

May 30, 1923

"Beginning with the introduction of three shifts in our galvanizing department in 1916, we have eliminated the two-shift plan in all departments, regularly working twenty-four hours continuously, except in our blast furnace departments at Ashland and Columbus. Although we have been studying the problem carefully for several years we have not yet been able to work out a plan for our blast furnaces that would not either increase costs to an extent that could not be justified, or reduce the earnings of the men.

"The introduction of the three-shift plan to the extent to which it is operating in our plants, without seriously affecting costs of the earnings of the men, has been possible only because of very fine cooperation of the men affected, careful studies by our superintendents and engineers, and the introduction of wage incentives for efficiency. It would be presumption on our part to assume that because we had been partly successful in solving the problem, all other steel plants could do likewise.

"Our own experience proves that it requires years of careful study and a willingness on the part of the men to contribute willingly and fully to the cause, in order to make such a change at all possible.

"Our experiences at Middletown were presented to the committee of the Iron & Steel Institute and no doubt given careful consideration, together with all the other reports.

"The hard work we had in selling the plan to our own open hearth men at Ashland, makes us feel very reticent about expressing an opinion with respect to the industry as a whole. Our inability so far to work out the scheme in connection with our blast furnaces is another reason why we feel loathe to make a public statement, which might be misunderstood or do an injustice to many that are absolutely sincere with respect to their actions and opinions."

July 14, 1923

"We began our studies with the hope of eliminating the twelve-hour turn on all twenty-four hour continuous jobs, sometime in 1913. The latter part of 1916 we introduced the three shifts into our galvanizing department, and between that time and June 18, 1920, we introduced the three-shift plan into all departments of our Middletown

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"In our blast furnace department at Columbus, Ohio, where we employ 107 men, we have not yet been able to work out the plan.

"On the first of January, 1922, we took over the properties of the Ashland Iron & Mining Company, and as soon as possible began to make the necessary studies there, with the result that our open hearth department at Ashland was put on three shifts on May 1, 1923. The blast furnaces employing 109 men, have not yet been put on three shifts. You of course are familiar with the fact that the number of men per ton of output at the blast furnaces is very small as compared to the other departments.."

(Mr. Hook's second letter to Miss Shaw was published in the Saturday Evening Post of July 21, 1923."

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