

# Display Helps Double Volume in Gift Section

**E**XCELLENT display, plus added merchandising features, has helped R. J. Rumreich of the Rumreich Hardware Co., Decorah, Iowa, double his gift, pottery and glass business. Located in a thriving Iowa city of 6000 population, Mr. Rumreich caters to both town and rural trade. Decorah is a city where farmers like to come to buy, and Mr. Rumreich makes a specialty of getting acquainted with them and stocking the items they like.

The gift department occupies an excellent location along a sidewalk near the front of the building. Two large counters at the center of the store also carry extensive displays of gifts and allied items.

As a background for his wall display of gifts, Mr. Rumreich has placed brightly colored paper which helps to reflect the light and makes the department very attractive. Mer-

chandise displayed against this paper background can be seen very easily by customers. He uses glass shelving in this department and finds it very effective.

## Patrons Like Variety

The average gift patron in this store likes variety, and Mr. Rumreich works hard to get a variety of items for his customers. He succeeds to a remarkable extent, through personal buying trips to supply sources. That is one reason why his gift section is popular with local women. He and his staff take great care to keep this gift section neat and attractive to customers. This means

continual dusting and replacement of stock, but the effort is well worth while.

Gift items that range from 25 cents to \$10. From \$1 to \$3.50 is a very popular price range for most customers. Mr. Rumreich points out that the town or farm women who buys a gift at his store and who is satisfied with her purchase, may come back and buy as many as five or six items of the same nature in the gift section during the period of a year.

"Women seem to buy more gift items than ever before," he states. "That is why a regular patron will keep on buying five or six times every year. She finds that the items that

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**The Rumreich Hardware Co. features line prominently and advertises it frequently. That's why sales grow**



Paint and supplies are featured in the windows at frequent intervals and draw many passers-by to the department. Here is a recent display that brought in its share of customers from the sidewalks.

of paint and supplies at one time for such a job. Farmers, too, buy many five-gallon cans of paint for farm buildings. In this area of Minnesota many farmers are now trying to get their farm buildings into good shape after the hard wear of the war years, and such a program calls for additional use of paint.

The paint display at the Koelz-Thom store is at the rear of the build-

ing, but has been placed on two walls. This gives a right angle display effect and means that the paint can be seen from several sections of the store. Lower shelves are filled with gallon size paint cans placed far enough forward for customers to see very easily. There is also a chair in this paint department for customers to sit while talking over paint problems.

Color charts and brochures on

paints are close at hand so that they can be referred to in any sales presentation and the store management finds that such charts are decidedly useful. Every effort is made to keep the department as neat as possible.

The store has two large, excellent windows and paints and painters' supplies are featured many times during the year. Recessed windows allow for considerable window display space and permit the displays to be viewed from several angles.

Sidewalk traffic is very heavy in Worthington which lies in the heart of a fine agricultural belt. Farmers come to town to shop almost every day in the week and a good paint display always catches their attention. The store management keeps the windows well lighted, and this aids in making the displays seen by more people.

Newspaper advertising is also used to bring paint and supplies before the attention of both town and rural people. With increasing local interest in decoration and in home building in this area, plus much farm building, Mr. Thom and his associates look forward to a fine paint business this year and next.

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we stock make useful gifts—not something that is quickly worn out."

Decorative items such as figurines, book ends, plaques, etc., are carried in stock as well as the more practical pottery, flower pots, vases, salt and pepper shakers and lamps.

"I have tried to lay out my stock to encourage browsing," states Mr. Rumreich, "for we have found that many gift patrons like to spend much time looking over the various items. We find that the longer women spend looking at the stock the more they buy."

Mr. Rumreich also carries dinnerware for town and rural families, as well as glassware, mixing bowls, small and large crocks. Some of this stock is kept handy, just below counter top level, so that it can be shown to customers who ask for it. This is especially true of heavy white dinnerware stock which many farmers use regularly, and on which there is considerable breakage on farms.

The firm advertises its gift section in regular newspaper ads. Some unique advertising has been used within the past year and it has been effective. One was a co-operative "Our Town" page in the local newspaper, running once a week. Each

co-operating merchant was given an opportunity during the campaign to have a picture of his store and an article on it featured in the center of the page, with merchants' ads grouped about it. When it came time for the Rumreich photo and writeup, the newspaper published a picture of Mr. Rumreich standing at the gift counter.

## The Nazis Were a Cool Ten Years Behind Us

**T**HE German air conditioning and refrigeration industry was found to be five to 10 years behind the American industry, according to Gunner Berg, investigator for the Joint Intelligence Objectives Agency. His report on the German industry is now on sale by the Office of the Publication Board, Department of Commerce.

Household refrigerators not only lacked style, but were often put together with nails instead of screws, according to Mr. Berg. Hardware was of steel instead of brass; and the cork insulation substitute, "Iporka," lacked mechanical strength and could not be used in the bottom of the cabinets.

Home freeze lockers had not yet been developed.

The report briefly describes German refrigerators, refrigerants, compressors, condensers, evaporators, control valves, cabinets, cycling controls, and tubing, piping, and fittings. Brief descriptions of 12 German firms are included.

Orders for the report (PB-17558; photostat, \$3; microfilm, 50 cents, 35 pages; dated Dec., 1945) should be addressed to the Office of the Publication Board, Department of Commerce, Washington 25, D. C., and should be accompanied by check or money order, payable to the Treasurer of the United States.



Colored paper serves as a background for this sidewall display of gifts.