

Blindly Speaking

No. 7

Published by the G. B. Lewis Company, Watertown, Wisconsin, U. S. A.

1942

How Long Will Venetian Blinds Be Made?

MAYBE that headline will scare some of our customers. It is to be hoped it will insure their reading over the limitation order applying to the industry and that each will at once join the Venetian Blind Association of America.

During the past three months this Company has sent each customer at the end of the month a post-card to fill out showing the percentage of business secured on which a government priority rating was available. The replies have come back only from a small number and these show a negligible sale of blinds to any buyer using a priority of A-10 or better.

These cards were intended to convince the Company's customers that it was necessary and advisable for them to get every dollar's worth of such "priority business" as possible. This was based upon our own experience indicating such orders were vital if one wanted to stay in business as the elimination of civilian goods progresses from war pressure.

While Venetian blinds are a comfort and can be used for blackouts and to prevent flying glass during bombing attacks, one must concede this war can be

won without Venetian blinds. Only if the industry can develop "war uses" and develop them fast, as well as cater to the priority customers, will the industry survive the necessity of conversion or shut-down.

This is plain talk such as we have not yet seen any where else but we believe it is time for plain talk. The use of yarns in tape, metal in blind hardware and perhaps even wood and labor in making blinds may be shut off at any time. This country is in process of going "all out" to win this war and if the Venetian blind industry cannot develop and show the War Production Board its value in wartime, we leave it to you as to how long any such industry will last.

Many customers who responded to our cards with a 0, wrote they had not asked their customers for a priority number. Without intent to criticize any one company, this shows a "business as usual" attitude and complete disregard of the need to show upon request, sales necessary to war purposes. It is true that many manufacturers of Venetian blinds

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A View of the General Office of the G. B. Lewis Company at Watertown, Wisconsin, U. S. A.

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have not cared to bid on government requirements because of the very narrow margins. However, it is better to bid on narrow margin priority orders than none at all.

Army, navy, cantonments, officers' quarters, housing for war plant workers and the like should carry good priority in ordering. Other government departments may not be permitted to order blinds at all when the necessity for conversion is more fully felt. Get out and get priority business. Be prepared to report it to your association officers. Make a splurge of the fact you are supplying war industry with your product.

Your association officers have been in Washington several times in an effort to find out just where the industry stands. They have presented facts and figures to the War Production Board to try to keep your industry going. Unless war uses become predominant, the use of any critical material or the machines for it may be converted to government use at any time. What are you doing to make Venetian blinds not just a convenience but a necessity to keep your business intact and your employees working? Better think it over.

STOP MANUFACTURING

You who read the papers recently noticed a list of articles on which manufacturing is to be stopped altogether in the near future. There were several hundred items in the list but Venetian blinds were not on this "stop" list. Credit for allowing Venetian blinds to continue undoubtedly belongs to the efforts made at Washington by the Venetian Blind Association of America. If you are not now a member you should be to protect your own interests as well as those of the entire industry. More work is needed and more membership funds will insure the work.

From Log to Slat to You



Hauling logs to mill. Griffith Lumber Co.

Keeping an adequate supply of lumber on hand, properly kiln dried, to always keep the mill going is no small job. While suitable lumber gets more and more difficult to buy because of war demands, the task of meeting the customer's slat requirements promptly has become more and more of a real job in the past few months, since Pearl Harbor.

Here is shown a train load of logs coming from the hillside where the trees were felled, into the mill where the logs are cut into boards. Months before the finished slats are shipped from Watertown careful plans had to be made for this very operation to make sure our supply would be available. In buying lumber we select the better grades which is the start of Lewis uniformity in all our slats.



If you think you know how to wrap packages just watch the girls put up packages of slats at Watertown

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K. Hawkins, Editor

MAKERS OF SLATS FOR 50 YEARS

Established in 1863

CHICAGO SALES OFFICE—C. W. Pollard, 200 E. Illinois St.

MEXICAN REPRESENTATIVE—A. A. Aguilar,

Apartado 428, Mexico, D. F.

*Only Wood
Blends with Wood*

New Ruling Beneficial

Recently Venetian blind manufacturers were limited to 5% weight of hardware to the blind and this has now been changed to 15 ounces per blind. The change is due to the efforts of your national association and credit should be given. It appears the 15 ounce limitation is more desirable for the country as a whole. With the old limitation probably 18 square feet minimum would have been necessary and this would have been very difficult for some. The new limitation will easily cover a standard set of hardware including installation brackets for blinds up to exceptionally large sizes. It will permit the use of metal hardware for use in wood enclosed head rails. Also the previous limitation would have worked a hardship on the stock blind manufacturer.



"Why not remodel it? All you'll need is Venetian blinds."

Courtesy Architectural Record

Industry Leaders



1. C. W. Goodell



2. E. C. James



3. R. M. McClure



4. V. T. Kimber



5. R. H. Wright

The Venetian blind industry took a long delayed but very important step when the Venetian Blind Association of America was recently formed. Here are shown some officers and committee chairmen chosen by the industry and their companies.

C. W. Goodell, (1), president of the Bostwick Goodell Company, Norwalk, O.; E. C. James, (2), secretary, of the Consolidated Venetian Blind Company, Houston, Texas; R. M. McClure, Chicago, (3), managing director for the association. Van Kimber, (4), chairman of the publicity committee is from the Little Rock Shade Company, Little Rock, Arkansas. R. H. Wright, (5), of the Guarantee Specialty Manufacturing Company, Cleveland, Ohio, heads the suppliers division.

All members of this association have received frequent bulletins from Mr. McClure regarding the efforts of the officers and committees to keep the industry going. A hard fight is being made with the War Production Board to keep the industry on the "essential" list. Help by joining now!

Cut To Length Slats

Since Lewis random length slats begin at 36" all slats less than this length are cut in multiples of one inch, from 24" to 35" inclusive. In this way the Venetian blind manufacturer may buy these short slats and avoid the waste of cutting up longer random lengths in his own shop.

These short slats are of the same grade as random length and serve as an excellent means for the manufacturer of blinds to make up specified lengths of less than 35" at a very low cost. All lengths from 35" down are cut with enough over the length required so they may be trimmed to exact length without waste. All are wrapped in Kraft paper, 50 slats in a bundle. When shipped in less than carloads this paper keeps them clean but by special arrangement these slats can be put up banded, not wrapped, in bundles of 50 at a saving of 15c per M.L.F. However, this arrangement requires advance notice before shipping date preferably of not less than three weeks.

A similar arrangement may be made to band random lengths at a similar saving to the buyer, when needs are anticipated. If you use short lengths buy Lewis Servisave grade and if less than 24" are needed, these can often be supplied too.



Bins of short length slats wrapped, ready for shipment at Watertown

We Save The "Squeal"

When you visit the national stockyards at Chicago the barker tells you they save everything but the "squeal," as an indication of their thorough organization to utilize all parts of each animal. Here at Watertown we save the "squeal" too.

In cutting lumber into slats and eliminating the knots, off-grain and other defects, the saws and sanders use up more than half the weight of the original lumber. Only by utilizing every good piece of lumber and the sawdust and sander dust, can we keep down the cost of our slats and keep up the grade. Below is shown sawdust and sander dust in bags ready for carlot shipment, handled on platforms with a movable lift truck. This material is sold to jobbers who in turn sell it to various industries from which other products such as plastics and explosives may be made. There are many such uses.

Every edging too narrow for slats is converted into some product. Some are used in other lines we sell not connected with Venetian blinds. It may be your boy, flying a toy kite gotten as a premium is using wood from the Lewis plant. Knots that cannot be used for any good purpose are sold in Watertown as kindling. Economy is the watchword of profit.



Stockyards lose squeal, we save sawdust