



C. F. McKinney, Supervisor of Tools & Machinery for the Erie Railroad intent at his hobby in the basement of his home

## HIS HOBBY HELPS FURNISH HIS HOUSE

AS FAR back as I can remember tools and machinery interested me. My father, a farmer in Louisiana, had a fair equipment of hand wood-working tools, some of which I learned to use quite early, largely, of course, in making play equipment.

At the age of 17 I went to work on a neighbor's plantation as blacksmith and farm hand. I had had very little blacksmithing experience, but made out pretty good on sharpening plow points and other ordinary work. This was back in the "horse and buggy days" and one job I got was to replace three or four spokes in a "cullard" lady's buggy wheel. I got the spokes whittled out and applied so that the job looked fairly respectable, but never having seen a tire applied to a wheel (the tire when cold should be slightly smaller than the wheel, heated to stretch it, applied to the wheel while hot and then cooled off with water before it has time to burn the wood rim) I put the tire on cold and the lady proceeded on her semi-annual trip to town, twelve miles away, but only got about three miles when the said wheel went on a "lay down" strike, which did not help my reputation very much as an all around blacksmith. I later decided I needed some real experience in blacksmithing and got a job as helper in a general repair shop where I soon learned how to shrink tires on so they would stay put.

My next job was as a "novelty workman", turning wood porch columns, balusters and stairway posts, as well as sawing out on a scroll saw ornamental bric-a-brac for exterior house trim-

By C. F. MCKINNEY  
*Supervisor of Tools & Machinery*

ming. I had had practically no experience in this line of work, but was given an opportunity to take over the shop and practice for a week at no salary to see what I could do. At the end of the week I was given the job at \$2 per 10-hour day, which was twice as much as I had ever made before. I held this job nine months and then went back to school. Prior to my graduation from college, I had worked at the following trades in addition to the work already mentioned: Carpenter, pipe-fitter's helper, pipe-fitter, stationary fireman, stationary engineer, millwright and cook.

The cooking experience came about with my signing up as a deck hand on a Government snag boat to clean out snags and other obstructions in the Pearl river in southern Louisiana. When operations were to start, all twelve deck hands were on board but no cook had been hired and the captain asked for a volunteer as a temporary assignment. I admitted that I could fry bacon and make biscuits, which was more than any of the others would acknowledge. So I drew the K.P. job temporarily. It lasted as long as I stayed on the boat all that summer. However, between meals I had some time to myself to hunt or get out in a small boat with a rifle and shoot alligators, which were quite plentiful. Afoot one Sunday afternoon in the swamps hunting squirrels I strayed off too far and got lost. I spent that night up a tree; a few semi-wild hogs came around and kept me awake wondering what they were until I shot at them. Then they would grunt and run away, much to my relief.

(Continued on page 28)

## His Hobby Helps Furnish His House

(Continued from page 7)

My cellar work shop equipment at my home on the West Side, Cleveland, is the result of a long desire to own and have tools to make about anything I might want to. This goal has not yet been reached, but considerable progress along this line has been achieved piece-meal. The first power tools were acquired in 1933; the purchase of each unit, of course, has to be justified on some economic basis. For example, in 1933 I needed a set of storm sash and screens for my home. These could have been purchased at that time ready-made for approximately \$110. I figured the materials could be bought for about \$50, leaving \$60 to buy equipment to make them with and break even. Naturally, the first step was to buy the sash and screen materials (get started, then you can't back out), then acquire the tools one at a time. First, I needed a circular saw to cut the framing to length with. After looking over the models I selected one with various attachments including a half H.P. motor at a cost of \$70. The next operation required a drill press with mortising attachment, cost \$40. To make the sash with square framing would give a cheap appearance to the job, so this called for a shaper or moulding cutter with bits, cost \$80. Most of the glass had to be cut, which is usually done by first class glaziers with a 10-cent cutter and which I tried to do, but broke too much glass and had to purchase a real diamond (with not much better results) at a cost of \$7. Then the sash and screen frames had to be fitted to the house frames (hand-planing is quite slow and laborious), so at a cost of \$75 for a power jointer or planer, this problem was solved. Total cost of materials and tools, \$322, less cost of purchasing ready made, \$110, leaves a balance of \$212 chargeable to something.

After the job is done you have the tools and usually find a good

many uses for them later and get a great deal of satisfaction out of being able to do some job quickly that would be practically impossible to do otherwise.

My power tool equipment consists of individually mounted units as follows: 10-inch Delta circular saw, one-half H.P. motor; 11-inch Delta wood lathe, double length bed, one-half H.P. motor; 14-inch Delta band saw, one-fourth H.P. motor; 6-inch Delta jointer or planer, one-half H.P. motor; 6-inch Delta double end emery wheel, one-third H.P. motor; 5-inch Atlas drill press, one-fourth H.P. motor; 48-inch Turner jig saw, one-fourth H.P. motor; Stanley router and shaper, three-eighths H.P. motor; 20-inch grindstone, one-fourth H.P. motor; 5-inch by 8-ft. bed Sidney engine lathe, three-fourths H.P. motor; Pratt and Whitney hand miller, one-half H.P. motor; paint spray outfit, one-fourth H.P. motor, and forge and anvil, one-man power.

Production from these facilities includes laying hardwood floors throughout my house. It is much less fatiguing to cut off and rip oak boards with a power saw than by hand. I made the base board and cap molding used in connection with sheet asbestos tiling wainscoting applied in both the kitchen and bath room; one mahogany grandfather's clock; two silhouette inlaid pictures of a farmer plowing, a positive and a negative; two floor lamps of multi-woods glued together and turned; two brass floor lamps; two shelf-type electric clock frames; one inlaid serving tray; one veneered desk top; one four-post with two shelves, coat, and hat rack and one streamlined top for an antique stand.

The problem of cellar space to operate in has to be worked out every once in a while, as more equipment is acquired. The crowded condition was greatly relieved about three years ago by buying a \$400 gas furnace and tearing out the coal bin. This move, however, proved to be very satisfactory from several other angles and is not charged to the "hobby" account.

Conditions are again getting terrible and the only area left is a space about 8 ft. by 10 ft. in one corner occupied by a couple of stationary tubs, a Bendix and a Thor ironer. If I could just get rid of these I would be all set for a while. However, the matter has not even been discussed except in a joking way.

<b>BOWNS, Inc.</b>	ESTABLISHED 1900
<b>ACE, NEW YORK</b>	
<b>HIGH GRADE BITUMINOUS COALS</b>	