Reasons Greetings! from JW Sprague

SPRAGUE SPECIALTIES, the past year has been an interesting and eventful one. While we have watched the tragic and terrible events in the old world, our business has, fortunately, not undergone the hardships and threats found in other lands.

We have had, on the other hand, a good share of the kind of problems that confront business organizations today. We live in a changing world, and if the company does not go ahead it is pretty certain that it is slipping backward. New developments in industry offer opportunities for new applications of the type of products we make. The constant prod of competition and, of course, our obligations and opportunities for service in our country's defense program have given management and employees plenty to think about during 1940. Along the road of progress and change we have discontinued some lines, and I am proud of the new developments that we have introduced such as our graphitized condensers and special models used in connection with fluorescent lighting.

Our ability to operate and compete successfully in this fast changing industry has been due not alone to the work of our selling and engineering departments that have created the models and brought in the new business, but also, and I might say particularly, to the willing and intelligent cooperation of every individual in our plant. Conditions are much too difficult these days for any company long to survive that does not have, as we do, such fine cooperation on the part of all. The old motto “United we stand, divided we fall” has always applied to business, but never more so than today.

I want to thank every member of our organization personally for the splendid help and cooperation given over the past year. In doing so, I also want to extend my heartiest good wishes for the success and happiness of all of you.

R. C. SPRAGUE, President.
CREDIT UNION ATTRACTS $350 IN SAVINGS WEEKLY

A remarkable total of $350 is being paid in on Credit Union saving shares every week according to Stanley Denoyan, Sprague Credit Union Treasurer. This vigorous new Sprague employee activity now shows paid-in shares of $3,985. As of the end of November, cash amounted to $1,360.18, and personal loans have reached $2,755.

This April, officers and directors of the Union will consider a dividend payment. At the October meeting, the Union decided to pass the dividend which might have been paid then and transferred $67.50 to pay off the original incorporators who are now entirely taken care of. The sum of $71.27 was paid into the Guarantee Fund, leaving undivided profits of $6.37 at the end of the first fiscal year, which has lasted only five months. Considering that this is the first year of the Sprague Credit Union’s operation, Treasurer Denoyan considers that they have done very well. “It’s amazing,” he says.

GIVE THIS MAN A PAY CUT

Without a doubt in the world there would be a lot of kicks and grumbling in your department if one member of it stood around all day, did nothing constructive, and pulled down a salary ranging anywhere from $150 to $300 a week. That’s a nice piece of change. And yet that is the sort of loss that goes on every week in some of our departments, all because of one high-salaried gentleman. His name is Mr. Waste.

Not so long ago, in our Dry Rolling Department, approximately $315 in expensive treated foil and paper was going in the scrap can every week. Some of this, of course, was the inevitable price of a long and complicated process with delicate and hard-to-handle materials. Yet conscientious work and improved equipment and better methods cut this loss by 890 a week. And improvements are still being made.

Mr. Waste is nobody’s friend. He makes prices higher and thereby cuts down the possibility of sales and additional employment. He also takes a tremendous chunk out of the total net income of the company so that there is less to go around for everybody else. That is why the savings that we are making are encouraging. They point the way and show what can be done.

Of the total amount of waste that occurs, a large percentage is due to the human element. This part can, and must, be cut to the minimum. Here are a few general rules to observe in helping to cut down these losses.

1. Remember the Golden Rule of production. Turn over parts and materials to the next department as you would like to have them turn them over to you.

2. If you are getting poor or damaged stock to work with, tell your foreman so that he can see that the root of the trouble is found in the other department.

3. Handle materials with care. Remember that the next person to handle or process them is human and send the materials or parts along in a way that will make it easy for the next person to handle them without damage or waste.

4. Put in some thinking on what can be done to cut down on losses. Several of our employees have received welcome suggestion awards under the Sprague Suggestion System for ideas. You too can win suggestion cash and recognition from the company by helping with this important problem of giving Mr. Waste as big a pay cut as possible.

RADIO INTERFERENCE, STARTING CONDENSERS, SUBJECTS OF LEAFLETS

Sprague Products Company continues to keep the world informed of facts and developments in the condenser field by informative, easy-to-read leaflets. Two recent publications include “Radio Interference for Public Utilities,” which is a discussion of the cause and cure of the various types of radio interference on transmission and distribution lines. The Sprague Interference Locator, Analyzer,
NEW PROCESS GIVES LOW POWER FACTOR AT 85°C.
TO SPRAGUE CASTOR OIL FLUORESCENT CONDENSERS

Now Indicated for Job Previously Done
by Chlorinated Di-Phenyl
Prompt Delivery Possible

By an important change in processing procedure developed in our laboratories, Sprague castor oil condensers for fluorescent lamp auxiliaries now operate at 85°C, with a lower power factor than previously registered by condensers of this type at 65°C. Thus, these new models fulfill the specifications previously expected only of chlorinated di-phenyl condensers.

The flash-point of the oil used is high enough to give a more than adequate safety margin under maximum heat conditions. Thus a new model condenser has been made available to the fluorescent industry and we are proud to be in a position to adequately supply an important share of this market.

Other developments and methods in our manufacturing process with respect to type of raw materials used have also eliminated a serious bottle-neck in this field where certain raw materials required for condensers used for these purposes are facing conditions of limited supply. Sprague’s ability to exempt itself from the need of these specific materials makes early delivery arrangement possible. This is an attractive if not extremely important factor from the point of view of the customer.

Experiments show an average power factor of less than three per cent at 85°C. Previous chlorinated di-phenyl models which have been tested by us show power factors at this temperature ranging from .49 per cent to 9.2 per cent, with an average of 4.5 per cent. The new Sprague models are found to operate successfully under very high ironization voltages. Models are flash-tested at voltages between 700 and 800 volts AC. Field demonstration of the intrinsic worth and reliability of the methods now applied to the manufacture of these models has been given in a number of sizeable orders of comparative models already shipped and installed.

MANY NEW USES OF SPRAGUE CONDENSERS IN CONNECTION WITH FLUORESCENT LIGHTING

Sprague condensers play an important part in increasing the usefulness and convenience of the products of the fast developing business of industrial and home fluorescent lighting.

1. Sprague capacitors are used for power factor correction of fluorescent lamps which, without correction, run about 50 per cent. Power companies usually require that such installations be corrected to have a minimum power factor of 90 per cent.

2. A special model Sprague resistor has also been made available for use where fluorescent lamps are operated from DC lines. These handy and convenient accessories are rugged and easy to plug in. Various models to fit different wattage and voltage requirements are available.

3. Sprague filters are also used to separate out such radio interference as may be set up on electric supply lines by nearby fluorescent light installations. Various types of filters are offered to meet different field conditions.

All these products are described and listed briefly on our form C-350, brought out by Mr. Kalker’s department of Sprague Products.

DO YOU KNOW?

The castor oil (oleum ricini) used in the new Sprague fluorescent condensers tastes better, smells less, and is purer than the castor oil the doctors prescribe.

* * *

The electrolyte in the formation electrolytes we use is twenty times purer than a similar chemical compound that makes up a popular eye-wash sold in the drug stores.

* * *

That we haven’t lost a run of our castor oil condensers since we put in our new process.

* * *

That the new Life-test Oven for KVA has voltages all the way from 575 up to 1,200 volts.

There are two kinds of men, those who do things and those who get credit for doing things.

— Calvin Coolidge.
Taking a Curtain Call: The entire cast of the Minstrel Show.

Among the surprises resulting from the show was the revelation that dramatic talent lurks in our midst. The old-fashioned “meller-drammer” presented in the first part of the show gave North Adams’ younger generation a satirical glimpse of what their fathers and mothers once witnessed and enjoyed — but hardly in the same spirit and atmosphere. The audience enjoyed itself immensely by hissing the villain and cheering the gallant hero. All parts in the play were excellently portrayed. The actors

THE THIRD ANNUAL SPRAGUE CHARITY REVUE

WHEN the curtain fell on the Third Annual Sprague Charity Revue on Friday night, December 13, the many weeks of hard and often discouraging work seemed certainly justified. A show full of good tunes, novelties and pep had put many useful dollars into the Sprague Christmas Basket Fund to make Christmas brighter in several needy homes.
were: George Livermore, Patricia Siciliano, Ernest LaFramboise, Doris Sanford, Laurence Haskins, Helen O'Connell and Kathleen Bellows. The play was directed by Mr. J. H. Reilly, head of the English Department of Drury High School. Prompters were Helen Albini and Emmanuel Landry. "She was Only a Farmer's Daughter" was certainly a treat and will long be remembered.

The antics of six good end men, an alert, large chorus, and fine solo work, made the Minstrel a definite hit. Two novelty numbers, "McNamara's Band" and "Foolish Facts," given by the end men, received several encores and were the hits of the Minstrel. One of the high lights of the show was certainly the appearance of the chorus with girls in evening gowns and with corsages and men in dark suits and black bow ties. Pranks amongst the audience were enjoyed and good-naturedly received.

As usual, after the last performance, an impromptu party was organized at Burke's to which everyone from Director Johnnie Quirk to the stage hands quickly retired. There the minstrel songs were sung for the last time, dancing was enjoyed, rehearsal incidents recalled, and...!

To mention the names of all who contributed on or off the stage to make the show a success would be almost impossible. There were perhaps two hundred, including ushers, cast, ticket sellers, candy makers, stage hands, committeemen, cash donors, who spared no effort in putting the big show over. Everyone is anxiously anticipating another Revue for 1941.
FRED POWERS

Fred Ralph Powers, Jr. is in charge of our miscellaneous production divisions covering pre-tuners, push-button tuners, trimmers, resistors, silver micas, and coaxial tuners. He is an authentic radio man, having held special experimental Army and amateur radio licenses. After he has covered the subject of radio, however, one more fact develops, he is a fisherman.

On more than one occasion, an automobile driving by a likely trout stream has been seen to stop suddenly and Fred Powers, who always keeps a complete fishing equipment in the back of his car, will jump out armed with a four and a half ounce split-bamboo rod, a fishing basket and net, and an extensive supply of dry flies made by himself, and leap to the attack on the speckled denizens of the rapid waters. Fred’s biggest trout was a two-pounder snared from the Deerfield River with a Light Cahill fly. Confidentially, Fred doesn’t confine his efforts solely to trout, and we submit in evidence an authentic photograph to be found on page 7 of the Sprague LOG dated August, 1940.

Powers has been a radio man almost since the time he could first manipulate a screw-driver. He joined up with two Williams College students and became a radio ham, at the same time picking up a good part of a college education on the side after his graduation from Williamstown High School. He built and operated two radio stations, W1FDC and W1EJV. The former was an experimental station on high frequency, the other an ordinary amateur transmitter. He did control work for the United States Army, relaying messages, and on Sunday afternoons would broadcast at 160 meters. At the time of the Pasadena earthquake, Powers relayed messages for George Colle, then a student at Williams College and a nephew of the famous automobile manufacturer, and made contact with Ford’s mother and sister in the earthquake area. He also handled many messages during the time of the floods. Although his special licenses have expired as he has given more time to business, Powers is still constantly experimenting with receiving sets.

In fact it was a radio license that helped him get his first job with Sprague in 1931 as a capacity and resistance bridge operator. After working there for a year, Mr. Teeple asked him to serve in his department as a clerk, and eventually Fred took over charge of his present departments. Also in his experience sheet, Fred cherishes the memories of work for Western Union in various capacities all the way from messenger boy to occasional operator.

For a little personal history, Powers was born in Union City New Jersey, and then moved to New York City, where his father became a friend of Al Smith of brown derby fame. The Powers family came to Williamstown around 1925.

Powers married Miss Anna Deuno of North Adams who, by the way, used to work in our Dry-rolling Department. She is also enthusiastic about fishing and was with him when he caught the two-pounder. They have two children: Grace, five, and Fred, 3d, two.

HOW IT SOMETIMES SEEMS

Design us an engine the head men say,
And it’s got to be built in such a way
That if it should stall or fail to start
The dumbest mechanic can take it apart,
Can just lay it down on an ordinary bench
And do the whole job with an old Stillson wrench.

Make the parts as simple as they can be
So they’ll all interchange with a Model T.
And cost is a factor to keep in mind,
So eliminate gadgets of every kind.
But much as it goes against the grain
There are certain things you must retain:
The dual ignition, the oversize sump,
The hydro control — and the vacuum pump.
And one thing more — (now don’t get mad),
A supercharger you’d better add.
It must run on the cheapest of gasoline,
Or better still, on kerosene.
And three thousand horses it has to show
With an oil consumption of zero.
And there is something else I forgot to say —
The date of delivery is yesterday.
And on second thought, there’s one thing more —
It’s got to be sold in a ten-cent store.

— Author Unknown.
THREE DEER BAGGED BY SPRAGUE HUNSTSMEN —
DURANT SHOOTS IN SELF-DEFENSE

At least three deer were bagged by intrepid Sprague hunters during the brief week's hunting season, the first of this month. So far, the hunters who have reported are Alex Durant, Dalmon Chilson, and Roger Garner.

Undoubtedly the most thrilling tale is that told by Durant, who ranks as one of the leading marksmen in North Adams and is also expert with bow and arrow. It seems Durant was hunting on Zoar Mountain, he jumped two deer, one of them a large buck at which he fired and either grazed or missed. As the second one came out, Durant took a difficult angle shot which wounded the beast, as it later developed, desperately. Durant paused to reload his three-shot, twenty-gauge shot gun. And then — suspense grows thick — and to use Durant's own words,

"I had company."

Indeed, the spike-horned buck had turned on its tracks and in blind fury was charging the Sprague Laboratory technician, whose score for the four positions in riflery is 180 out of 200. The secretary of the Sprague Rifle Club fired again, hit the animal square in the head. The beast shook its antler, but continued the charge. Only a last-minute shot brought it down. Take it from one who knows, it "wasn't funny when it was happening."

Roger Garner shot his 125-pound animal in Williamstown. Eleven shots were fired and the animal was chased for a considerable distance before succumbing. It is well to remember that hunters in Massachusetts are required by law to use shotguns. Deer hangs for two weeks before it makes good venison.

RADIO IN ITS TWENTY-FIRST YEAR

Last month modern radio celebrated its twentieth year, the first historic broadcast having taken place November 2, 1920, when KDKA transmitted the Harding election returns from Pittsburgh. Since that time, the industry has progressed in giant strides, both commercially and scientifically.

The November issue of "Radio Today" carries pictures of the old-time sets with as many as nine different controls. Head phones, goose-neck magnetic speakers, crystal detectors, and complicated battery arrangements made radio more of an adventure into electrical science than a form of entertainment.

Prices, too, were far higher. Many people bought parts and assembled their own sets.

In its step-by-step history of radio, "Radio Today" shows many a landmark. 1922 marked the first commercial broadcast program, in 1924 the radio chains began. Radio listeners can remember the long station announcements in which the call letters of every station in the chain would be announced. By 1925, socket power units were developed, and it was not until 1927 that the Federal Radio Commission established specific air wave channels for the different stations.

The depression brought the growth of several important commercial fields. Midget and table models became popular, automatic volume controls were introduced, auto radios and short-wave reception became popular. 1937 marked the introduction of push-button tuning, something in which Sprague Specialties has a particular interest. It is interesting that 1940 shows a total of $50,000,000 invested in the plants of 1,064 radio manufacturers throughout the country. 862 broadcasting stations are listed with an annual gross revenue of $135,000,000.

Sprague Specialties became a substantial factor in the picture about the time of AC operated radios in 1928 and 1929. Progress of Sprague models and Sprague engineering can serve as a good index in radio development. The whole is never greater than the sum of its parts, and radio developments and radio design have been able to progress only with the development and progress in the condensers, resistors, tuners, and of course all the other units that go into making the set.

FOURTH RESCUE FOR GEORGE ROY

Saving people's lives is becoming, for George Roy, one of our intrepid Sprague truck drivers, just part of a day's work.

Just a week before Christmas, George saved little Thomas Bernard of 295 Beaver Street and this was the fourth rescue that he has made. In the excitement, George sprained his knee and had to receive medical attention for it from our Dr. McWilliams.

Congratulations again for your swift and courageous act.
VACATIONS

Hattie Roy and Albert Zepka took their vacations beginning December 9.

Also on December 9, Harold Dufraine and Leslie Kent started on a week’s deer hunting.

Ivis Lewis chose December 16 as his vacation date.

Fourteen persons began their vacations December 23, including Pat Beniniasa, Eleanor Brooks, Mary Curie, Ralph Deso, Angelina Ganger, Viola Harvey, Dora Manns, Gertrude Manns, Alfred Pellerin, Clara Perry, Josephine Pisano, Thelma Racette, Sam Troia, and Casmer Ziemlak.

Walter Duquette, Alice Puppalo, Rose Pasatti, and Jeanette Trela from the Final Inspection also took their vacations December 23.

On December 30, Josephine Convery and Alfred Pierce began their vacations.

ORCHIDS AND DIAMONDS

Anita Ponti of the Boxing Department and Ralph Parmenter, not employed here, have announced their engagement. They plan to be married April 19, 1941.

WEDDING BELLS

Mildred Drobiak of the Paper Assembly and Casimer Oparowski, who works at Clark’s Biscuit Company, were married on November 30 at St. Francis Church. Their wedding trip included Washington, D.C.

On December 15, Hazel Gregory of the Paper Assembly and John Camadine of the Lunch Room were married in Pittsfield, Mass.

BLESSED EVENTS

A son, Kenneth, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gassett on December 15.

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Rancatti on December 18. Mother is Norma of the Former Mica Department.

NEWS ITEMS

Jimmy Martin, formerly of the Machine Shop and who is now studying aeronautics in California, was a recent visitor to the plant.

Helen Scarfone of the Pretuner Department recently visited Lillian Dingus, formerly of the Paper Assembly, in Springfield.

GOLDEN WEDDING

Mr. and Mrs. Leon A. Pike and family drove through winter weather to attend a Golden Wedding celebration of Mrs. Pike’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. William E. Crocker of Wayne, Maine.

Mr. Pike himself comes from a long-lived family. His father was one of fourteen children, all of whom grew up. Mr. Pike’s grandfather lived to be seventy-eight and great-uncles lived to be eighty-four, eighty-six, ninety-three, and one climbed to beyond the century mark to the ripe old age of a hundred and two. Leon himself, who married when he was twenty-two, has passed the twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. Asked what the family recipe was for long life, Leon says, “Just work hard.”

THE LOG WANTS PICTURES

Get your cameras out. Bright sunny days in winter provide real opportunities for camera enthusiasts. The LOG is particularly anxious to have pictures showing Sprague people and suggests the following topics:

1. Skiing, skating, and bob-sledding. All these winter sports, particularly action shots, are good.

2. Hunting and fishing. Pictures of fishing through the ice, or hunting are always welcome.

3. Hobbies. If you are a radio Ham, raise mushrooms in your cellar, collect antiques or stamps, let the LOG have a picture of yourself shown engaged in your favorite hobby with all your hobby equipment.

4. Parties. Parties and get-togethers; all pictures must show Sprague people exclusively.

5. If your children win prizes or play musical instruments or are just plain cute, good photographs of them are welcome.

Particularly if anything newsworthy happens, give us the story plus a picture.

Remember, to meet LOG specifications, pictures should be clear glossy photographs in good focus and not too light or too dark. It is hard for us to use pictures developed in sizes smaller than two inches in any dimension or larger than four and one-half inches.

K. V. A. Bowling Team. Left to right: Fred Potter, George Benoit, Kenny Russell, Norman Champagne, Stanley Sauvecki, John Stockton, and Walt Carpenter, smiling and ready to bring their team out on top.

GUESS WHO: The happy baby in the tub now works in the Boxing Department; the boy gazing so seriously at you now works in Final Test; and that sweet little girl with the big hair ribbon is now employed in our Paper Assembly.