

Belief in Idea, Product Started Shaw Research In Omemee Village

The story behind Shaw Research of Omemee is one of a near genius' belief in an idea and its product.

The story begins in Huntsville early in the century, when 16-year-old Charles Shaw joined a mechanical gang at his father's Anglo-Canadian Leather Co.

He had a natural feeling for chemistry and soon began applying his acquired knowledge to tanning processes. Combined with this was an outstanding mechanical ability.

In 1927 Charles Shaw designed and built the first heavy leather press in Canada. He received necessary patents on his machine and for his achievement was awarded an honorary membership in the American Society of Engineers.

He continued working on faster, more efficient methods of tanning and late in the 1920's developed an advanced system and searched for a place to set up a pilot plant.

After a brief period in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Charles Shaw moved back to Canada and in 1932 was setting up a full - fledged operation in Omemee.

Continually developing and improving tanning processes, Charles Shaw was able to keep his North American Leather Co. producing at a lower cost than much of the competition.

When the plant was destroyed by fire in the '30's a new building was already under construction and equipment was gradually moving in.

The fire had caused a little holdup in operations and, by the Second World War, North American Leather in Omemee was producing 25 percent of all military leather in Canada.

During the latter part of the war the government



Shaw Research employee Charles Evans with proprietor Brackley Shaw

began searching for methods of eliminating fungus growths that were attacking shipments of leather goods to military forces in tropical areas.

North American Leather joined in this search and Charles Shaw put his knowledge of chemistry to work. Before long the plant's laboratory was engrossed in this study and the effects of fungus growth on human health.

Following the war North American Leather was gradually closed down and there emerged the smaller firm of Shaw Research. With Charles Shaw at the helm assisted by his son,

Brackley.

The years of research brought Mr. Shaw into close association with the late Dr. Harold K. Box, of the University of Toronto, who was also devoted to the search for cures of fungus disease.

Dr. Box died in 1956, and Charles Shaw passed away in June, 1961. But their work had progressed far enough so that Shaw Research was manufacturing medicines for oral hygiene.

Now producing a number of these products under the trade name 'Mycomort' Shaw Research is moving gradually ahead in this delicate field under the guid-

ance of Brackley Shaw.

He is assisted by Charles Evans and Christina Connell. Employed in the manufacturing and packaging processes are Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Elliott, and David Goddard.

Shaw Research is housed in one of Omemee's old hotels. Mr. Shaw has utilized many of the old building's original fixtures.

The oak - panelled reception desk still stands in the main hall, and a long, hand carved bar serves for storage in the shipping room. Billiard tables in the plant are now topped with plywood for use as work areas. The huge, ornately decorated oak bar backdrop serves for storage in a back workshop.

The laboratory and Mr. Shaw's office are old apartments, large, bright rooms on the 2nd floor. Throughout the building there is an atmosphere of the old and new.

Brackley Shaw is taking his firm ahead gradually and carefully, following his father's tradition in this exacting work.