

Ancient 'Lost Wax' Process Produces Intricate Castings



Al Rice, one of three Mid Canadian Investment Castings Ltd. partners with mould

Most plants boast of their latest, fairly small parts was ap- newest, most modern process, pre- ciated. Since then the intri- but at Mid Canadian Investment- cate parts called for in the- Castings Ltd. on Mountainview- space age has made it popular- Rd., they boast of the antiquity- again.

SIX YEARS OLD

The process, known as 'the- lost wax process' was first used- during the Shang Dynasty in the- China between 1766-1122 B. C.- The next trace of the same- method was in ancient Egypt- where it was used for jewellery.- It then skips a few centuries- to turn up in Columbia in hol- low gold figures, before the- time of Columbus. The Aztecs- too, left remains of their civil- ization showing hollow gold fi- gures, worked the same way.

BRONZE STATUES

The next trace is the Renais- sance, then the famed sculptor- Benvenuto Cellini, cast his- bronze statues this way. He- learned the method from the- earliest foundry text book, one- written by a monk named Tho- mas Presbyter in 1190 A.D.,- who had traced its whole his- tory.

Oddly enough, the lost wax- process fell into disuse until as- late as 1897, when dentists star- ted using it, but it wasn't till- World War II, that the wide- possibilities for casting intri- cates parts was appreciated.

LOST WAX

What is this mysterious 'lost- wax process?' It's called that- for the simplest of reasons —

the wax is lost by melting after- it has served its purpose.

First, on receiving an order,- a metal master mould is pre- pared from the customer's- drawings. Then the die is- clamped together and wax is- injected into it under pressure.- The wax at this point is the- consistency of heavy face- cream. When it solidifies, there- is an exact copy of the de- sired finished product only made of- wax.

EVERY DETAIL

The wax is then surround- ed with mould material made of- ceramic. This in turn goes into- the furnace, where the ceramic- becomes hard and the wax be- comes soft, so soft it melts and- is lost, hence the name. There- is now a ceramic shell with a- cavity with every detail of the- wax pattern on it. Molten metal- is poured into the cavity, and- allowed to cool. The outside- ceramic shell is cut off and the- finished product is there. The- only remaining step is some- grinding and it is then shipped- to the customer.

In the six years since the- business was started the num- ber of employees has grown to- 29 and the hopeful partners feel- it won't be too long before that- number will increase.

Log Cabin Newest Museum Addition

While potential buyers have- shied away from the historical- smithy shop at the corner of- Water and Mill Streets mainly- because of the high cost of- moving it from the site, Halton- County Museum has found an- old log cabin that they plan to- re-assemble at Kelso.

"The pile of logs is the newest- addition to Halton County Mu- seum."

BEFORE SNOW FLIES
Piece by piece, the log cabin- in Nassagaweya Township has-

been carted to the museum site- and now only awaits to be re- assembled.

"We're going to try to have- it reconstructed before the- snow flies," said Dr. Hal New- man.

NEVER FINISHED

"We could furnish it now if- it were finished," said Mrs.- Erla Britain, curator of the- museum. "Of course you're ne- ver finished. You're always loo- king for added touches."

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We go back to March 18th, 1864.

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On that day, in the town of London, Ontario, 25 pioneer businessmen gathered together in the room above MacFie's Store and founded what is now Canada Trust.

Soon they had opened our very first office just behind that store.

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Partner Eric Knoetspel, left, and Doug Hoare check a pot of molten steel before it is poured into a ceramic shell at Mid Canadian Investment Castings Ltd. on Mountainview Road.

