



Shown above are just a few of the hundreds of brass parts which are fabricated in the Metals Division at East Alton, Illinois. These include such brass items as pencil tips, brass cans for condensers and electrical components of many kinds for customers from coast to coast.

BRASS is mighty big business at Olin Industries. It is one of the company's biggest-selling products as well as one of the oldest. The Brass Mill at East Alton has produced more wartime cartridge metal than any other mill in the nation. During World War II, Olin Industries produced more than 15 billion loaded rounds of ammunition, using its own brass in all of them, at its own and at government-owned plants which it operated. The combined production of brass, for all purposes during that period was over 1½ billion pounds.

Brass-making is a process of great contrasts and of spectacular sights. For example, in the Rolling Mill at East Alton, it is not at all uncommon for a brass bar to be rolled out to a length of well over 5,000 feet or nearly a mile! And it is possible to produce a continuous non-welded strip of brass several times that long. At the same time some of these fantastic lengths are being achieved, it is possible to roll brass down almost as thin as cigarette paper.

If brass is an old product at Olin Industries, it is an ancient one in the world. An alloy of copper and zinc, brass was known to the Romans at the time of the Empire. They fused copper with the zinc ore we know as smithsonite to form brass.

One of the company's early expansions was its

THE STORY OF BRASS



Pouring molten brass into a mold in The Cast Shop is a delicate operation. Here the furnace operator is shown carefully watching over a typical pouring. The furnace is hydraulically tilted until the last bit of brass has been poured into the mold. Critical supervision of pouring is necessary in order to cast a high quality bar.

construction of a brass mill at East Alton in 1916 to provide its own source of cartridge metal needed to fill military contracts during World War I. After that war it had its own source of cartridge metal for its sporting ammunition, and its surplus capacity enabled it to enter the commercial brass business.

From a modest start in supplying World War I's military ammunition needs, the East Alton plant grew into the present large mill, which now produces the metal for a host of requirements of hundreds of other companies and includes cartridge brass for the government-owned St. Louis Ordnance Plant. This plant is operated by the U. S. Defense Corporation, an Olin subsidiary. Brass produced in the mills of Olin Industries is bought by customers varying from small stamping shops to large corporations. Among many others, the automotive and electrical and electronic industries are important consumers. Olin's own fabricating departments turn out such brass items as pencil tips, brass cans for condensers, and electrical components of many kinds as well as hundreds of other articles for customers from coast to coast.