

THE BIG JOB

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First Car of Chlorine Rolls out of B.M.I.

The strange quiet of a Sunday afternoon pervades the project. Down at one end of the field a few workmen squat in the shade. They seem to be waiting for something. Near them stands a great black tank car. Up the track rolls BMI's big Diesel locomotive. It nudges gently into the tank-car couplings and pauses. Then slowly it starts rolling in the opposite direction, pulling the tank car after it.

Without ceremony, without officials present--with no more fanfare than would accompany the switching of a car of lumber--the first product made at BMI rolls away from the project. It is a car bearing 55 tons of liquid chlorine, vital chemical in the war effort. The chlorine came from a portion of the recently completed cell building which opened with less trouble and less difficulty--according to officials of the Hooker Electrochemical Company--than has marked the beginning of production in any chlorine plant in the United States. As the car moved off the project one realized that it contained something more than Chlorine. It represented a triumph of design, sound construction of an intricate plant and tens of thousands of man hours by plumbers, electricians, painters and all the other crafts who wrought this marvel of modern electrochemistry.

Loading the specially designed chlorine car was an interesting process. Chlorine entered the car at a temperature of about 32 degrees below zero. It immediately vaporized. The chlorine gas then passed back into the liquefaction plant. As the process continued the car gradually cooled. When the car contained about 50 tons of liquid chlorine valves were closed. Vaporization inside the car continued until the pressure of the gas effected an equilibrium preventing further vaporization. Experts say the temperature of the chlorine in the car will increase by only four degrees in transit.

IT'S BREAKFAST TIME AT BMI

"Fry six-thousand, sunny-side up."

The BMI project is about to start another day. It's 3 a.m. Anderson's cooks are going to work.

"Gimme 260 pounds of coffee. Haul out 1500 pounds of sugar--today's portion of the

45,000 pounds for the month. Cut up four steers for supper. Make 5,000 sandwiches. Get them out to the canteens pronto."

MEALS EVEN WHEN COOKS ARE ABSENT

"How's that? Four cooks missing? Call our employment offices at Salt Lake and L. A. Get some more cooks here quick. Meantime, shake a leg. Can't tell these boys we haven't got cooks to get their breakfast. 'So what?' they'd answer. 'Let's eat!'"

AND IT STARTS AGAIN TOMORROW

It's just another one of those big tough jobs in these parts. On many days, with a labor turnover that has run as high as 120 per cent a week--despite 20 per cent bonuses for those who stay on the job--on many days when the last bite has been taken and the last drink gulped, they look back wearily and wonder how they managed it all.

TRY TO BUY HALF TON OF BACON

Buyers in Los Angeles, Salt Lake: *"Listen, we want 1,000 pounds of bacon. We need 100 pounds a day."*

"How's that? We get 200 pounds? Oh, I see. The Army and Navy again, eh? Well, that's O.K. They come first. Transports going out maybe. Or cargo ships. Wrap up the 200 pounds."

ARMY, NAVY--THEN ANDERSONS

In Coast food market priorities, Andersons, buying food for you and me, ranks next to the armed forces. But sometimes the Army and Navy almost clean out the supplies before it comes our turn. Then there's a bustle in secondary markets all over the Coast, so the cry, "When do we eat," can be answered by the dinner bell.

WHEN THE SUN GETS HIGH

It's noon around the project. Seventeen canteens go into action. In addition to the 5,000 sandwiches, those girls hand out 8,000 pints of milk every day. The whole project consumes 9,000 bottled pints a day, plus about 500 gallons in bulk. Almost half of it is hauled from Los Angeles. The girls sell much of the 12,000 bottles of soft drinks consumed every 24 hours.

FOOD BY THE TON BY TRUCK

It takes 300,000 pounds of food a week to fuel the bodies of BMI project workers. A 20-ton Anderson Diesel pulls in from L. A. three times a week. The rest comes on other

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conveyances. Altogether Anderson serves 20,000 meals a day. At the camp three men use facilities--dining room, showers, and so forth--for every man who lives in a dorm or a tent. The dining room over there covers nearly half an acre. It seats 2,000. The kitchen is nearly as large. It takes 350 persons to prepare the food and serve it--and they use 350 dozens of every kind of utensil and dish.

JUST A FEW SMALL ITEMS

We won't bore you with too many items. Here are a few. In the coffee shop alone, folks eat 4,600 soft rolls and 500 loaves of bread a day. All baking is done here by Andersons. It takes a ton of meat for supper at the camp.

"Ice cream for dinner? Freeze 450 gallons. And remember, everybody, when ice cream is on the list, the boys stay at the table 15 minutes longer.

"If it's canned peaches, open up 130 gallons."

WHY BUYERS GET GRAY HAIR

Buyers are bang up against it when they go out to buy coffee, tea, and spices in quantities needed here. The project calls for four tons of coffee and half a ton of tea a month. Coffee comes from Brazil. Ships are scarce. Tea comes from Ceylon, the East Indies, Japan. Write your own answer to that one. Supply house agents yawn and look out the window when a buyer mentions Oriental spices these days.

A FEW OTHER SERVICES

The commissary at the camp is post office, laundry, barber shop, lounging room, thirst-quencher, and store. Four employees sort the mail and deliver it throughout the camp. The laundry service handles 450 bundles a day. It all goes to Los Angeles and back because local laundries are not equipped to handle it.

A TWO-WAY BENDER

Down in the field they're laying wire netting on steps before pouring concrete stairs. It's a long and difficult job to bend these sheets of net. So somebody thinks a bender ought to be made. And this is one for the book. They take the task to the welders. The boys have never seen a bender that bends two-ways as they want this netting bent for steps. Neither has anyone else. But the welders make the machine anyway. It's in use on the job every day now--saving thousands of man hours and no little cussing. Doing impossible things like that around here is becoming an old project tradition--like getting breakfast without cooks.

THE SHADES OF NIGHT HAVE FALLEN

The camp is silent. Swing shifters are at work. The commissary is empty. The boys in bed are between some of the 15,000 sheets it takes to keep fresh bedding on hand. Their heads are on some of the 12,000 pillowcases. And--oh yes--the camp has 10,000 woolen blankets. Phew! And is buying more. Don't laugh! You'll be needing them--and it won't be long now, either.

JUST ANOTHER DAY AT BMI

An alarm clock sounds off. Cooks mutter at the awakening and start to dress. It's the opening of another day at BMI.

"Hey--6,000 hen fruit and wreck 'em. Whatsa matter with them buyers? No bacon? Must be the Army and Navy again."

The sun rises. In come the waitresses from the Boulder City dormitories. (Building new ones for them near the camp now.) "What? Four waitresses got married and quit? It's just one damned thing after another." No matter what you're doing on this job--making two-way benders or feeding folks--you've got to be able to dish it out--and take it.

A LITTLE ABOUT CHLORINE

Down in the field a group of engineers are telling a non-technical man about chlorine. Interesting chemical, this chlorine. And badly needed in the war effort. The plant here, when finished, will be the world's largest. Next to fluorine, chlorine is the most electro-negative element. It is obtained by the electrolysis of chlorides--salt to you.

Chlorine is used for bleaching paper and cloth and for the purification of water. It is needed in extracting copper, lead, and zinc from their ores, and in separating tungsten and vanadium from theirs. It is used for detinning scrap white cast iron and scrap galvanized iron.

ONE STEP NEARER THAT GOAL

The whistle blows. Lunch time. The ca- teens open. Clusters of men from all kinds of crews that are doing all kinds of impossible things gather at the little wooden buildings.

"Five thousand sandwiches. Eight thousand quarts of milk."

Another half day of progress. We're that much nearer to completing the No. 1 war job of the U.S.A.

Old Glory flies over the field.

Hot? Sure. But Anderson's buying blankets.