



a story of accomplishment:

FRANK M. TAIT

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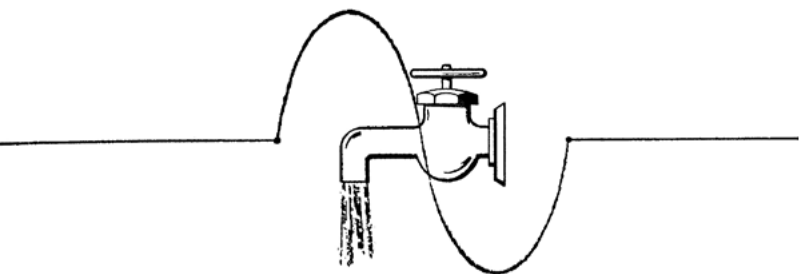
A
STORY OF
ACCOMPLISHMENT

FRANK
M.
TAIT

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A Story of Accomplishment: Frank M. Tait
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Preface

One day soon after Frank Tait had placed me in charge of his pump company, he called on the phone and asked how I was getting along. Being new on the job, I had been working hard to learn all I could about the company as quickly as possible. So I told him, conversationally, that I was “pretty busy.”

“I’m sure of that Louis,” he said kindly. “But are you getting anything done?”

Results are what count.

We were getting things done that day, and the achievements of our company are mounting every day. Otherwise, we wouldn’t be living up to the name of our company - The Tait Manufacturing Company.

Frank Tait is a prime example of the man who gets things done. I know this personally, as a business associate and as a friend. And I am grateful; few persons have the opportunity to know a great man well, and to learn first-hand his road of service to his fellow men.

Reading about a man of accomplishment is the next best way to know him. That, of course, is why this book was prepared. It is a guide for a young person to use in his own drive for accomplishment. It is a report of one man’s contribution to basic industries. But most of all it is an essential addition to the living record and the eternal challenge of the men who have made America great.

Louis Wozar,

President

The Tait Manufacturing Company

Dayton, Ohio

March, 1957



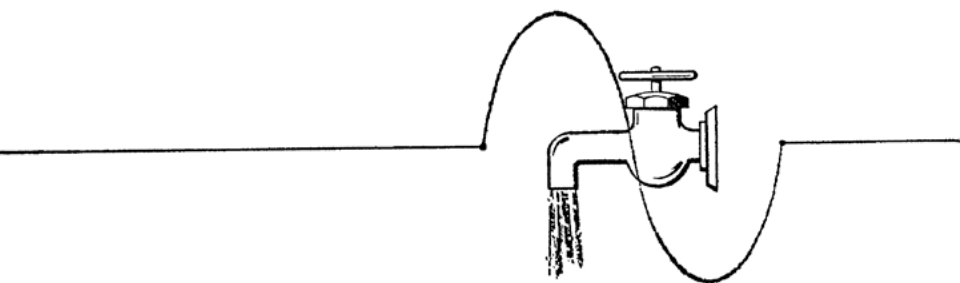


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I This is Frank Morrison Tait

I *This is Frank Morrison Tait*

Truth is beyond doubt. Yet one must experience a truth in some way before it becomes a part of him. The kind man knows best about kindness. The brave man knows best about bravery. The man who walks through the forest knows more about the trees than the man who skirts the edges.

This is a small book, written for a purpose. It is a tribute to Frank Morrison Tait as a man of accomplishment. But he is a modest man, and the book could not and would not be presented for his own personal gratification. Rather, as a tribute to Mr. Tait the book is presented as proof of two basic truths: (1) that personal achievement by an individual in America is ever possible; and (2) that such personal achievement by the individual becomes of divine value when it contributes to the welfare of his fellow men.

An insight into Frank Tait's life is, therefore, an opportunity to experience these truths. It is an inspiration to his fellow men, particularly to the vibrant young people whose strong hands are ready, as generation follows generation, to take over the levers of further American progress. And it can be a study in accomplishment to those who are not so vibrant anymore and whose hands are not so strong.

Frank Tait performed no miracles. He was not an overnight wonder boy. Let this be clear: His life cannot be viewed to find an easy road to the human accomplishment of a valid purpose.

Rather, this man is an expression of the American desire to excel and succeed, for himself and for his fellow men. First

comes excellence, then comes success. But throughout the entire process are uncountable hours and weeks and years of thought and work. He started from scratch: he was born in a small home in Catasauqua, Pa., nine years after the civil war. His formal education stopped with high school. He was, then, a typical small town American boy, starting as millions of others have done and do today, with a strong urge to “do something worthwhile on his own.”

He did.

Frank Tait’s business career now spans more than 60 years. He is one of the nation’s leading industrialists—at one time he was active in the direction of 35 major corporations. He is a foremost public utilities executive—he has participated in the management of public utilities in seven states and Japan. And he has climaxed his life with the establishment of a foundation which will aid perpetually in the development of charitable, scientific, educational and religious causes.

This is accomplishment—and it came over the long and hard road.

After Tait left the Catasauqua high school in the early 90’s. He worked at small jobs and studied on his own initiative such trades as stenography and telegraphy. He worked in the local steel mill and then, at the age of 19, had the superb opportunity to assist Thomas Alva Edison in one of the inventor’s projects. This had a profound effect on the youth and charged him up for what became his career of distinction in electricity and other

fields.

After the association with Edison, Tait went to work in the Catasauqua power plant, soon became its manager and did such an effective job that investors in his field took notice of the young man. They offered him one challenging job after another, and his performances led him to be an expert in the organization of small “central stations” into larger, more effective groups of power plants that could then best serve a wider area.

Starting in the early 1900's, Tait subsequently has played an important role in the executive development of public utilities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, Connecticut, Tennessee, New York and Indiana. His contributions to the progress of public utilities in those areas and to the industry in general have earned him the honorary title of “Dean of the Public Utilities Industry.”

Nowhere has his talent for public utilities organization and development been more effective than in Dayton, Ohio. As a representative of a group of investors, he personally took over in 1905 what has become the Dayton Power and Light Company. He was 31 years old at the time. Along with a hard working corps of splendid associates, he has ever since directed the firm that is now one of the largest and most progressive utilities in the country. He was president of the company until 1945, when he took over his present post as chairman of the board.

In addition to his public utilities achievements, Tait also has made his mark in the development of allied uses of electricity.

His contributions in this field are best illustrated by his participation in the water systems industry. He founded the Dayton Pump and Manufacturing Company in 1908, and it produced the first completely automatic electric water pump. Since then the company, of which he is chairman of the board, has grown to be a dominant leader in its field. In his honor, it is now known as the Tait Manufacturing Company.

While the two Dayton companies he heads have been closest to him throughout his career, he also has been active in the management of many other important companies. For example, he has long been an executive in the Sloss Sheffield Steel and Iron Co., Birmingham, Ala., a subsidiary of the United States Pipe & Foundry Co., one of the world's largest producers of pig iron, manganese and cast iron pipe and fittings.

Overall, Frank Tait's career covers virtually every industry that is basic to the American way of living. He found time to do all of this and he has had the time for Mrs. Tait and him to live a fine, worthwhile personal and civic life, too.

For such all-around achievement, there must be a reason. As is the rule in most cases of American personal achievement, there are solid reasons for Tait's rise to the top ranks.

An associate of Mr. Tait's for 40 years sums them up:

A native ability to think clearly and act promptly and vigorously;

Personal charm that made people want to like him;

Leadership that made people willing to follow his directions;

Persistence in effort-not giving up easily; and

Initiative-making action follow thought and not just getting an idea and wishing something could be done.

Those are potent qualities of personality. In addition, Tait has had two other fundamental qualities that are stamped most legibly on his career. One is hard work, the other is his philosophy of service.

All of these form an incredibly dynamic way of life. And accomplishment is the result.

That is why Tait's story must be told, not for his personal benefit, but as testimony, as a possible guide to those whose minds and hands shape the present and future of a home, a business, a city, or a country. It is a message that is particularly appropriate for the person, young or old, who believes, with Tait, that opportunity for an individual in this country is limitless, now and forever.

This nation was created, has grown, and thrives on the qualities that are represented in Tait's career. It is historically true that a nation's future is but an extension of its past history and personalities. Therefore, a look at Frank Tait is a look at the past, an understanding of the present, and a view to the future. It is an experience in truth, in the interests of humanity.



II

The Span of Progress

II *The Span of Progress*

Two years after Frank Tait was born, the telephone was invented. Before his thirtieth birthday such marvels had come as the phonograph, incandescent electric lamp, cash register, aluminum electrolysis, adding machine, diesel motor, radio, automobile, X-rays, movies, and airplanes. Now there are wonder drugs, jet airplanes, calculating machine systems, television and atomic energy. Along with all of these have come great inventions and improvements in industrial, agricultural and commercial processes.

So, for more than three quarters of a century, Frank Tait has lived in a spectacular era of American industrial and human progress. He has seen, in many cases first-hand, developments that have revolutionized a way of life. And through his direct association with the basic industries of power, water and steel, he has been a very real participant in the advancement of the scientific and industrial might of America.

Two examples illustrate Mr. Tait's personal and professional contact with progress.

Orville Wright was a friend of his. A year or two after the Wright brothers' famed flight at Kitty Hawk in 1903, Orville invited Tait to witness the flight of one of his first planes on a field near Dayton.

As Tait tells it, "that was one of the most awe-inspiring experiences in my life. With Orville's sister and father, I watched him take up that fragile thing and it was almost impossible to believe such a flimsy craft would hold together, let alone fly! It

shook so much! And yet Orville flew around the field, easily and without incident.

“Ever since that day, although personally I am not a part of aviation, I have been thrilled with each new wonderful aeronautical advancement. Somehow, when I see a jet plane streak through the air, I am pleasantly reminded of Orville flying in his flimsy plane that was shaking so much-but getting there.”

In a prominent place on the wall in Tait’s office hangs a framed personal note from Orville Wright to Tait, and attached to it is a memento—a token piece of fabric and wood from one of the first Wright planes.

Along with Tait’s personal friendship with Orville Wright, it is curiously coincidental that Tait’s power firm has long supplied the mighty Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton with all the electricity it needs to perform its valuable functions that contribute so heavily to the nation’s defense. This has been true at every step in the tremendous growth of the mammoth base, particularly since the early days of World War II.

“Wright-Patterson has always had and will always have power there,” Tait says, “as much as they wanted for their wind tunnels and other facilities, and when they wanted it.” Giant military and industrial establishments in other parts of the country perhaps have not always been so fortunate.

Such personal and professional experiences with progress have given Tait almost a unique vantage point to view human

endeavor. In later years he has become acutely aware of this. While he makes very little mention of it directly, he is grateful that (1) he has come from a long way back, (2) the scope of his life encompasses a truly great era in history, and (3) through his work he has been a part of that era.

These factors have made him an even more forthright exponent of the basic truths that, to him, make it possible for an individual to realize his potentials, and cumulatively, make it possible for this country to be great.

“Yes, we have come a long way in the span of progress in which I have lived,” he says. “And the credit belongs to many. It belongs to those who spent a great deal of time in dreaming. It belongs to those who had the faith and the courage to turn their dreams into reality. It belongs to those who thought the job was never done quite well enough—and worked constantly to improve themselves and also whole-heartedly assisted me in all of my undertakings.

“The credit belongs also to those who, over the years, have fought to maintain our traditional way of life—under which men have been free to think, express themselves, and act for the greatest common good.

“There is no mystery about business success—or success in any field of human endeavor. The real secret of success is ‘service.’ The best in life comes to those who are dedicated to the ideal of true service.”

But Tait is quick to point out that, regardless of the magnitude

of past accomplishments, the future is limitless. He believes, like Edison, that each new attainment is but a vantage point from which to search out new goals ahead.

“The developments that I have seen might have led to the belief that we have saturated our capacity to progress. On the contrary, my experience makes me believe-know-that we are only beginning. What we must not do, ever, is to slow up, hesitate, or, heaven forbid, stop! The future is there! “There are potentials in every field. What of civilian uses of atomic energy for power and heat? What of interurban rockets to whisk us around the country in minutes, or around the universe for that matter? What of harnessing the energy of the sun, and controlling weather? Or new building and clothing materials, new agricultural and manufacturing processes? New drugs, cures for our incurable maladies? What of social gains that eliminate slums, decrease crime and delinquency? And, probably the hardest job, what of progress in human relations, toward fewer wars, broken homes, broken minds, and broken lives?

“The job is there, and with God’s help we are going to achieve the greater era, and the still better ones to follow, through the dedicated service that is possible through keen visitation, intelligent thinking, and hard work.”

Frank Tait has the long view, an exciting view from the mountain top of three quarters of a century of living a dynamic life in dynamic times. It is clear: mankind’s future progress is a glowing certainty through the philosophy of service that is activated by vision, intelligent thinking and hard work.

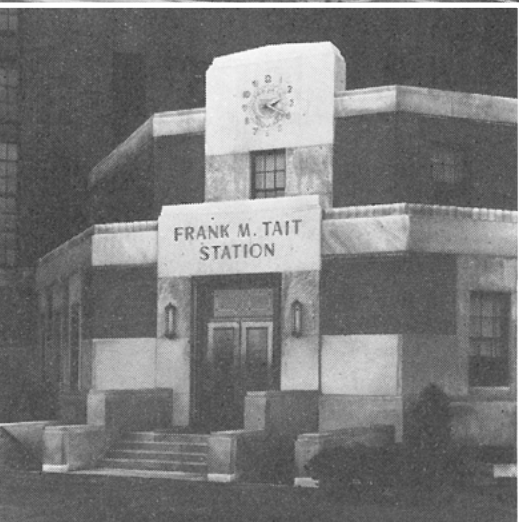
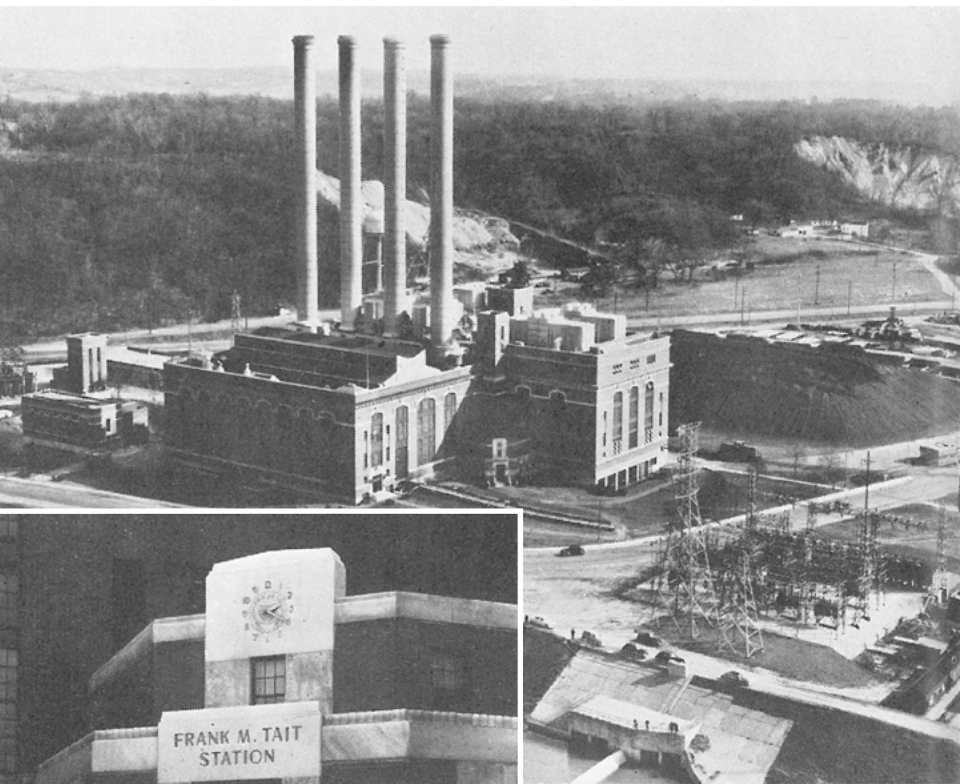


III

Progress Through Service



FRANK MORRISON TAIT



The Frank M. Tait electric generating station, one of the two large, modern power plants operated by The Dayton Power and Light Company

III *Progress Through Service*

His participation and subsequent accomplishment in a dazzling era of progress formed in Frank Tait an unshakable belief in service—the Golden Rule. To Tait it is the reason for Man, his success in things past and his guidepost for things to come.

Service to him is the mainline to progress, and the key to individual personal satisfaction. When one thinks, works and lives so that humanity benefits, no matter in how small a way, that is service. The result is the satisfaction of contributing something useful, the sense of “belonging.”

The pursuit of personal gain, alone, leads to personal chaos, he believes. “That is for the unhappy ones, the shallow, distrustful, embittered ones.”

Tait has seen that a man and a company can fulfill the destiny of service through vision like Orville Wright’s, intelligent thinking like Charles Kettering’s, and hard work like Edison’s.

“Wright had the vision of accomplishment,” he says, “the vision to ‘see’ that a collection of wire, fabric, wood and steel would fly. This is the kind of vision that ‘sees’ a factory where there is a cornfield, or ‘sees’ a new device or process that will produce more things better, faster and cheaper for more people. Men of vision see over, see through, and see beyond.”

For intelligent thinking he points to the works of Charles Kettering who invented, among other things, the automobile self starter.

“I remember when our company strung wires in Dayton to

an old barn so that Kettering and his yellow-tinkerers could use power in their creative work. What success-service-they have accomplished!”

And for hard work there was Edison.

Tait recalls, “Edison said genius was 99 per cent perspiration and one per cent inspiration. And he typified that definition. His relentless drive for his next invention, his average reported four hours of sleep a night are well known. When I assisted him in 1893 his tremendous energy and driving power, despite a difference of more than 27 years in our ages, literally wore me down and left me exhausted. But see what his work accomplished! He had 1097 patented inventions and you see and use Edison everywhere—electricity, phonograph, movies, electronics, and so on.”

In addition to direct association with such prime examples of men who have served, Tait himself, in his way, has lived the qualities on which effective service is built.

He had the vision to see the answer to the farmer’s acute need for ample running water. Out of that vision grew the company that for a half century now has provided almost three million pumps that automatically supply water to farms and suburban homes around the clock. He had the intelligent thinking, that together with the efforts of other competent hard workers, helped to develop the power company from a firm serving 700 customers in 1905 to the progressive institution that now serves more than 500,000 customers with the light, power and gas that

provide the convenience and ease of modern living.

And throughout it all he has had the capacity for hard work. Even today, with his age in the 80's, Tait goes to his office every day in the Hulman Building in Dayton, and makes regular business trips to New York and other cities. These are pleasant and interesting for him, and oftentimes Mrs. Tait accompanies him. They completely enjoy their personal contacts with friends all over the country and are happy in their lovely home on Tait Road in Dayton. He leads a vigorous and a healthy life; he doesn't smoke and he has no use for liquor. Constructive work is his life; he would have it no other way.

Now, in view of his association with many men who have served well, and his own living of the philosophy of service, he has a devout appreciation of the need for man, particularly a young man, to excel. There must be excellence before full service can be realized.

"After all," he says, "the business of the world is just men and women at work: excellence, then, in the men and women determines the degree of the person's and the company's success."

He believes there are four basic steps that lead to excellence. These are:

1. The individual must be developed basically as well as he and society can do the job. "He must have continuing education, reasonably good health, human qualities such as kindness, patience and integrity, and he must have a

spiritual design for living.”

2. He must be curious. “This nation rolls on the wheels of progress because always along the way, men have look up from some routine activity and suddenly said, ‘Mmmm, I wonder why that is, and why this couldn’t be done better?’”
3. He must have drive, or push, or energy. “Always there are obstacles and disappointments. In my career there have been, among other troubles, the disastrous 1913 flood in Dayton, a severe depression, and two world wars. Yet today our companies are leaders... Sometimes you have to push very, very hard.”
4. Then, finally the individual must grow. “He must not be satisfied with one accomplishment. He must grow into other and better and greater accomplishments. In that direction lies excellence; mediocrity hesitates, then stops along the way.”

Tait feels strongly about all of these things with respect to an individual, a company, a country, and humanity. To him these are the qualities of Truth that are represented by his own life, his era in history, and by men with whom he has associated. There must be personal excellence. There must be vision, intelligent thinking, and hard work. Only then, in relation to God’s will and the man’s capabilities, can there be the ultimate Truth for man which is service to fellow men.



IV

The Road to Service

IV *The Road to Service*

Frank Tait's life of service started in Catasauqua, a small Lehigh County town in the anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania. He was born on February 20, 1874, the son of John R. and Jane Morrison Tait. He has one brother, Lewis E. Tait, who now lives in Hendersonville, N.C.

The Tait home was modest. Frank's father worked at the Catasauqua Rolling Mill and Frank and his brother did the chores of lugging water, coal and ashes as other boys in the neighborhood did.

As he grew up, Frank became known in the town as a bright and aggressive youth with a growing desire to "get ahead." He was graduated from high school, which in those days was a feat in itself, and then learned stenography, train dispatching and telegraphy. He did this on his own initiative, indicating what has turned out to be a lifelong interest in acquiring knowledge.

His first job, in 1889, was on the night engineering force in the electric light plant of the rolling mills Catasauqua and nearby Fullerton, Pa. He was 15 years old. Now, more than 65 years later, he still recalls that job vividly for the fundamental experience it gave him. He found that working in overalls and wearing hobnail shoes that were insulated from heat, as he did, was in its way essential to "finding what makes things tick."

That has been a favorite expression of his throughout his career because it sums up the importance of knowledge of various aspects of a job. The man who, figuratively at least, wears overalls-knows the basics-learns from the bottom up. The effort

in any job, Tait emphasizes, must be to learn what comes before a specific job and what happens after it. “Unfortunately,” he says, “I have seen many promising youngsters fall aside into a rut of frustration. They were more interested in the foolishness of maximum wages for minimum work than they were in climbing up the ladder, step by step.”

From his job at the rolling mill he progressed, in 1893, to The Davies & Thomas Company, of Catasauqua, a cast iron and structural steel firm. Here he found a use for the stenography he had learned. Although he was only 19 years old, he became secretary to the president of the company. In his work of taking stenographic notes and in other duties he quickly acquired extensive experience in the manufacture and use of cast iron structural steel and other materials in buildings, power plants, gas works, tunnels, underground trolley systems, and general construction and the sales knowledge and experience needed to sell the products at a suitable profit.

Tait by this time was becoming an exceptionally capable and versatile workman. Then came an incomparable opportunity. It was in the form of a man, America’s greatest inventor, Thomas A. Edison. He was then at the height of his illustrious career, having already invented the quadruplex telegraph, phonograph, incandescent electric light, and the motion picture machine.

Edison came to Catasauqua in 1893 to conduct an important project in the Crane Iron Works. He needed a young man to help him and Tait won the job.

Edison had developed and obtained a patent on a magnetic ore separator. This was useful on the low-grade ores found in the area and magnetically separated the iron portion from the “gangue” or the veinstone or rock. It could be done at a rate of 6,000 tons per day. The magnetic particles of iron were mixed with a binder and compressed into briquettes one and one half inches thick and three inches in diameter at the rate of 60 per minute. These briquettes, 2800 to a ton, were hard enough to withstand shipment, waterproof, and porous enough to allow the proper action of furnace gases, particularly when using anthracite coal fuels.

Edison came to Catsauqua to conduct what was his greatest test of the performance of the briquettes in the blast furnaces of the Crane Iron Works there. It was done with the aid of Leonard Peckitt, chief chemist and directing head of the Crane Iron Works, who suggested Tait to Mr. Edison after the inventor had asked Peckitt for a young man who “was not afraid to work” to assist him.

The furnace used for the test produced 100 tons of pig iron per day using the ordinary mixture of fuel. Charging of the briquettes began with a percentage of 25% and then was increased to 100%. Results were most satisfactory, since the yield increased from 104 tons at 25% briquettes to 138 tons with 100% briquettes. In addition, labor and general expenses were reduced. Since fuel consumption was lower, furnaces in the area could use less of a costlier coke and more of the anthracite

coal which was abundant in that region.

Testing of the process was a complete success. However, subsequent discovery of enormous deposits of high-grade Bessemer ore in the Mesaba range in Minnesota limited widespread use of Edison's briquette process. But there is a remarkable coincidence in Tait's association with the Edison process on ores. He not only assisted the inventor in testing it, but for many years now Tait has been active in the business of a company that uses the process. It is the Sloss-Sheffield Steel and Iron Co., of Birmingham, of which he is a member of the board of directors and a member of the executive committee.

Edison had a profound effect on Tait, then, and in his business and personal dealings in later years. Tait speaks about it feelingly. "I am sure his influence on me," Tait says, "had a great deal to do with whatever capacity I may have developed to do things. I was thrilled to be associated with him, and observed all I could. I shall never forget his tremendous facility for concentrating on any problem.

"He persistently and continuously pushed ahead for successful conclusions, regardless of time, money, distractions or discouragements. He fought off discouragements by practicing his belief that there was no such thing as an unsuccessful experiment. Every experiment proved something.

"I am certain that I must have acquired from my contact with him my insatiable desire to learn 'what makes things tick'; always to question whether or not there may be better and more

efficient ways for doing the mental and physical work necessary to the various businesses with which I am associated.

“His diligence was amazing. How he worked! At the close of each Friday work day, when Mr. Edison left for his home in West Orange, New Jersey, I would promptly go to bed and sleep through until I had acquired sufficient rest. This was essential to me, so that I might again be fit to keep pace with this man when he returned on Tuesdays.

“Of the great lessons to be learned from Edison, none could be more in keeping with confused and troublesome times than his belief that there are always new goals ahead. As he said, ‘We don’t know one millionth of one per cent about anything.’ And to reach those goals a man must have physical tools, but so must he have spiritual tools.

“Even now, I well remember his sense of urgency during our work that problems had to be solved because, as he told me many times, ‘we must not waste this God-given time.’ He never stopped trying in spite of hundreds and hundreds of failures. It is my conviction that no man can do that unless his faith is active and boundless.

“Remember, I was just a youngster when I first received my impressions of the great inventor. And looking back now, I am grateful for that, because my life stretched out ahead. He never told me to go to Sunday School; he didn’t have to. But, you see, I learned from being with him on the job and away from the job that here was a good man, kind, pleasant, helpful, honest.

Just look at a picture of Thomas Edison: there is the face of a good man.

“His influence on me seems to me now to have been almost a spiritual influence. For one human being—whether he is a co-worker, minister, neighbor or friend—to do that to another human being, is the ultimate achievement.

“It put me on the right road and kept me there. I have tried to live by the Golden Rule and I know the meaning of the Ten Commandments and I know the power of prayer. In job and family and personal life, we won’t, we can’t live unless we serve through faith in God, in our fellow men, and in ourselves. Through such spiritual drive, and physical and mental work, we can go ever forward.

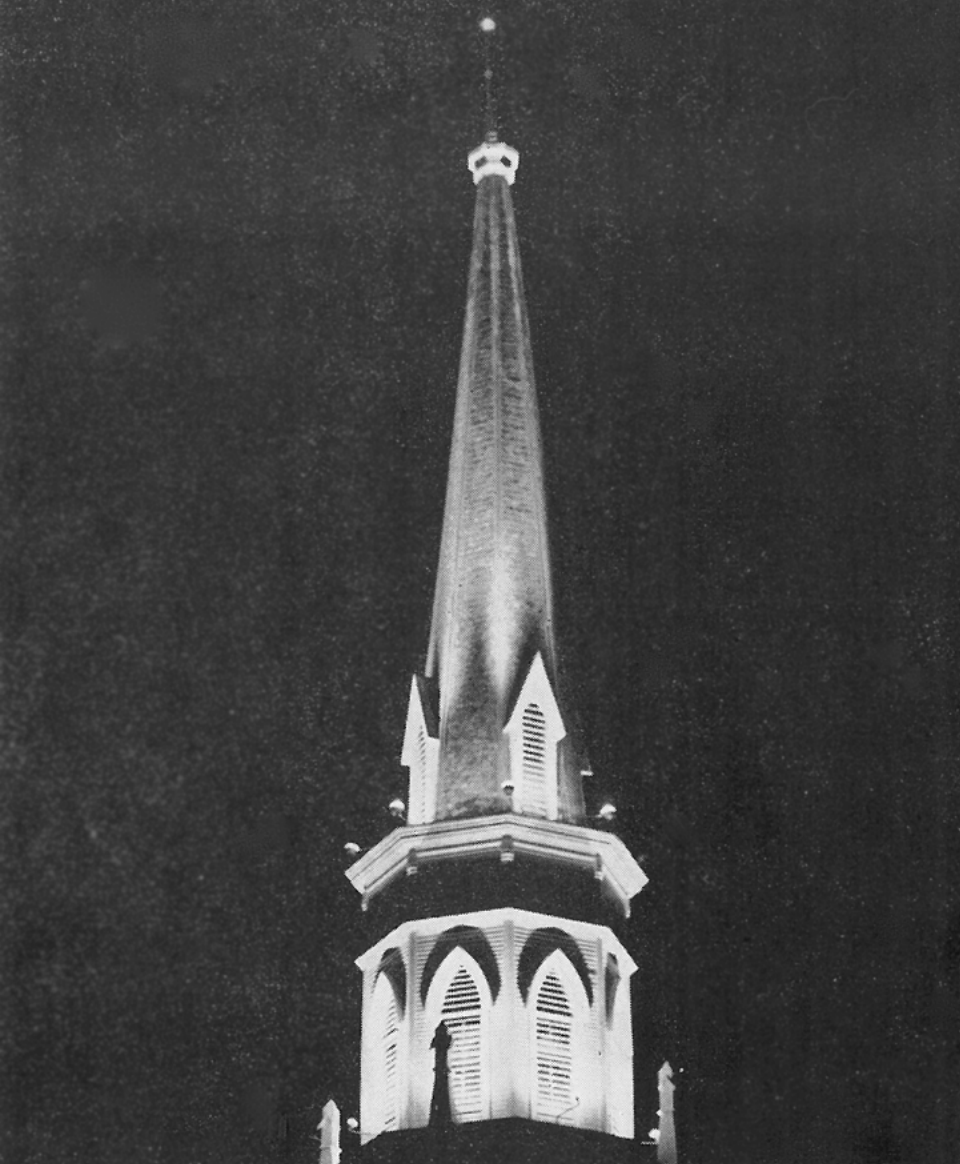
“Edison’s work and accomplishments challenge us to more diligent service, to greater production through clear thinking, to the end that we may make more things cheaper; sell more things faster; create more and more jobs, and thereby improve every field of human thought and endeavor.

“The essence of the Edison lesson to me, to all of us, is that we should emulate him in better adherence to the Golden Rule, which he diligently practiced; emulate him in a willingness to patiently think each problem through to its correction conclusion; and certainly to emulate him in working harder

“Edison’s life was the human peak of service. He was the complete man. He had only three months of formal schooling in his life, yet he acquired a profound education through



*The Tait Manufacturing Company, established in 1908
as The Dayton Pump and Manufacturing Company*



*The lighted steeple of the Presbyterian church in
Catsauqua, Pennsylvania: "a landmark and a guidepost"*

reading and study. He was one of the kindest persons I have ever known, and he has been called 'nature's man, completely in harmony with nature and God.' Obviously he was one of the most curious men in history, certainly he had as much drive as any man in history, and how he grew with every success! He has been a great influence on mankind, and his last words, "have faith, go forward," are a benediction and a challenge. I am humbly grateful to have known him!"

It is quite apparent that Edison had a deep and lasting and wonderful effect on Tait that has been lifelong.

Among Edison's widespread interests, he was highly enthusiastic about electricity and its uses. Tait caught this fire from him. Immediately after the end of the work with Edison, Tait forthwith obtained a job at the power plant in Catsauqua. This, incidentally, was one of the first plants in the country to use Edison's three-wire system for the distribution of electricity.

This job was the beginning of Frank Tait's public utilities career, and it was to lead him to the top. He sold electricity, helped install facilities, and even on occasion swept the floor. Soon he became manager of the company and greatly advanced its business in the area.

In those days small power plants such as this were blossoming throughout the country. Investors were quick to see the effective work young Tait was doing in Catsauqua. They beckoned, and Tait, realizing the opportunity for growth in his field, jumped at the chance. But first, before he left Catsauqua, he participated

in the most important ceremony of his life. In 1899 he was married to Margaret Lewis, his sweetheart since high school days, and Mr. and Mrs. Tait have had a wonderful life together.

After his marriage, Tait set out with his bride into the new century and into his bursting opportunity in the public utilities field. The small town boy already had a firm background in the “what makes it tick” philosophy, experience in basic jobs in basic industries, and a close, shining example of service in his association with Edison.



V

The Foundation of Service

V *The Foundation of Service*

At the turn of the century, the United States was beginning to surge into the growth that has made it the world's greatest industrial power. Forty-five states, all but Arizona, New Mexico and Oklahoma, were in the union. Across the land agriculture was dominant, but industrial activity was making determined steps toward the mass production stage that has brought mass use of the conveniences of modern living. For example, the spawning automobile industry had a record of little more than 4000 cars produced in 1900; the number was six times as large in 1905.

The infant electric industry was striving to keep pace with the bustling activity, and in some cases was leading it. Still, it was a tough situation for the enthusiastic adherents of the local central power stations. Unbelievable as it seems now with the marvel of electricity taken for granted, electricity was hard to sell in those early days. Sometimes it just didn't work. And for the industrial consumer who was interested in the central station's output, there would be the expense of converting to electric power. Homeowners, too, seemed satisfied with the light they were getting from their gas mantles.

But the central station operators were up to the challenge. They worked hard. Frank Tait was one of them.

He had been promoted to manager of his hometown utility, which had become, following his consolidation of local gas interests with the electric light company, the Catasauqua Gas and Electric Company. Following his success there, and

because of it, he then became connected with the public utilities of Somerville, New Jersey. He rebuilt all the gas and electric properties at Raritan, Somerville, Finderne and Bound Brook in New Jersey, merging them into the Somerset Lighting Company. This became, and is now, a part of the Public Service Electric and Gas Corporation of New Jersey.

From 1903 to 1905 Tait was in New London, Connecticut. He became directing head of the gas and electric companies, together with the management and operation of a general machine, boiler, coppersmith and boat repairing business. He developed and directed the corporation which was then known as the New London Gas and Electric Company, and now is a part of the general plant and property of The Connecticut Company.

Tait had taken all of these small plants—from Catasaqua to New London—and through a step-up in efficiency, consolidation with other properties, and the application of sound sales and management policies, had built each of them into a thriving concern.

He was ready for the next step, which was a big one.

Anthony N. Brady was a New York financier who had amassed a large fortune in various enterprises. One of his principal interests was public utilities. Brady was attracted by youthful Tait's work and brought him into the organization.

Tait's job was to study the entire field of electric and gas companies which were then in various stages of growth, all over the eastern part of the country. After comprehensive surveys

and detailed intensive investigation, he would recommend the purchase of a property, then after purchasing it, participate in building it into a solid firm that would be of increasing value to the area it served and to its stockholders. Tait was exceptionally successful in this type of work, because of his native quality of vision. He had the capacity to “see” the potentials of a company and its area out of a maze of bewildering facts, sometimes distorted information, and incomplete reports.

At the death of Brady in 1913, the estate was placed under the direction of his two sons, Nicholas and James. The management was largely under the supervision of Nicholas, who, from his father’s death to his own death in 1930, about doubled the Brady fortune. Under his regime, Tait was in charge of public utilities for the estate, and contributed a direct part in the management of its vast system. Tait was principally responsible for the development and growth of utilities in Troy, Cohoes, Albany, Ilion, and Utica, New York; Ft. Wayne, Indiana; Memphis and Chattanooga, Tennessee; and Osaka, Japan. He also was a principal participant in the merger of gas and electric properties in the Mohawk and Hudson River valleys in New York into a company now known as The Mohawk Hudson Power Corporation, a subsidiary of the Niagara Hudson Power Corporation.

There was one more utility property to which Tait contributed his talents—a contribution that started in 1904 and continues to this day.

It is the Dayton Power and Light Company.



VI

The Power Company

VI *The Power Company*

In one of his first assignments for Brady, Frank Tait was sent to Dayton to look over public utility possibilities in the city and the Miami Valley. This was in 1904, when the city had a population of approximately 85,000.

Tait liked what he saw and The Dayton Electric Light Company was purchased. Tait was so enthusiastic about the future of the city located in the splendid Miami Valley that the Brady organization placed him in charge of the Dayton operation in addition to his other duties.

Tait moved to Dayton and took over management of the company on January 1, 1905. At that time the firm had 700 customers and its light and power lines were available north as far as the corporation line in Riverdale; west on Salem Avenue to the corporation limits and in Dayton View; west on Third Street as far as the corporation line; south on Main Street and Brown Street as far as Oakwood; east on Third Street as far as the corporation line; east on Fifth Street to the top of the Huffman Hill and east as far as Keowee and Valley Streets.

Growth was almost immediate.

In that very first year the Montgomery County Electric Company was consolidated with Tait's firm and the new company was named The Dayton Lighting Company. The plant was expanded, cables in the downtown section were placed underground, and the cost of electricity was reduced from 15 cents to nine cents per kilowatt hour. To meet the growing need for current, the first 1500 kw turbo-generator was installed in

1906, and another one came in 1910.

In 1911 a temporary competing firm, The Dayton Citizens Electric Company was joined with the Tait company and became The Dayton Power and Light Company. Tait was elected president on October 2, 1911, a post he held until December 31, 1945, when he became chairman of the board of directors and Kenneth C. Long, who for a long time had been vice president and associate general manager, was elected president and general manager.

With its new name, further expansion for the company was far and fast, with power being distributed in the suburbs circling the city. Then came the historic flood of 1913 which devastated Dayton and the surrounding area.

Following almost a week of rain, the rivers of the region ran rampant, and there were 12 feet of water in Dayton's Main Street. More than 350 persons lost their lives in the whole flooded area and property damage was estimated at \$100,000,000. The power company was hit hard. Its electric service for the entire area was cut off. Virtually every overhead transmission and distribution line in the downtown section was displaced or destroyed and generating equipment was out of action from the effects of mud and water.

It was a monumental task to restore the company's service. But it was done in what historians call an unbelievably short time. Everyone helped. A few years later, Frederick H. Rike, founder of one of Dayton's largest department stores, recalled

seeing Tait, who himself had been marooned with his family for two days, pulling an electric cable out of a nearby manhole to supply power for Rike's store.

After the ravages of the flood, the company's expansion continued at a steady pace. Power was supplied to an ever-increasing area of small towns and communities. In 1925 gas was added to its service through the purchase of The Dayton Gas Company. This was the same year the Brady interests withdrew and the company became a part of Columbia Gas which subsequently relinquished its control in 1940 under the "death knell" law. Now it is owned by 18,440 stockholders, with Tait and his associates among the largest. More than 700 employees are shareholders. The company was one of the first to sell its securities in small holdings.

Today, the company is one of the largest and most progressive privately-owned utilities in the country. It has two large generating plants. The first was completed in 1918 and was known as the Miller's Ford Station. On December 20, 1946, the board of directors changed its name to The Frank M. Tait Station in honor of a man who had spent his working lifetime "in the production and distribution on the electric system that is now The Dayton Power and Light Company." In like manner, the other generating station, the O. H. Hutchings Station, located near Miamisburg, is named in honor of Tait's early associate who had been vice president for 26 years, former general manager, and a co-worker for half a century.

Between them, the two great modern stations produce 580,000 kilowatts to serve the company's area of 6,100 square miles. The firm now supplies electricity or gas or a combination of both, along with water and steam in some areas, to approximately 500,000 customers, representing approximately 500,000 customers, representing approximately one million persons, in more than 300 communities and adjoining areas in 25 countries. Total investment in property and plant is over \$200,000,000.

This is what Tait had envisioned back in 1904—the reality of a solid company in a solid area.

Dayton lies near the center of the nation's population and close to the heart of manufacturing and transportation activities. It is a key industrial city, with such leaders as National Cash Register and five General Motors divisions. And there is Wright-Patterson Air Force Base which uses a large amount of power.

Electricity cannot be stored. When the buttons are pushed for thousands of machine tools, or for wind tunnels or electric ranges, the generators must produce the electricity instantaneously. Tait's company has produced it.

"We've always had power here," he states without qualification. "In fact we've always been ahead, no matter how much power was needed. And we always will."

In addition to the company's ability to generate power whenever it is needed, Tait also is proud of the overall stability

of the company, which he considers to be vital in a public utility.

All through its history, the company has emphasized stability in its growth by achieving balance among the various elements that comprise its business/ As a result, there is this extensive service for the dynamic industrial area that is Dayton. In the second place, the company has branched out into the rich farming area that is southwestern Ohio. In its territory there are several hundred towns; this insures a good ratio of commercial business. And everywhere there are homes to be served increasingly as new and improved appliances and necessities are introduced.

The company, then, stands and grows on a four-way combination of industrial, farm, home, and commercial business. That combination, Tait believes, is unbeatable and the individual community, the employees and the stockholders all benefit.

He will not waste time in any argument about private vs. public ownership of utilities because to him there is no argument. He believes his company is a perfect example of the effectiveness of "the American Way" because it supplies more power to more people, cheaper. "We don't spend taxpayers' money to generate red ink," he says bluntly.

The heart of the business is the private enterprise upon which the company is built. "We are an organization that serves the public and we believe and practice the 'public-be-pleased' policy. We are successful because of the public's confidence in

our company. There is no other way.”

Again it is the philosophy of service that counts, just as it has been throughout Tait’s life, in his magnificent era in history, and in those geniuses who contributed to the wonder of that era..

This motto is appropriate for Dayton Power and Light: “To know what to do is wisdom; to know how to do it is skill; to do a thing as it should be done is service.”



VII

The Pump Company

VII *The Pump Company*

Frank Tait's life has been wrapped up so completely in the production and distribution of electricity that it can be said in truth that he has never had or wanted any hobbies. Yet, in a way, applied uses of electricity have been of keen interest to him, not as a hobby perhaps, but rather as an additional effort to spread the wonder of the force that so intrigued him.

The application of electricity to new devices or processes, of course, increases the use of power. But, symbolically, every additional use in which Tait has participated has been of value first to his fellow men. For instance, in New London he electrified a playground-bench that provided long hours of recreation for the people in the area; in Ft. Wayne he first instituted the practice of putting "red" stop lights on the rear of his company's trolley cars, which of course are common now on all vehicles; and he long has worked for such pronounced benefits as extensive street lighting and flood lighting.

His greatest effort, however, has been to provide the electric pumps that supply water automatically for farm and suburban homes. In his early years in Dayton, Tait was busy developing the local power plant and in extending its service. One day, early in 1908, he sat deep in thought at his desk. He was thinking of electricity and thinking of the farm field. Electric lines, thanks to the Edison system of distribution, were beginning to provide lights for farmers.

But even with lights, life on the farm was tough. Water, lots of it, had to be carried out into the fields for livestock and,

sometimes, for growing crops. And countless buckets of water had to be carried into the home for drinking, cooking, cleaning and baths, invariably splattering the kitchen. Sanitation was primitive. Contaminated water frequently caused illness and epidemics. The water problem meant seemingly unending drudgery for the tired farm woman and her family.

Tait had personally experienced the problem. As a boy he had lugged water for his home in Catasauqua.

“I remembered what a distasteful job it was,” Tait recalls, “Compared to farm boys, I was lucky. But even for me the bucket was heavy, my arm ached from pumping, and sometimes I spilled as much as I saved. Then, like every boy did, once in a while I stumbled and dumped the whole bucket of water on myself or on the floor. It was at those times that I muttered literally that someone ought to do something about this thing.”

To Tait the question arose: why couldn't the farm pump be electrified and the water piped directly to where it was needed?

He got busy. With money he had saved, he rounded up the necessary personnel, acquired a factory site and founded the Dayton Pump and Manufacturing Company and in the same year introduced the water system that gave the farm family and others sparkling pure water at the touch of a faucet.

Naturally it wasn't that easy. The small band of workmen had the troubles of most infant industries. The prototype pump would stick. It would leak. It would pump only a trickle of water. The parts were too expensive and didn't last long. The

belt from the motor would break. The motor would miss. It would burn.

But persistence paid off. Late in 1908 they completed a pump that did its work efficiently and inexpensively, and it was practical to manufacture in quantity. The motor drove the wheel which operated the pump which sucked the water out of the well into the storage tank. When the water in the tank fell to a given level, the pump automatically went to work and filled the tank again.

This, then, was the first commercially successful, completely automatic electric water system. And it was proudly called “The Dayton” system. Farmers, their wives, sons, and daughters, loved it. No more drudgery; no more endless buckets of water for livestock; no more floods on the kitchen floor. By 1911 the company was nationally advertising the pumps for their “perfection” in construction and design. Strength and simplicity in all parts, combined with convenient design are the main characteristics of these equipments. Upon the reliability of the pump more than on any other detail, does the complete water system depend for its life and satisfactory service. Dayton Pumps are designed with special reference to this class of work and are reliable, durable and quiet “running.”

It's been a long time since “The Dayton” first won its place on the farm. And, in the intervening years, successive models of the company's initial pump have made friends on farms all over the United States, in fact, around the world. Today the company

is one of the world's largest manufacturers of domestic water systems.

Throughout its history, Tait's company has had an enviable record of "firsts," starting with the introduction of the electric pump. In 1924 the firm produced the first compact direct pressure electric water system in which the pump and tank were incorporated in one single unit. This was the original package system, which is now a popular merchandising factor. In 1953 the Rapidayton Convertible Champion was introduced—the start of what is now Rapidayton's outstanding line of Champion pumps. This was the first truly convertible jet water system to sell for less than one hundred dollars. Early in 1956, as a climax to its intensive period of recent growth, the firm introduced the radically different Rapidayton Dolphin submersible pump, designed to resist abrasion.

In related fields, too, the company has achieved success. Having supplied inventor Charles Kettering with electric power for some of his early experiments, Tait anticipated a great future for the automobile. In 1915 he brought out a hand-operated gasoline dispensing pump. Then, in 1929 came the first electric motor-driven pump and a few years later, the computing type pump.

The company also is well known for its water softeners, first introduced in 1922. There are now two lines, automatic and manual. There is also a complete line of galvanized, brass, and aluminum cellar drainers.

Indicative of how Tait's company has achieved dominance in the past few years is the fact that every product is new since 1952: all basic designs have been changed and countless exclusive "worth-more" features have been added. This has been of special merit because it has enabled the company to keep pace with the tremendous change in the mode of American living in recent years. The marked shift of city population to the suburbs and the complete electrification of more farm homes have increased the demand for more water in more places. The average per capita consumption of water has increased from 90 gallons a day in 1920 to 145 gallons now. Moreover, in many areas, it has been necessary to go deeper to get water. Tait's company has met these challenges with new, and newly-designed products, and even in 1956 with a new line, The Commander, which is a companion to the company's well-established Rapidayton line.

An incident in the creation of one of the company's "firsts" illustrates Tait's emphasis on vision and dynamic thought. One day in 1952, Louis Wozar, president, and Kenneth Lung, chief engineer, came to Tait's office.

"Mr. Tait," Wozar said, "Ken has an idea for a new type of pump that works something like the engine of a jet airplane you can see from your windows here."

"It is what I call an axial flow pump," Lung said. "As you know, centrifugal pumps are the radial type and the water goes around in them in a rotary fashion. In this new design, we have the water shooting out of five openings upward, not around, the

axis of the pump.”

Tait studied the drawings, then asked, “What would be the advantage of it to a user?”

“Well,” Lung said, “it will give him more pump for his money. You see, the engines on jet planes are efficient because the air is driven straight through the engine, not in a circular manner. It’s the same principle in this design. Since the water drives upward along the axis of the pump, it will give the customer 20 per cent more water with the same horsepower.”

“You see, Mr. Tait,” Wozar said, “the pump will give more water faster, smoother and more quietly than any centrifugal jet pump produced.”

And so was born the Rapidayton axial flow pump, the “Super Champ,” which is considered the first major improvement in centrifugal pumps in 50 years.

With such technological advances, the pump company has earned for itself a deservedly high place in the industry, particularly for its remarkable contributions of the past few years under the direction of Tait, Wozar and their associates. Certainly the company’s stature in the field is a tribute to the vision of Frank Tait a half century ago, when he thought about the applied uses of electricity in relation to water problems on the farm and did something about it.

On January 4, 1956, the company honored Mr. Tait by taking his name. The tribute, signed by Wozar and presented to Mr. Tait during “Recognition Day” ceremonies, reads: “A tribute in

recognition of the pioneering vision and dynamic leadership of Frank M/ Tait. We, the directors, officers and employees of the Dayton Pump and Manufacturing Company, respectfully acknowledge his dedicated service to humanity by decreeing that, now and henceforth, the firm will be proudly known as The Tait Manufacturing Company.”

Wozar, in presenting the plaque to Mr. Tait before the employee group, said, in part:

“Dayton Pump has survived and grown over the 47 years of its existence. There’s an important reason why we did not fold up in the dark days of the depression. There’s an important reason why more than 90 competitors could never lick ups. There’s an important reason why we have been able to expand, buy new machinery, and have greatly improved working conditions over the past few years.

“Behind all this has been one man-one of America’s great men-Frank M. Tait.

“The company prospered because of his faith in it, because of his encouragement, guidance and inspiring leadership. It prospered because he plowed profits back into the business-in order to protect jobs and make even more jobs.

“Recently Mr. Tait established The Frank M. Tait Foundation so that our company might continue to grow and provide each of us with the brightest possible future. There is no way to measure what he has contributed-to humanity, to this nation, to our community, and to our company. It has been tremendous.

It will benefit generations yet to come.”

In acknowledging the honor of the name change, Mr. Taut said, in part: “This is truly one of the greatest moments in my life. I accept-proudly but humbly-the honor which you bestow upon me in calling your company The Tait Manufacturing Company. But you must remember this: A name does not make a company. Quite the opposite is true. It is the product or the service which a company offers-or a combination of the two-which gives real meaning to the name of the company.

“Tait is not of Primary importance. It is the design of our products, the quality which we build into them, the manner in which they benefit mankind-those are the important things.

“What Dayton Pump of Rapidayton means in our industry today has been determined by 47 years of employee effort. I may have had a hand in establishing the company and in coming to the rescue on several occasions when money was needed. But it was you, the employees of our company, who pooled your talents and skills and built pumps of such outstanding value that they were purchased ahead of many other makes.

“You have made Dayton Pump what it is today. Likewise, you can make what you want of The Tait Manufacturing Company over the years ahead. This is both a great challenge and a great responsibility in the true American way.

“Work hard-serve-and keep faith-and the future will be bright.

“What you do on your jobs tomorrow and in the days and

years ahead will give the name Tait the character and integrity which will make it stand out as a truly great name in American industry. When that happens-as I know it will-and must-it will be more your name than mine. And that is the way it should be.

“I thank you-and God bless you!”



VIII

Investment in the Future

VIII *Investment in the Future*

Although Mr. Tait can look back to a thoroughly satisfying life of accomplishment, he is not looking back. Rather, he is, by nature, looking ahead. The future is very teal to him, and therein lies his continuing influence on his community and on those with whom he has been associated during his life.

Most particularly, his interest in the future is directed specifically to the young people who will, he says, "have their hands on the lever of progress as every year leads to another." Indeed, this book would not have been written unless, as Mr. Tait insisted, it would clearly be an opportunity to show that hard work and thought produce dividends for a man and his fellow men.

Mr. Tait proves this, as he is viewed now at the top of a long and noteworthy career. He has come from 'way back, he has been an active factor in the terrific era of American industrial and human progress, and he has proven through experience-through living-the philosophy of service best expressed in the Golden Rule. It is imperative then, that his challenge be stated, for now and henceforth.

Mr. Tait believes that humanity, with this country as its leader, is even yet just on the threshold of accomplishment. The surface has only been scratched in every field of human endeavor, whether it be science, engineering, agriculture, or human relations.

"Yes," he says, "in my lifetime I have seen and been a part of many 'unbelievable' advances that have taken place. There was

Thomas Edison and his works. Orville Wright and his flimsy airplane. 'Boss' Kettering and that automobile starter. All of our electrical advances. And many, many more revolutionary developments.

"But there will be many, many more tremendous steps forward. I know this. I know this because I have seen and been a part of so much progress. Understand that: what has been done makes me positive that many other great things will be done.

"That is the challenge that supremely defies failure. Our young people have the stuff-the intelligence, the capacity for hard work, the inspiration and the opportunity to meet the challenge. And they will do it, tomorrow and tomorrow. There is simply no limit to solid American progress, industrial and human!"

Mr. Tait's life, itself, is his personal contribution to continuing progress. Yet, he does not stop with his life as an example of the way to meet the ever-ascending challenge of the future.

He has gone all the way.

Mr. Tait has established a superb investment in the future. It will be the large sum of money that he has built through a lifetime of hard work, and the grace of God. It will be his personal financial stake in the opportunity that, he knows, is coming.

In December, 1955, he established the channel for his investment in the future. It is The Frank M. Tait Foundation

for charitable, scientific, educational and religious purposes. He specifically created it to aid perpetually in the development of these worthy causes through financial assistance from the organization's funds.

At the time of the announcement of the Foundation, which was widely and sincerely heralded nationally and particularly in the Dayton area, Mr. Tait said:

"It gives me a deep personal satisfaction to create this continuing instrument of goodwill and progress. Humanity goes ever forward through the sincere dedication to cultural ideals of all of us, to the best of our ability.

"It is my hope and plan that the Foundation's efforts to help achieve these ideals will largely center in Dayton and the Miami Valley, where much of my work has been done."

Mr. Tait's first grant to the Foundation was the assets of the pump company, which represent a very substantial amount. And, with the first grant, he set up the distribution machinery for the organization. It is in the hands of a board of trustees of Dayton persons. The board is: Mr. Tait; Louis Wozar, president of the pump company; Howard L. M. Jones, vice president and secretary of the pump company; Walter H. J. Behm, president of Winters Bank and Trust Company; and Jesse Cassel, senior partner in Cassel, Groneweg, Rohlfling & Clark, public accountants.

The trustees, of course, have the exclusive right to determine policies and investments of the Foundation's capital, and the

distribution of earnings and capital. Disbursements already have been made by the trustees to worthy causes, and they will continue at proper intervals.

Mr. Tait's Foundation will, in fact, be of tremendous importance in the years ahead, particularly in the Miami Valley.

Dayton Pump's assets were only the start of the financial backlog of the Foundation. In the announcement of its creation, it was stated that other of the Tait holdings will in time be allocated to the Foundation. In the announcement of its creation, it was stated that other of the Tait holdings will in time be allocated to the Foundation.

Mr. Tait, his family and friends are large stockholders in The Dayton Power and Light Company as well as in other gas and electric utilities. He also has substantial interests in The United States Pipe and Foundry Company of Birmingham.

When additional securities are turned over to the Tait Foundation, which will be done as circumstances permit, the Foundation will be in a position to function actively and significantly in the work of the community.

"I want to see much of this done in my lifetime," said Mr. Tait. "I believe, like Mr. Kettering, that if a man disposes of his estate during his lifetime, he can determine whether he has selected the correct method of handling his fortune and whether those he has selected to administer it are suitable."

Thus, Mr. Tait has carefully planned to go a long way to invest in the brilliant future that he knows is coming.

It is well to give pause here for the impact, the thorough realization of what this man has deliberately done for his fellow men in his home community. Few men can match it, in desire and in content.

There are four elements in Mr. Tait's establishment of his Foundation. Consider:

1. He started it with Dayton Pump assets. This is a tribute to the pump company that has been close to his heart for these many years. And it is a further tribute that the firm's president is a Foundation trustee and that the company's secretary is also a trustee. The pump company, its employees and its management, can rightfully be proud of its original participation in the Foundation that, overall, will be of such great, perpetual value to its community. It is fitting, therefore, that the firm was honored by being first in the Foundation, and then honored itself and Mr. Tait by changing its name to The Tait Manufacturing Company.
2. He will enlarge the Foundation's financial resources by placing into it funds earned through his service in industries that are basic to human welfare and convenience. It is appropriate that Mr. Tait's Foundation, which is for the benefit of humanity, will be entirely financed through funds that have come from industries that, in themselves, benefit humanity. His career has been completely centered on those things

that, in large measure, account for the American standard of living: light, power, water, gas and steel.

It is symbolic, therefore, that the humanity which has gained through his participation in basic industries also gains by perpetually benefitting through his Foundation which is built on funds he earned in these basic industries.

3. It is his hope and plan that the Foundation's aid to worthy causes will center in Dayton and the Miami Valley. Mr. Tait made this clear, at the outset, because the Valley is where "much of my life's work has been done."

This factor is indicative of Mr. Tait's deep seated love of the area—a love that came at first sight when he surveyed the area in 1904. Then the city had a population of 85,000. Now it is more than a quarter of a million. Mr. Tait contributed to that growth. And he is so imbued with the city's potential that he believes it should soon grow to a population of at least one million. It is a tribute to Mr. Tait and to the community, therefore, that the Foundation's value will be primarily devoted to Dayton and its metropolitan area, Mr. Tait's home base.

4. Mr. Tait wants, characteristically, to help participate in seeing that the Foundation "gets going on the right track."

Virtually every accomplishment that Mr. Tait has achieved can be attributed to his keen sense of finding “what makes things tick,” and then acting upon them. To solve a problem, there must be understanding, then action.

For Mr. Tait, his desire is a God-given share in the future progress of humanity. This has come through his perceptive knowledge and appreciation of his fellow men, where they have come from historically, and where they are going positively. The action is establishing a channel, a foundation, that will contribute to man’s progress.

Mr. Tait has accomplished this. The Foundation is in operation and he has the continuing opportunity as its founder and as one of its trustees, to participate in the start of its work, and in its growth as more funds are allocated to it.

It is a complete fulfillment, therefore, that in his lifetime Mr. Tait not only has established the Foundation but also that he has a direct part in starting its perpetual service to his fellow men.

Certainly, as it is said, “a thing of beauty is a joy forever.” In his way, Mr. Tait has created, in his Foundation, a thing of beauty that will be a joy forever to charity, science, religion, and education—the embodiment of human progress.

There is no greater inspiration to young people . . . to all

people. It is then, everlastingly to this man's credit that (1) he honored the pump company by placing it into the Foundation first; (2) he honored his career in basic industries by using much of his earnings from them as the substantial foundation of a Foundation; (3) he honored his home community by centering the Foundation's value on it; and (4) he honored Man himself by doing all of these things.

Is this not Man at his finest?



IX

A Life of Accomplishment

IX *A Life of Accomplishment*

Establishment of his Foundation is Frank Tait's investment in the future, an evidence of human accomplishment that benefits humanity. The Dayton Power and Light Company, The Tait Manufacturing Company and his other business interests stand as concrete evidence of his industrial accomplishments. He is, then, a man of accomplishment and his life proves the two basic truths that personal achievement is ever possible in America, and such achievement becomes of divine value when it contributes to the welfare of mankind.

Tait's fellow men have recognized his accomplishments over the years. One of the most recent recognitions was the pump company's change of name in his honor. During the past few years tributes have been paid to him by the Dayton Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, and the local chapter of the Newcomen Society of England. His home state, Pennsylvania, in his honor appointed him a "Pennsylvania Ambassador."

While he never had the opportunity or the benefit of a college education, he has received two honorary degrees.

In 1947 the University of Dayton honored him with the degree of Doctor of Science with the citation: "Frank M. Tait, pioneer in the development of public utilities, scientist, inspirational and far-sighted leader in applying energy forms for use in home and industry, administrator excelling in solving problems of human relationships in industry."

In 1951 the power company unveiled an oil portrait of Mr. Tait in honor of its board chairman. Coincidentally, it faces a

portrait of Edison. “After all these years,” Tait laughs, “my old boss is still keeping an eye on me.”

Tait is one of Dayton’s most prominent citizens , and he has been an acid champion of the city and its area since he first came to it, as his plans for his Foundation’s benefits prove. A story told to illustrate his feelings toward the city.

One day he was in the depot of a large city waiting for a train that would take him to Dayton. Somehow, as he walked around the station, he fell to wondering why Dayton was not one of the cities listed on the call board at the gate leading to the train. He wondered still more when the station announcer didn’t formally call the city as one of the train’s stops.

Tait is not one to let a question go unanswered. As soon as he returned to his office, he went into action via the telephone and postal service. He pointed out to certain appropriate parties that Dayton was an up-and-coming industrial power. Furthermore, he went on, many of the fittings and other equipment on the trains themselves were made in Dayton.

The suggestions were effective. Revisions were made in the depot call boards after that and the next time Tait waited for a train to Dayton, he was gratified to hear the announcer call the city in a loud voice.

That is one small way he has followed up his lifetime desire “to put Dayton on the map.” His companies and his other work have done that too. This was even recognized 40 years ago, in 1915 ten years after he had started to work in Dayton. Tait was

given a testimonial dinner prior to leaving the city for awhile in connection with his other utility work. Among messages by a host of distinguished speakers were these, in part”

James M. Cox, publishing executive and former governor of Ohio: “He enlarged the city of Dayton and carried the wires and the vibrating powers of the great dynamos of the institution over which he presided into communities all about the place. He generated not only electric current, which was the commodity he was dealing in, but he generated a friendly, a helpful and a cooperative public opinion all over the section of the state. We believe he has been a distinct asset to this community. We believe that he has built in part the glories of the town.”

Col. Edward A. Deeds, of National Cash Register fame: “His company is one of the greatest assets that we have industrially, not only in meeting every demand in our city, but in reaching out into cities beyond. I think we should never forget what he has done to place at Dayton’s industrial door the facilities—the power and light facilities which he has done in his splendid way.”

The late Frederick H. Rike, founder of the department store that bears his name: “There has not been an activity in Dayton in the ten years that he has been interested in it. Mr. Tait has not only been a leader in the business life and in the development of his company, but in the civic life of the community.”

For most of his career Tait has been associated with prominent clubs and associations. He is a member of the Edison Electric

Institute, successor of the National Electric Light Association, having served that association in years past as director, secretary, treasurer, vice president, and in 1913 was president. He also served as president of the Ohio Electric Light Association in 1907.

He is a fellow of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, member of the American Gas Institute, The Newcomen Society of England, The Royal Society of Arts of England, The Edison Pioneers, The Illuminating Engineering and other societies. He maintains membership in The Engineers Club and Recess Club of New York; The Engineers Club, Dayton Country Club, Dayton Bicycle Club, Moraine Golf Club, Vingt-et-Un and various other clubs in Dayton.

Tait is a member of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Dayton. In Catsauqua he has "another church." It is the Presbyterian Church in which he was raised and married, and he and his wife maintain as close a contact with it as possible.

That small church in the Lehigh Valley is the best-lighted in the world—inside and out. Its majestic tower, reaching 180 feet into the sky and topped by a large gilt ball, is so perfectly floodlighted that it can be seen for miles. Its priceless stained glass windows, designed by Tiffany, are softly lighted from inside the church to bring life and significance to the religious scenes which they depict.

Lighting of the spire and windows was made possible by a fund established by the Taites and her sister, Miss Ellen J,

Lewis, for the specific purpose of permanently operating and maintaining this unique lighting system.

The church is both a landmark and a guidepost to those who pass that way. And its lighted steeple is symbolic of Frank Tait. Through his industrial accomplishments he has built a strong, permanent monument of service. Through his personal accomplishments, as typified by his Foundation, he will illuminate it, perpetually.

