

Hopes for World's Fair Orders For Belleville-Made Articles

By ANDY TURNBULL

P.M.I. ENGRAVERS

"Expo 67", the Montreal world's fair planned for Canada's centennial year, may mean big business for Paul Mercier Industries, of Belleville. Mercier is hoping for several contracts for engraved items — identification badges, signs and the like — from the fair itself and he is trying to have a line of made-in-Belleville costume jewellery accepted for sale at concessions at the fair.

The jewellery is made by Avon Jewellery of Belleville according to Paul Mercier's design and with the PMI trademark. Most of it bears a Canadian motif, and it is distributed coast to coast.

The engraved products are a development of Mercier's business as a Front St. jeweller. He bought a pantograph engraving machine about fifteen years ago, to engrave plaques, gifts and the like. Two years ago he was approached by a local industrial firm with an engraving problem, and he solved the problem. Since then he has added three more pantograph engraving machines to his shop, and he now gets regular business from about 20 local industries.

A lot of his work is done in plastic. Working with laminated plastics — a colored veneer on a white sheet — he cuts away the colored veneer so the pattern or lettering shows through.

He makes signs and identification badges for clubs and other organizations.

But a growing percentage of the work is done in brass, steel and aluminum. One job now in progress is a good example of this sort of work. Mercier is engraving the crest of the city of Sarnia on the cover plates for doorlatches for the building. The work is being done under subcontract from International Hardware. He also has regular orders for engraving the "push" and "pull" inscriptions on push-bars for glass doors.

TRACED ON LINOLEUM

In the shop above his Front St. jewellery store, Mercier enlarges a customer's sketch with an opaque projector (mounted on rails hung from the ceiling) to the required size on a sheet of linoleum. The pattern is then cut by hand in the linoleum.

Next step is to make a master pattern, with a pantograph engraving machine. A pantograph is a machine with two styluses, pens or other instruments connected so one will imitate — on the same or a different scale — the motions of the other. In a pantograph engraving machine, one stylus is used to follow the pattern, and a rotary cutting tool cuts a similar pattern in the material. All Mercier's machines are rigged to reduce the pattern size on scales of about three to one. The master pattern, cut in brass, is smaller than that linoleum pattern but larger than the final engraving. Finished, it is clamped in place on the engraving machine and the final work is ready to begin.

Newest line produced by P.M.I. is a maple leaf flag design silk-screen printed on plastic with a pin on the back, for use as a brooch. The pins hit the market in Belleville last week and are slowly spreading through the district. Mercier hopes to have national distribution arranged in the near future.