

Abrasive Griddle Bricks Cut From Scoria At Newell

By RUTH KING
TULELAKE—Whipped up froth of obsidian lava, violently ejected in some early volcanic action on Glass Mountain, 16 miles south of here is scrubbing stove grills in restaurants and coffee shops around the world.

Abrasive griddle bricks, used by fry cooks to scour cooking surfaces in public eating places, are being turned out by the freight car loads by the United States Pumice Supply Company, Inc., at Newell, one of the largest operations of its kind in the U.S.

Phil Park, owner of the Park Motel here is manager. Company headquarters are in Los Angeles.

Blue prints for the business may originate in some plush office but the "down to pumice" operation has been developed by hardy men who fight a truck up rugged slopes to the mines to dig scoria out with picks and crow bars.

Loading operations are accomplished with a heavy open steel basket operated on a caterpillar tractor. Mining operations continue during the spring, summer and fall, with trucks hauling big loads of the porous lightweight material to the factory.

Hundreds of acres of scoria, spread in a layer from six inches to 20 feet deep down the mountain side, is still waiting to be used, making the Glass Mountain strata one of the largest in the U.S. All major deposits of scoria are found on the West Coast.

The varied sized chunks of the frothy substance are dumped in the holding yard to later travel on a moving belt to the sawyers, who are guarded against eye and skin damage by goggles and neoprene gloves.

Two circular saws, with carbide bands fused to steel, cut the scoria into bricks; about 1000 per day are turned out. The

bricks, travel on rollers to a drying kiln where warm air is circulated for 24 hours.

Rough edges are then rubbed off, they are weighed to meet specifications for three sizes and packaged under Grillmaster and Modoc brands.

East coast trade demands the heavier, harder grade of bricks while west coast purchasers use the lighter. Bricks are clamped in a cast aluminum holder during use.

The cutting surface of scoria is sharply abrasive and it has no odor as in synthetic abrasives which have a sulphuric binding agent. Scoria cuts grease and grime more rapidly and lasts longer than other cleaning agents used for griddles.

The larger bricks retail for 75 cents. Small sizes are slightly lower and reject sell for a nickel. Farmers use rejects for cleaning rust from farm machinery and tools, women have discovered that corns and callouses disappear, with a whisk of scoria on dampened skin and painters use it to scrub hardened paint from surfaces.

About 85 per cent of the material brought down from the mountain is waste and huge piles of it have accumulated around the plant. Occasionally a carload of waste is shipped to a winery or vinegar factory to be used for filtering purposes.

Scoria once came from Italy in dust form but importations from that country have practically ceased since deposits have been found in the mountains of the West Coast and in lesser degree in Utah and Arizona.

A new section for mining was opened this fall on Glass Mountain.

Pumice and scoria from local deposits have been put to com-



SAWYERS OPERATING power-driven equipment cut the scoria into blocks 4x4x8 and 3 1/2x3 1/2x6 inches. Here a worker behind goggles, pushes a chunk of the material into a saw. These bricks of abrasives, manufactured at Newell by the United States Pumice Supply Co., are shipped out in carloads.

mercial use in varied forms for several years, with pumice tile rapidly becoming a favored building material.

The Newell plant which cuts bricks during the winter employs seven men and one woman.

The business is carried on in a long warehouse at the former Japanese relocation center.

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Hungary Faces Grim Winter

VIENNA (AP)—Nine million Hungarians face a grim winter. There are long lineups for coal and wood and the government admits many will go without heat. There are lines for meat, butter and fat.

An indignant mother wrote a Budapest newspaper: "Winter coats for 3-year-olds are not to be bought anywhere."

The trouble in Hungary, diplomats here say, is a crisis in its "new look" policy of trying to provide consumer goods. To carry out this plan, the Communists are turning the country's entire economy upside down. They did it once before when they took over in 1949. Then, they set out to make central Europe's biggest granary into an industrial giant.

Now that's been all thrown overboard and they are going in reverse, all the way back to making Hungary an agricultural country with emphasis on consumer goods instead of on heavy iron and steel.

The result, the diplomats say, is that the entire economy doesn't know where it is going. Neither do the people.

Production of all kinds seems to

be standing still as the entire economy is being shifted, as retooling takes place, as workers are retrained and reassigned.

Thousands of persons have been thrown out of jobs recently in an effort to reduce bureaucracy.

Many of these are without any form of relief, and others have been forced to take lower-paid jobs, causing discontent. A government effort to force them to go to work on farms or in mines appears to have failed.

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