



The Belcortline



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THE BELCORTLINE

January - March, 1971

GRANT S. HEALY NAMED GENERAL PLANTS MANAGER

New assignments for several members of the executive and managerial staff of Belding Heminway Company, Inc. were announced by Mr. R. H. Brown, Director of Operations for the Thread Divisions, New York Executive Office. All assignments were effective as of January 5, 1971.



Grant S. Healy was named General Plants Manager, Thread Operations, encompassing the company's manufacturing facilities in Putnam and Grosvenor Dale, Connecticut, and in Hendersonville, North Carolina.

Mr. Healy joined Belding at Putnam in September 1948 as a mechanical engineer. In late summer of 1950 he was transferred to North Carolina, where he assumed a very active role in the construction and in the manufacturing operation of Belding's plant in Hendersonville.

In 1965 an expansion of that facility to double its production capabilities was completed under his supervision. His most recent title was plant manager, the position he leaves to assume his new duties in Putnam.

A native of Webster, Massachusetts, he received a B.S. Degree in Mechanical Engineering at Lowell Technological Institute, Lowell, Massachusetts, and a Master's Degree at Northeastern University, Boston.

He is affiliated with the Professional Engineers Society, American Society of

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Other appointments include:



Clinton B. Adams
Manager, Planning and Scheduling
Thread Operations



Sebastian S. Cerreto
Manager, Manufacturing
Putnam and Grosvenor Dale
Thread Operations



William R. Temple
Manager, Manufacturing Services
Thread Operations



Walter E. Crow was appointed plant manager, Belding Chemical Industries, Grosvenor Dale operations.

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JOINT MEETING HELD BY ASSOCIATION AND CREDIT UNION

A joint meeting of the BHC Employees Association and Belcort Employees Federal Credit Union was held at the Belding Clubhouse Sunday, January 24, 1971. A buffet supper catered by Duffy was enjoyed following adjournment of the meeting.



Henry "Bobo" Robillard of the Dye-house was elected to serve as president of the Association for 1971. Others elected were:



Richard Delage, Vice-President
(Technician, Coat Department)



Kathi Peterson, Secretary
(Secretary to
Messrs. Cerreto and Couture)



Alexine Phaneuf, Treasurer
(Personnel Office)



Mary Dupre, Assistant Treasurer
(Billing and Statistics)

Directors elected to serve two-year terms were:

Lucille Casco (3rd Floor)
Charles Belair (Dyehouse)
Louis Flagg (3rd Floor)
Rose Page (R P D)
Edgar Tetreault (Kievstov Operator)
Lawrence Light (Automatic Bobbin Winding)
Josephine Stenback (B.C.I.)

Directors with an unexpired term of one year are:

James Prokos (Engineering)
Lyonel Dardier (Dyehouse)
Rita Sullivan (Research)
Jeannette Davis (Throwing)
Ray Esten (Throwing)
Diane Robillard (Quality Control)

At the Belcort Employees Federal Credit Union Meeting President Paul Gauthier announced that the Board of Directors voted to pay to its members a dividend of 5 1/2% based on the credit union earnings for the year 1970. The dividend will be paid to shareholders of record as of December 31, 1970.

The Board of Directors has also authorized the payment of a 25% patronage refund on all interest paid on loans during 1970.



Officers re-elected to serve for 1971 are President Paul Gauthier and Secretary-Treasurer Alexine Phaneuf.

Others are:

Vice-President: Charles Sullivan
Directors: Clinton Adams
Roland Bellerive
Ernest Vigeani
Tom Musumeci
Clerk: Dorothy Schaeffer

WALTER E. CRAW

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Mr. Craw resides in West Thompson with his wife, Phyllis, and four children. Daughter Beverly is a sophomore at Tourtellotte Memorial High School; Betsy is in the seventh grade of Junior High; son Peter is a freshman at the University of Connecticut; and David, a UConn graduate is waiting for his orders to enter the service as a Lieutenant.

Walter Craw is very active on the Thompson School Board, and his wife volunteers a great deal of her spare time to the Salvation Army.

Mr. Craw's father, an employee at General Electric, moved his family to several locations; so, although Walter was born in Schenectady, New York, he also lived in Illinois, New Jersey, and Connecticut. He was graduated from Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering in 1943. He came to Beldings from Army Chemical Warfare Service with the rank of sergeant in August 1946.

Walter E. Crow
An Autobiography

In August I accepted an offer from Belding Heminway Co. located in the town of Putnam in the extreme N.E. corner of Connecticut. I was to stay with Belding for 39 years until my retirement in 1985. There was some irony in this, because remembering back to one of our Chem. Engr. classes where we were given a brief exposure to textile chemistry and technology I had decided that it was neither very interesting nor very attractive and would not be a field where I would want to work. Belding is a textile company - a leading supplier of household and industrial sewing threads for over 100 years. They were embarking on a development program that was to revolutionize the industrial thread market, mainly in nylon, with a product called Nymo. The individual fine filaments had always been twisted together to form the finished thread, but the twisting resulted in a relatively rough surface that caused heat to build - up through friction when the thread passed through the eye of a needle at extremely high speed in industrial sewing machines. The result is thread breakage and down - time, which is very bad news. Nymo was not twisted but was bonded with an alcohol soluble nylon, called Type 800, being produced by Du Pont in pilot plant quantities. The smoother surface provided by the bonding process caused less friction, less heat build-up and less down time. It was very well received by the trade. My job was to set up and handle the production and handling of the bonding solutions and also to develop an extensive line of colors.

In May, 1955 our daughter Beverly was born, and in August of that year Putnam was inundated by a terrible flood. I was among several who were cut-off by the flood and trapped for a very wild night at the plant. We had the river on one side and a railroad cut on the other side that had become a raging torrent, so there was no escape. To make matters worse, the plant of our neighbor just across the river was burning and sending showers of sparks in our direction. He

Walter E. Crow
An Autobiography

was in the pyrotechnics business and had illegally stored large quantities of powdered magnesium in drums in his plant. Some of the drums found their way into the river and went off like bombs downstream from the plant. Our building, a typical old New England brick building of five floors was pretty tough, and we managed to save it by forming a bucket brigade to carry water up to the roof. As an added attraction the No. 6 fuel oil contained in underground tanks floated to the surface, thoroughly coating everything in the basement with a thick, sticky coating of oil. The clean up was a task of gargantuan proportions.

At about this time Du Pont approached our management with an offer to license us to produce the Type 600 nylon. It had not lived up to their marketing expectations, and they wanted to spin it off. This resulted in the formation of Belding Chemical Industries as a subsidiary to Belding Hemmingway Co.

BCI was set up in another old mill building in the nearby town of Thompson. The Type 800 process is not a polymerization process but rather a modification process in which 6:6 nylon is reacted with methanol and formaldehyde to form methoxymethyl groups along the 6:6 backbone and thus rendering it alcohol soluble. When applied as a coating it can be cross-linked with acid catalyst, giving it excellent moisture resistance. In addition to our captive use in thread bonding, it was used by a large rubber company as a hydrocarbon barrier in laminated fuel cells used in aircraft wings.

I was Supervisor at BCI until 1970 when I was promoted to Plant Manager - a position I held until my retirement.

In the 1960's we expanded our operation to include polymerization of a variety of nylon polymers, including 6:6 (from the 6 carbon hexamethylene diamine and the 6 carbon adipic acid) 6:10 (hexamethylene diamine and the 10 carbon sebacic acid) and 6 (caprolactam). We mainly produced these as copolymers and terpolymers for a wide variety of end uses -not only for solution applications, but also for injection molding and extrusion. These are truly engineering resins, and in many cases we were required to provide certification of physical properties with each shipment. Our unit operations were quite diverse -in fact I often thought that the plant bore a striking resemblance to a unit operations lab. The polymerization process in particular was very exacting. It went from high pressure at the start to full vacuum at the end and had to be absolutely free from leaks under vacuum. Even a very slight leak under vacuum would cause discoloration through oxidation.

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In the early 1970's the Connecticut D.E.P. began to flex its muscles. They were to be a large and painful thorn in my side until my retirement. In my many meetings with them I was often appalled at the technical ignorance displayed as well as the arrogance. They were the white knights defending the environment and we were the dirty industrial polluters. It made no difference that our discharges were not all that bad nor that we were providing jobs and contributing to the G.N.P. Their proud boast was that Connecticut exceeds the Federal E.P.A. requirements. The only possible recourse was through legal action, but my corporate management had a firm policy precluding that, so I was doomed to frustration. We had to take several expensive corrective actions that probably could have been avoided.

Shortly after my retirement the BCI plant was shut down - the polymer business sold and the Type 800 process moved to another company location in North Carolina. Like so many of the old New England mill buildings it has been left to decay. It saddens me to drive by and see the windows broken, the brick - work eroding and the weeds growing tall.

Thompson, Connecticut
March, 1993