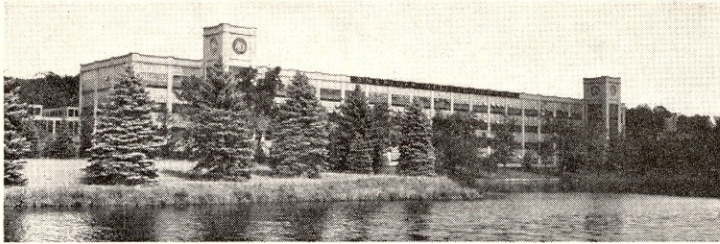


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Complete Line Of Safety Products Manufactured By AO Putnam Plant

Last month marked the sixth anniversary of AO's Putnam Plant which produces safety equipment. The story behind this plant goes back to 1938 when the production facilities and a few of the personnel of the Safety Equipment Sales Company of Cleveland, Ohio, which AO had acquired a few years previously, were moved to Southbridge. At that time space was provided on the third floor of Casedale for the manufacture of safety clothing, and the facilities for the production of safety goggles were installed at Nomar. In 1939 the first of AO's respirators were produced at Casedale, and in the short space of eight years this article has become one of the major items of the Safety Division. By 1941 D9C, the safety clothing department, was outgrowing its Casedale quarters, and it was then that the decision was made to purchase the building in Putnam which now contains all of the manufacturing facilities of the Safety Division.

At the start a total of twenty-eight people comprised the entire supervisory, office, production, and maintenance personnel of this plant. At the height of the war effort the total number of employees rose to over 300, and today approximately 200 people are employed there.

In 1942 the cup-goggle production facilities were moved from Southbridge, and a short while after this the production of respirators was also moved to Putnam. In 1944 a new item, the Brow Rest Goggle, was added, and an endless belt assembly line was set up for its production. At one time between 1944 and the end of World War II in August, 1945, 160,000 of these goggles were coming off this assembly line every week. This entire production was going to the U. S. Armed Services,



and the popularity of this sun goggle, the lenses of which are Polaroid sheeting, is attested to by the weekly production figure stated above. The wartime demand for leather gloves and asbestos gunners mitts was also very large and resulted in a peak production figure of 7,500 pairs weekly.

Today the complete line of AO Safety equipment includes more than two dozen styles of goggles among which are some designed for specific occupations such as welding and sandblasting in addition to others designed to protect the eyes of those working on jobs where flying objects are a constant hazard. Face shields made of lightweight cellulose acetate and welding helmets, both of which are designed to protect the face as well as the eyes of people in certain hazardous occupations, are also included among AO's safety products. There are seven styles of respirators manufactured to protect workers and scientists against hazards of dust, vapor, gas, and mist. In the safety clothing line there are literally scores of gloves, mittens, hand guards, and finger guards in addition to coats, leggings, aprons, spats, and other specially designed articles to protect arms, legs, and bodies of workmen.