

The following article appears from the Southend Standard Newspaper, dated 25th of August 1932 with thanks to the Southend on Sea Library Archives department A fascinating article but maybe some people would find the wording from over 70 years ago, a trifle sexist?? Jools

A VISIT TO THE EKCO WORKS.

SEVEN YEARS' WONDERFUL GROWTH.

Over 2000 EMPLOYED.

Come inside the Ekco factory ! Even Southend, town of rapid growth, has nothing to show comparable with this romance of commerce, this phenomenon of business enterprise - the results of which are exemplified at the Radio Exhibition, which was opened on Friday.

The story of how an electrical equipment dealer named Cole met an ex - coal miner named Verrells has often been told, but it is such a genuine romance that it will bear telling again. This is how it runs; " When Verrells was nine, his father died. He went to work. For a time, at 12, he toiled in a Welsh coal mine, but he studied in a night school in the evenings. He did his share of fighting in the war. His lungs were badly injured. For a time it looked as though his future would be short and dark. Then one day, a doctor said to him, Go to Southend. The ozone will do you good. He went. His lungs began to improve, He had become a writer. He wrote an article for the Southend newspaper, E K Cole replied to it. That is how Verrells met Cole.

At that time Cole had a small shop. He sold electrical equipment. But he had invented an improved radio set. He showed it to Verrells, who promptly said, I can sell those sets. Verrells killed two birds with one stone - he went from door to door in Southend selling the sets that Cole made and he breathed in so much ozone that his lung trouble disappeared. "

Such was the origin of Ekco All - electric Radio, which earns 100 per cent dividends at a time of unprecedented world depression, and of which Mr W.S. Verrells is Chairman and Managing Director and Mr. E.K. Cole Works and Technical Director. After a visit to their factory, it is almost impossible to believe this development has all taken place in seven years. To stand at one end of the main factory and see row upon row of close upon 2000 girl workers stretching away before your eyes is a real experience.

To walk around and inspect the benches is an education. Bench behind bench, the number of the workers seems illimitable, and on every bench is something to see. Along each runs a slowly moving belt, laden with the components on which the bench is working. On the benches at this end, which is as yet not fully developed, the girls are making windings, reeling on the wire at a great pace with machines which stop immediately it breaks. What wonderful workers the girls are! In the packing department, or performing the routine operations, one would expect to find them, but here they are soldering, riveting, screwing and turning out work which cannot fail to inspire the admiration of the most expert or the most ignorant. It seems necessary to coin the word " craftswomen " in the Ekco works.



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