

HOFFMANN-LA ROCHE INC.

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VICE-PRESIDENT IN CHARGE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

ONE of the principal pillars of New Jersey's claim to be the "medicine chest of the nation" is Hoffmann-La Roche Inc., which manufactures drugs and fine pharmaceutical chemicals. The principal executive offices, and the manufacturing and research laboratories are located in Roche Park, Nutley, New Jersey. In addition to supplying a number of the most important medicinal products upon which physicians rely in their neverending battle against disease, the firm manufactures a high percentage of the nation's required quantities of Vitamins A, B1, B2, B6, C, E, and K. Approximately 2,500 of New Jersey's citizenry are employed at Roche Park.

Like many of New Jersey's thriving enterprises, Hoffmann-La Roche was formerly a New York company incorporated on June 20, 1905. At that time it was known as the Hoffmann-La Roche Chemical Works Inc. The trademark 'Roche,' and the slogan, "Makers of Medicines of Rare Quality" had come to command the respect of the medical profession, and the entire pharmaceutical industry. By 1928, because of a rapidly expanding business, the need for much larger facilities than the 4-story building owned by the company on Cliff Street in Manhattan had become apparent.

After a prolonged search of available sites in the New York Metropolitan area, the Nutley site was selected. It was determined immediately that the plant manufacturing and research laboratories would be the last word in external and internal beauty and cleanliness where requisites for safety, care, and quality would establish new high standards. The clean air and abundant space in Nutley provided the opportunity to achieve these things.

On November 17, 1928, ground was broken for the new home of Hoffmann-La Roche Inc., the name under which the company became a New Jersey corporation. Over a weekend the following June the arduous task of moving the firm's entire manufacturing, laboratory and office equipment from New York was undertaken, and on Monday morning, June 17, 1929, business was being carried on at Nutley in practically normal fashion. From the approximately 165 employees in 1929, the company's personnel at Nutley has grown to number approximately 2,500 today, thus bringing employment to some 2,300 additional people in New Jersey, and adding proportionately to the area's purchasing power. Most of those working throughout the plant are from the Essex-Passaic Counties area. From the four original buildings on a 23-acre plot, Hoffmann-La Roche has grown in physical size to 55 major buildings on a 104-acre plot.

Hoffmann-La Roche business is divided into four major fields of interest. From the earliest days, it has been a recognized source for certain "fine" medicinal

chemicals sold principally to other pharmaceutical manufacturers, and in recent years, original Roche research has put the company into a commanding position in the bulk vitamin field. Hoffmann-La Roche was the first to announce commercial scale production, using the marvels of synthetic chemistry, in manufacturing ascorbic acid (Vitamin C), riboflavin (Vitamin B2), dl-alpha-tocopherol acetate (Vitamin E in the form adopted as the international standard), Vitamin K in water-soluble form (Synkayvite), and most recently, Vitamin A. Basic research positions also enabled Roche to become a leading quality producer of thiamine (Vitamin B1), pyridoxine (Vitamin B6), Biotin (Vitamin H), and Panthenol (pantothenyl alcohol). At Nutley, huge buildings have been constructed for production of these vitamins by the ton.

A further Roche research triumph resulted in the synthetic production of pure beta-carotene, a vegetable form of Vitamin A, and a pigment which gives the characteristic color to carrots.

Secondly, and contributing greatly to the ever-growing esteem cultivated for the trademark 'Roche' over the past five decades is the Hoffmann-La Roche line of some 50-odd pharmaceutical specialties. These high-quality ethical prescription remedies are marketed by the firm's Roche Laboratories division. They are not advertised directly to the public, but their names have become legion throughout the medical and dental professions, the drug trade, and the hospital world.

No product stays permanently in the number one spot in a pharmaceutical company's sales. Continuous costly research must be carried on for new products if a company aims to keep pace with medical progress. Roche is among the leaders because it has consistently invested large sums in research and development. Roche has counted among its leading products the first injectable digitalis, Digalen, the first injectable whole opium, Pantopon, a series of sleep-inducing and pain-relieving agents of which Allonal, Alurate and Noludar are outstanding examples, Prostigmin (now in the U.S. Pharmacopeia as neostigmine), Vi-Penta and several other vitamin products, the sulfonamids Gantrisin and Madribon, the isoniazids (Roche shared the 1955 Albert Lasker award given by the American Public Health Association for exceptional achievement in medical research for its part in the break-through of the treatment of tuberculosis), and the tranquilizing-like product, Librium.

Thirdly, an Animal Nutrition division was added to sell special bulk vitamins and other products for use in animal feeds.

Fourth, the newest member of the Roche family is an Aromatics division which sells synthetic aromatic chemicals to the perfume and soap industries.

As a result of these achievements in synthetic chemistry, the Hoffmann-La Roche enterprise in the United States has grown to the size where there is now a storage warehouse in Clifton, and four warehouses and distributing centers located in Atlanta, Georgia; Dallas, Texas; Oakland, California; and

Skokie, Illinois. There is also a large stand-by plant, not activated, in Cambridge, Ohio, plus a 200-acre area for expansion in the distant future in White Township, Warren County, New Jersey.

The company's total personnel, numbering 3000 in May, 1961, find Roche a good place to work. Its buildings and grounds afford pleasant, healthy working conditions and the company is known for its forward-looking personnel policies. It has a liberal, well-rounded security program, including hospital and medical care insurance, life insurance and retirement annuities. There are a number of paid holidays each year, a liberal vacation plan and, for a number of years past, service bonuses.

Special attention is given to employee health and welfare. There is a Safety Department, headed by a qualified Safety Engineer. The company maintains a dispensary under the supervision of a full-time physician.

There is a well-rounded recreation program involving sports for young and old, male and female. Inter- and/or intra-plant sports include softball, golf, bowling, tennis, fishing and rifle-shooting.

The Roche Research Club, a branch of the Research Society of America, provides interesting speakers on scientific subjects at its monthly meetings. There is an active camera club and choral group.

The company is an industrial citizen of both Essex and Passaic Counties of New Jersey - the county line runs through the plant grounds. Roche is a taxpayer in the municipalities of both Nutley (Essex County) and Clifton (Passaic County). It has aimed to be a good citizen by making its grounds an asset to both communities. Large sums of money have been spent for a building especially equipped to neutralize and purify waste water before it enters sewer lines; also for an incinerator which facilitates the disposal of both solid and liquid wastes and helps greatly to minimize odors which are a part of so many manufacturing processes.

Hoffmann-La Roche, Nutley is one of many Roche enterprises throughout the world. The parent company is F. Hoffmann-La Roche & Co., Ltd. in Basle, Switzerland. Separate manufacturing operations are carried on in 21 countries and there are agency arrangements in others. As a result, Roche products are available in practically every country except Red China, Russia and Cuba.

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