

that any employee of the Company can effect his motor car insurance with them at the standard rates less fifteen per cent. This scheme does not include motor cycles.

Anyone who wishes to consider taking advantage of this arrangement should see Mr. J. F. Allen who can be contacted in the Pensions office.

RECREATION JOTTINGS

The cricket teams have made a good start and by mid-June the First XI had played 7 games and won 3 and drawn 2. The Second XI had played 6 and won 4.

At the present time the inter-departmental competitions are being played.

The football First XI were successful in winning the Mayor of Oldbury's Charity Cup competition. The works teams can be depended upon to win at least one trophy every season!

Games in the inter-departmental bowls knock-out competition will be played during August and September. Each department is invited to enter at least one team and entries should be sent to Arthur Evans, Optical department, by 3rd August.

On Thursday, 20th June, the Company entertained the staff of the National Provincial Bank on the recreation ground. Cricket, bowls and tennis were played and the evening ended with an excellent buffet supper served by club steward, Jack Kenny and his wife, in the bar which has just been redecorated in a contemporary manner.

These social evenings have been held each year for at least thirty years.

The first XI won the Mayor of Oldbury's Charity Cup.



Paris in the Spring

By Colin Rigg—a laboratory apprentice at present studying at Sheffield University

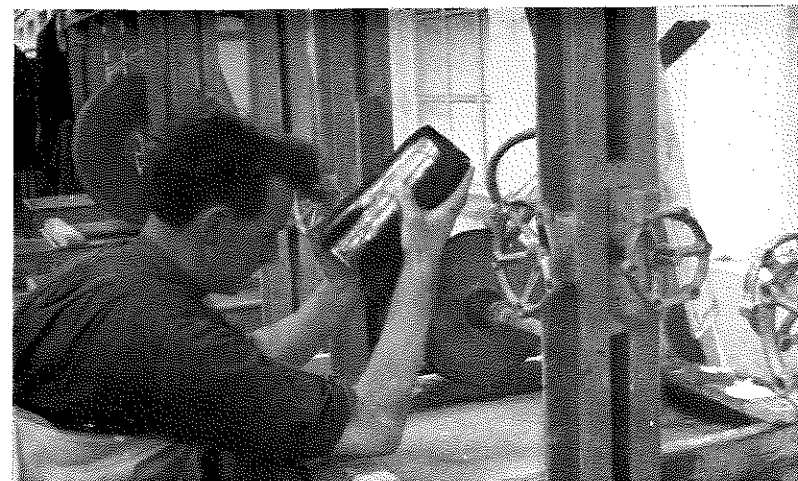
THE title does not cover the full scope of these jottings which are meant to deal with a brief tour of glassworks in France and Switzerland. Nevertheless, it does convey the ideas in the minds of a party of staff and students from Sheffield University as they crossed the English Channel in search of "knowledge."

I started my tour a little early by visiting the works of Powell and Sons (Whitefriars). It is always a thrill to see an article made by a hand-worker because so much depends upon the art of the craftsman. After watching the manufacture of tubing for thermometers, I do know now how they get the stripe in and make the lens effect. I was

Houses in Strasbourg.



(Photo by courtesy of The French Government Tourist Office.)



Grinding a "flashed" vase at the Cristallene.

most impressed by the stained glass windows. The meticulous care of these artists dealing with numerous pieces of glass and the many processes was almost unbelievable. It is an advantage for them to have what would be bad glass for other purposes, uneven thickness, striae and seed all add to the effect. The technical staff can have fun putting bubbles into the glass but it is difficult to reproduce the results when similar pieces are required.

A horribly early rising ensured that I met the party in London for the boat train. Unfortunately, the Channel was very windy and some members of the party did not enjoy the sea air as much as they might otherwise have done. But everyone brightened up on the train from Dieppe to Paris, when they had removed salt from their hair and eyebrows.

At Paris we had our first encounter with voluble, gesticulating Frenchmen. We should have been met by a 'bus and taken to our hotel but something had gone wrong; the luggage was taken and half the party crammed into a taxi. The remainder went into a cafe and were picked up several coffees later, about half an hour later than promised, so the meal we then had was much appreciated. We took this as a warning on the subject

of organisation. Perhaps this was a little unfair because everything else went so smoothly.

The hotel was in the Latin Quarter; that this is the student area of Paris was easily seen from the vast numbers in the cafes and walking along the Boulevard St. Michel. Even in the evening many carried brief-cases and during the days nearly every student from the age of five upwards carried one. The styles of trousers were varied, nearly all of them tight and often too long, so that they could not hang straight, but rather in wrinkles. The variety came in turn-ups which did not exist in some cases and in others were about three inches deep. But one could make similar comments on British students and they are not the whole population.

I tried the Metro (underground) early in my wanderings and found it an excellent way of getting about. Any journey costs the same price and one changes from line to line at the various interchange stations. Some of the passages in the depths of the earth were so long that I often wondered if I would get anywhere but I always found a platform or exit eventually. The first carriage I used showed remains of the government of M. Mendes France. The adverts were urging the Parisians not to

drink more than a litre of wine a day, and not to allow children under five to drink wine at all. I found several more like this and enjoyed them all. The notices passed the time away and kept my attention from the couple who were passionately embracing by the carriage door. Nobody ever seemed to take much notice. I suppose it was such a normal sight. This happened everywhere and brought the comment, "No wonder the French seem to think so much of love, they are brought up on it."

The first full day was a Sunday and we were taken by coach around some of the show pieces of Paris. I was struck by contrasts. Paris has magnificent buildings and squares but the ordinary house seems so shabby; paint seems to be little used. This is partly due to rents controlled, in some cases, at the same values as 1914, and the value of the franc has fallen considerably since then. There was a contrast too between the very Eastern looking Church of the Sacred

Heart dominating Montmartre and the square Cathedral of Notre Dame by the Seine. In both tourists wandered around too noisily, apparently oblivious of the services being conducted.

In the afternoon we wandered in groups around the great Boulevards and the back streets. All the time it was difficult to believe it was Sunday. Many shops were closed but the cafes were open and there are so many of them. The crowd was more like an English Saturday afternoon than a quiet Sunday one. Cars were numerous and the sight of seven lines of them "revving" up for the change of lights has to be seen to be believed. Often the drivers used their initiative and didn't bother with lights but they were helpful if one didn't get in their way. The use of horns is forbidden and the result is pleasing but must exasperate the driver.

Inspection of prices in the shops showed that on a straight exchange

Salesman in the Bird-market on the Left Bank (Paris).



Display of crystal glass at the Cristalline of St. Louis-les-Batiches.

basis most goods were higher priced than in England. This we found later to be due to prices in the capital being somewhat higher than the country but clothing seemed to be always about one quarter to one third higher. Fruit and vegetables were about the same or less than in England.

It is possible to eat well and quite cheaply by using cafes away from the "plush" areas. The food was always good. The oil used on lettuce did not appeal to me but a red wine was a good antidote. However, one had to be careful drinking; wine in Paris approaches English prices and it was easy to get into conversation over meals, particularly because of the visit of the Queen and Prince Philip, about whom we received many questions from these very well informed French people.

Because of visits we missed most of the royal occasions but we did manage to see the Queen and the Prince as they made their journey on the Seine. This was difficult because the crowd was massive and seemed to be very excited. The firework display and the flood-lit buildings all added to a memorable occasion.

The works we visited in the Paris area were the St. Gobain Company. It is one of the largest of French enterprises and deals not only with glass but also chemicals products, fertilizers, plastics, detergents, oil-refining and atomic energy. Their hospitality was boundless and their patience with our inadequate French inexhaustible. The habit of taking champagne after each visit was enjoyable but it could be a little dangerous on a breakfast of coffee and rolls. We soon discovered the beneficent effect of finishing meals with thick black coffee!

Corrugated and figured glass is made at the original works which was based on the castle of St. Gobain in the 17th century. For contrast we saw a new plant operating the Pilkington "twin-plate" process for plate glass. They have left room for the twin polishing part when the research laboratories have discovered how to work it. Automatic control was prevalent and instead of seeing people we passed controllers with their eyes flashing red and green. It wasn't until we came to the toughening processes that we saw the hordes of workers one expects to see. A fibre-

(continued overleaf)

Paris in the Spring—continued

glass factory provided another variation and visits to two research laboratories made a full time table.

A train journey from Paris to Strasbourg took us through many types of country, from industry through wooded hillsides and agricultural plains to the vineyards and hop fields of Alsace. Again there was a contrast between the electric train rushing through the country and the ox carts being used at the side of the track.

In spite of being built on a river, Strasbourg is so much different from Paris. There is a distinct German influence in the buildings and this was carried into the language which presented a problem but the people were very patient. There was the atmosphere of a country town and everyone seemed very friendly. Four of us spent a very pleasant evening in a bar jabbering to a group of local fellows. From all this we learned a great deal about them and the country. I hope they were equally pleased with what they saw and heard of us. I found "rock 'n' roll" was much the same in any country and enjoyed dancing with a local girl who had spent several years in England. We also liked Strasbourg for the cheap excellent local beers and wines.

The reason for being there was to see a crystal glass works which was way out. The change of scenery from the flatness of Paris to the wooded slopes here was noticed on our journey. I found many of the products of this works rather "heavy"; large vases with deep cutting, etc., although there was some very appealing finer work.

All too soon we had to leave for Lausanne, managing to get the wrong train to Basle but we escaped a surcharge for using a faster train. The people were all as helpful and obliging as our ticket collector. Particularly were we astounded at their linguistic ability. There are three official languages; French, German and Italian, and many people speak these and English.

The country side was as pretty, if not more so, than the picture postcards. The chalets really do cling perilously to the sides of the mountains and how they get them so high is a mystery.

We ate well in Lausanne and found the dishes to be very similar to those in England. We spent an evening eating various cheese dishes accompanied by excellent Swiss wines. The glorious ice cream dishes and a trout cooked in butter are still remembered. So often it was difficult to say "no" when the dish came along for the third or fourth time.

The prices were favourable for souvenir shopping and various miscalculations left us with spare Swiss money. Most people got what they wanted with a little rushing in our tight schedule.

The two works visited made bottles and sheet glass respectively. These were particularly interesting because of the electric melting which is used so successfully in Switzerland. Electricity is cheap but that is not the complete story for there is a saving in not having a heat recovery system (regenerator or recuperator). This alters the appearance in spite of the design of the actual furnace being very similar. There is an "all electric" furnace in this country and I look forward to seeing the many differences from those in Switzerland.

It was interesting to hear the problems of the Swiss due to the high freight costs and the small orders coupled with competition from neighbouring countries, but the directors we met seemed to be happy despite their problems.

We reluctantly left Lausanne for Paris and because of the anticipated railway strike, left there next day. This meant frantic early morning shopping for those with any money left. The strike had an ironical tinge for many of the people we met had been amused by the strikes which seemed to occur so often in Britain. They couldn't understand why British workers would stand the loss of wages without doing more negotiations beforehand. The Swiss, particularly, spoke highly of their works committees which worked well and so benefitted management and workers alike.

The journey was a wonderful experience, not only from the technical side, but because we met and talked with all types of people on subjects varying from managing a works to Suez. It was good to be home; Buckingham Palace and Hyde Park looked as good as anything we had seen and the taste of crisp fresh lettuce was a pleasure.

WORKS COMMITTEES

Who's Who

In our last issue we reported the results of the elections for representatives on the Works Consultative Committee. The W.C.C. has several sub-committees to help in its responsibilities and the following is a directory of the sub-committees for 1957/58:—

Blown and Pressed Production Sub-committee

Management	Workpeople
W. E. Barrett	C. McCarthy
<i>Chairman</i>	
B. D. Patrick	S. Russell
D. Davies	C. Burford
G. Grigg	D. Bowser
O. McKenna	R. Cammies
S. Stockin	J. Knight
L. Hill	Mrs. R. Yates

No. 10 Group Sub-committee

Management	Workpeople
S. W. Shaw	B. Bagnall
<i>Chairman</i>	
E. R. Flook	D. Handy
W. A. Standley	W. Short
	H. Sedgley

Maintenance and Construction Sub-committee

Management	Workpeople
W. E. Barrett	H. F. Cosnett
<i>Chairman</i>	
J. R. Chestham	R. W. Timmins
G. Castle	R. Turley
H. Haller	J. F. Wheatley
F. J. Nield	L. Bradley
S. V. Scriven	J. Beasant
<i>Secretary</i>	E. Brittain
	H. Care
	J. H. J. Redfern

Flat Glass Production Sub-committee

Management	Workpeople
L. Gorman	G. Sherwood
<i>Chairman</i>	J. E. Saul
R. E. Evans	A. Fardell
S. Round	Miss Hickman
E. Richards	Mrs. G. Walker
A. Mann	E. Guppy
S. G. Cooper	

Optical Production Sub-committee

Management	Workpeople
Dr. R. E. Bastick	Mrs. J. Bloomer
<i>Chairman</i>	
F. Rollason	Mrs. O. Brown
L. White	G. Halliday
B. Cartwright	G. Russell

Safety Committee

Management	Workpeople
S. W. Shaw	R. Acton
<i>Chairman</i>	<i>Electricians</i>
G. Castle	H. Bagnall
E. R. Flook	<i>Internal transport</i>
L. Mole	E. Carter
Dr. A. S. Pearson	<i>Boiler shop</i>
W. F. Rollason	R. Ferris
W. Sargent	<i>Rolled Plate</i>
S. G. Cooper	G. Halliday, <i>Optical</i>
D. R. Kirkwood	W. Peters, <i>Building</i>
K. L. O'Leary	W. West
A. Ogden	<i>Seven Storey</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	R. Cammies
	B. & P.

Suggestions Scheme committee

Management	Workpeople
C. J. S. Newman	W. King, B. & P.
<i>Chairman</i>	H. Bodley
G. Castle	<i>Rolled Plate</i>
L. G. Hinton	J. Hill, <i>Boiler shop</i>
D. Davies	G. Russell, <i>Optical</i>
W. McCarthy	B. Bagnall
W. F. Rollason	<i>Internal transport</i>
L. G. Barton	
A. Ogden, <i>Secretary</i>	

Canteen Advisory Sub-committee

Management	Workpeople
E. A. Whitehouse	<i>Electricians</i>
<i>Chairman</i>	
D. R. Kirkwood	<i>General Stores</i>
F. W. Davies	<i>Blown & Pressed</i>
Mrs. O. Brown	<i>Optical</i>
A. Ogden, <i>Secretary</i>	