

The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University

Ohio State Engineer

Title: Otto W. Winter, '29

Creators: Scott, Roger

Issue Date: 1940-12

Publisher: Ohio State University, College of Engineering

Citation: Ohio State Engineer, vol. 24, no. 2 (December, 1940), 10-11, 19.

URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/1811/35749>

GRADS IN INDUSTRY:

Otto W. Winter, '29

By ROGER SCOTT, I.E. 3

Many of us come to this Institution with the intentions of using the knowledge gained here as a stepping stone to success; the desire to make something of ourselves, to become leaders in our communities, to gain financial independence and security, or to approach our own individual interpretation of the word "success". Since we all wish to be successful engineers it was only natural for me to believe that the readers of this magazine would be interested in learning of a man who once, just as you and I are now doing, plodded these long campus walks, climbed the steep stairs of old U. Hall, went out into the world, and within the short time of eleven years has made himself successful. It is with the purpose of acquainting you with this O. S. U. Alumnus, that I have asked and received his generous co-operation in supplying information vitally necessary for this writing.

Otto W. Winter entered O. S. U. in the fall of 1925, graduating in 1929 in Industrial Engineering. During the summer preceding his senior year he worked for the Cincinnati Milling Company which later proved to be his initial employer.

For his thesis he supervised a research project for this company on the subject of "Milling Power Requirements". This was a subject on which little was known and was co-sponsored by the Engineering Experiment Station. Several I. E. classmates assisted on this project and it was continued the following year and supervised from Cincinnati.

Subsequently he entered a sales training course and was sent to the newly opened Detroit Office. In Detroit his work consisted of sales engineering on milling and grinding equipment particularly with reference to automotive manufacturing.

In the latter part of 1932 he was selected by Cincinnati to go to Russia for them and for the Heald Machine Company of Worcester, Mass. Before going he spent several months at Heald in an intensified course on internal grinding and precision boring machine application, construction, etc. Work in Russia for Cincinnati and Heald consisted of sale promotion, credit negotiating, and technical service to various planning commissions.

Concerning his work in Russia, Otto said, "In a sense, I was loaned to the Soviet Government to help them in their own machine tool building program, which was sadly needing some experienced assistance. The Russians proved to be so slow in following up my recommendations that I eventually handled three or four plants at one time. In each plant I had a staff



O. W. Winter — behind the desk

of Russian engineers to follow through in detail the recommendations made. By working several plants I avoided going completely crazy trying to overcome Russian slowness".

Eventually, because of the even worse situation existing in their cutting tool industry, he got into cutting tool work. Work in this respect also consisted of correcting faults and making improvements in cutting tool design and manufacture.

One very bad handicap was the lack of definite standards, as well as good design, of milling cutters. Consequently he undertook a night project to design a complete line of solid and inserted tooth type milling cutters. On this project he had 30 draftsmen working for him. Speaking of his work in Russia, he stated, "These designs incorporated the best of American practice, a lot of Cincinnati ideas and some of my own. The project was finished and adopted as the Russian National Standard and as far as I know is still in use today".

While there he did a lot of technical lecturing, by interpreter, at various technical institutes and schools. In addition to this he also managed to find time to do some rather extensive writing in Russian technical journals, all of which was most appreciated by the Russian hosts.

Mrs. Winter was with him during the year's contract, and jointly they made an interesting study of Russian people, their government, customs, art, etc. I wish to quote directly Mr. Winter's words regarding his observations: "In Russia I learned some powerful lessons in government and its relation to the individual. Some lessons and experiences that since and especially of late have been most valuable. If a lot of people in this country could but experience, as I did, the lethargy, bureaucracy, inefficiency, and loss of incentive that is experienced when the state takes over what should be private

enterprise and initiative, we would stand a much better chance of saving and preserving those institutions that have and will continue to make America great. We are all so well fed and content that we have too much time to speculate on various 'isms'. The best bleaching process for a parlor pink I can think of is to let him live in Russia for a while and get his nose rubbed in it. Even the dyed-in-the-wool Reds eventually lose color.

"There is no satisfactory substitute for individual reward and initiative. Perhaps a million years from now men will be content to work for the common good of society. Until then, however, it is individual incentive and profit that motivates us and pulls us out of the clock puncher class.

"As we are risking in this country there exists in Russia and other totalitarian states, a political aristocracy, based on kow-towing, favor, fear and secret police that is not only a long, long way from the anticipated proletarian Utopia but is even worse than the blooded aristocracy that revolution smashed.

"The chaotic bureaucracy and bungling of government control of everything coupled with the attendant lack of private and individual initiative and enterprise is impossible to comprehend without having actually experienced it. Famine, starvation, shortage of everything, even wood and oil, are only a part of the result and price paid".

After returning from Russia, he resumed work of a sales engineering nature for the Cincinnati Milling Machine and Cincinnati Grinders, Inc. This work included layout of some complete motor production lines in collaboration with other machine tool builders.

Several months later an unusual opportunity opened up at Whitman & Barnes, Inc. of Detroit. This company engaged in the manufacture of drills primarily desired to broaden out and include milling cutters, special tools, reamers, etc. His job then was to organize a separate division for this purpose. As general manager of this division the work included designing a complete new line of solid and inserted tooth type milling cutters, tooling them up, and putting them into production and handling all sales promotion work in this connection. A complete engineering and manufacturing organization was hired and equipment selected, or built, and set up for operation. In other words they started from scratch and built a complete company within a company. The only exception to this was that the straight selling was handled with the existing sales organization. After two years of profitable operation it was realized that drill salesmen were not competent to handle the sales engineering problems involved in special cutting tools. Under these circumstances a separate sales organization was necessary. In addition to this, considerable additional equipment was required. These factors coupled with a highly unethical and cut-throat competitive situation that was devel-

oping in the special tool business resulted in a decision to get out of this business rather than do a half-way job and lose customer good-will.

About this time an opportunity developed with the Kent-Owens Machine Company of Toledo, Ohio. The work here as industrial engineer was to establish a production control, tool control, and material control system. These systems were installed and the plant was re-arranged and put on an efficient basis within a year's time before the present opportunity opened up.

His job now, as previously mentioned, is factory manager of the Columbus McKinnon Chain Corporation and Chisholm-Moore Hoist Corporation of Tonawanda, New York, in charge of all manufacturing, personnel, production, maintenance, inspection, etc., and collaborating on engineering matters. He said, "We have had a lot of fun the past three years revising and improving the business. The work is not yet complete but a great deal of progress has been made. For that matter I will be surprised if the task is ever really completed. The successful industrial engineer is always striving to 'find the one best way', quoting John Younger, head of Department of Industrial Engineering, the Ohio State University. For that matter any firm as well as any executive or industrial engineer that complacently thinks the best way has been found is doomed to failure. Today the track is fast, competition is tough and keen and no one can rest long on their oars. Who wants to, anyhow—continual dis-satisfaction and striving for improvement, against standing still, content with things as they are, is the difference between living and existing."

Below are listed the requisites of a successful engineer as given to me by Otto Winter:

1. Put the best effort into your job that you possibly can. Never be satisfied with what you are doing or have done. There is always a better way, and in the words of John Younger, "Find the one best way".
2. Never stop studying. You can never know too much about your profession. Your four years in college are only prelims for the main bout later on. There is no real substitute for "knowing your stuff".
3. Make your job your hobby. Be intensely interested in it. Love work.
4. Never make an enemy. It can be avoided. People may be envious or jealous but they don't have to hate or dislike you; see to it that they don't.
5. Don't crawl in a shell. Join and be active in professional societies. Do some writing for trade papers and the like.
6. Cultivate the art of diplomacy. Don't let your youthful exuberance and ambitions run amuck. Remember you've got to learn to get along with people in a competitive world.

(Continued on Page 19)

Otto W. Winter

(Continued from Page 11)

7. Keep smiling. Don't be a sourpuss. No one wants to hear your troubles; listen to theirs and realize how well off you really are.
8. Be fair and honest. A reputation for fair dealing and honesty is a precious and delicate thing to be carefully guarded. Just a few slips and the results can be chaotic.
9. Live and let live. Be human and don't throw stones or try to pose as a saint. Let your actions do your preaching.
10. Keep fit. Don't let yourself go. Remember "a sound mind in a sound body".
11. Cultivate the ability to take stock of what you have. Know what the "have-nots" have not and you have. Learn to appreciate things normally taken for granted.
12. Be a real full-fledged American citizen. Take an active part in community affairs. Don't gripe at bad government and politics if you yourself do nothing to correct conditions.

"There are a lot of other requisites one could set up for success. Much depends on what one considers success. Too often we attach the amassing of a lot of money to the term success. I have tried to outline some of those requisites to success other than how to make a lot of money."

In connection with community activity he practices what he preaches. At the present he is President of the

Rotary Club of the Tonawandas, First Vice-President of the Business and Civic Association of the Tonawandas (Senior Chamber of Commerce), State Chairman of the Industrial Relations Committee of the New York State Junior Chamber of Commerce and a director of the Boys Club of the Tonawandas. He is, likewise, active in professional society affairs (belongs to four of them) and especially, the American Society of Tool Engineers, of which he is a past chairman of Detroit, Toledo and Buffalo Chapters, as well as a National director. His principal activity in this society is in the capacity of member of the National Educational Committee. In this connection he is very busy at the present on matters pertaining to the training of needed skilled labor for the National defense program.

Mr. Winter has an intense interest in sports of any kind. He says, "I can still do 100 yards in 10 seconds and will take on any 11-year alumnus in any athletic contest and give him odds." Well boys, the line forms on the right, oh yes! I will be glad to hold the stakes as a matter of accommodation. But before you do anything rash, let's take a look at his record. While in school he was president of the Varsity "O", member of the gym team and taught freshman gymnastics for three years. After graduation he taught the same in the Y. M. C. A.'s of Detroit and Toledo, the Physical Culture Institute of Moscos and in Tonawanda. If anyone still wishes to accept the challenge, you may find him at the annual Industrial Engineers' picnic.