



*LIGHT OCCUPATIONS* might seem at first glance to include building motors small enough to enclose in a flash-light bulb, but if you think so, just try it. Not satisfied with enclosing one miniature motor, C. O. Blaisdell (Dept. 7613) hopes to have another running in the same 5/16-inch bulb at the Hobby Show. The motor shown in the circle runs on D. C.; the other is to be an A. C. motor.

## **Charles Oswald Blaisdell — The Inventor**

by Marilyn Blaisdell Chilton

**C**harles Oswald Blaisdell, 1899-1981, from my earliest recollections, was always building something. As a child, I remember him making stilts for us and a push cart (fore-runner of the stroller) for my sisters. I realized as I grew up that he built many interesting things.

Charles, BS (Electrical Engineering), 1924, Univ. of Wisconsin, began his career with Western Electric Co., Chicago, where he worked for 26 years before being transferred to Indianapolis.

### **Making Talking Movies**

He was assigned to work on ways to synchronize sound with movies to make talking movies. The DuPont process was eventually chosen as the industry standard. He designed many of the components in today's telephone, receiving numerous patents for his ideas and innovations.

At home in 1934 he made several talking home movies. He made a miniature electric motor that fit inside a 1-½ volt flashlight bulb (5/16ths of an inch in diameter).

### **Half-scaled 1908 Olds**

During WWII, he built a three-wheeled bicycle, driven with an electric motor. His "tricycle" was featured in the November 1944 edition of the *Popular Mechanics*. In the 1950's he made a self-contained camping trailer; in the 1960's he built a ½ scale model of a 1908 Oldsmobile. He licensed it to drive around Pasadena, CA.

### **A Unique Clock**

In the 1940's he modified a grandfather clock, incorporating hand carved animated figures that struck bells on the hour and quarter hour. In the 1960's he started building clocks in which the mechanism that operated the clocks was hidden from view. One of these clocks is in our home.

On this clock the numbers and hands are glued to pieces of round glass, and there is no visible means to move the hands. The clock is fastened to the wall, supported by two cylindrical rods. The secret is that he used three separate pieces of glass. The numbers are glued to a stationary glass, and the hour and minute hands are each glued to two separated pieces of glass.

He made ring gears to fit the hour and minute hand pieces of glass, and incorporated shafts running through the support tubing that extend into the next room, in this case, the garage. There he installed a motor and a series of gears and chains to drive the clock. The clock has kept perfect time for over 40 years.

### **Clock-making is in the Genes**

Charles is a descendant of David Blaisdell (1712-1756), the clock maker who lived in Amesbury, Massachusetts. We do not think that he was aware of David Blaisdell's skills as a clock maker. We do know that he inherited a lot of those clock-making genes!

**Charles Oswald Blaisdell** *From: George Nicholas Blaisdell, Joseph William Blaisdell, Nicholas Blaisdell, Joseph Blaisdell — (6.199) — David Blaisdell — (4.21)*

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