

A LINK OF CLAY IN EVERY CHAIN OF GOLD

Assaying is as essential to precious metal mining as navigation is to an ocean liner—and assaying demands crucibles and other vessels of special clays that withstand temperatures so high they flux ore-bearing rock into free-flowing liquid. Thus, the saga of gold is also the saga of clay.

None knew this better than the founder of the Denver Fire Clay Company. The Company was established in 1876, the year Colorado was admitted into the Union, doing business in conjunction with his drug store. In "gold rush" days, metallurgical clay goods were imported. It was discovered the clay deposits near Golden, Colorado had exceptional properties of high refractoriness, purity and other requisite characteristics. Working with a pioneer assayer and chemist, and through intensive research, formulae and methods of manufacturing crucibles, scorifiers and muffles were perfected. In 1879, having outgrown the manufacturing possibilities in the rear of the small drug store, a factory was established at its present location. The other partner in the drug store bought out that portion and later developed it into one of the largest wholesale drug businesses in the West. In 1890, the founder was killed in an explosion at the store when he was experimenting with flash light powders. The company had been under his guidance for only fourteen years in the most difficult period of development, but it was carried on under the same principle of research and high business standards.

From the earliest beginnings, when crucibles were made by hand in the rear of the old drug store, commercial expansion of The Denver Fire Clay Com-

pany kept pace with product development and improvement. Assay furnaces and other equipment for the assay office were developed. Kilns, industrial furnaces, crushers and pulverizers, industrial oil and gas burners, a complete line of refractory brick, tile and specialties—these were carefully developed and form the chief terms of manufacture today. The company also secured distribution of world-famed lines of chemicals, scientific laboratory apparatus and supplies, medical laboratory and hospital equipment and supplies.

In 1918 the present management took charge, and a merger with the Colorado Crucible and Clay Company brought the parent company another factory. This is the location where refractory cements and plastic fire brick such as HiCast, HiFire Bond, PX 33 and Latite are now manufactured. In 1909, the company established a branch office in Salt Lake City, following this in 1923 with another at El Paso and sales representation in New York City.

Starting with a force of five, the company has now one of the largest payrolls in the state of Colorado; is the second largest user of gas in the state; ships many of its products into all corners of the globe. Denver Fire Clay products are known in every mining camp of the world, and important sales have been made to the United States Navy, whose specifications are especially exact and rigid.

The company has an enviable reputation for research done on its products which is reflected in their performance. The company is justly proud of the vital part it has played in establishing the superiority of American manufacturers in the export field.

