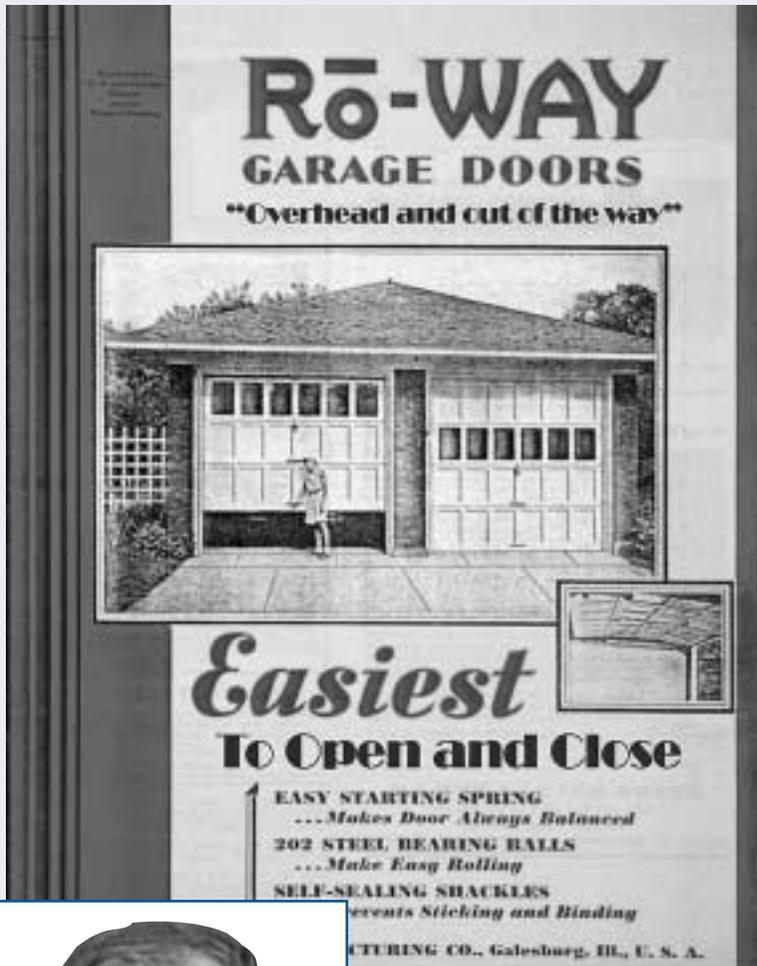


## Rowe Manufacturing Company



ABOVE: Rowe brochure, ca. 1930

LEFT: Alvin Rowe, founder and president

BELOW: The Rowe office staff during World War II, July 1942. Dale and Alvin Rowe are in the second row, 4th and 5th from the left. Bill Norberg is in the same row, fourth from the right.



### Milestones

- 1908: Alvin Rowe established Rowe Manufacturing Company in Galesburg, Ill., making Can't Sag farm gates. Other items, such as wood ladders, were added later.
- 1930: The firm began making the Ro-Way Garage Door, an over-the-head sectional door. In the late 1930s, garage doors became their major product, as Rowe was considered one of the major garage door manufacturers in the nation, behind Overhead Door and Crawford Door. Rowe's 1930s slogan: "The Best of the Better Doors."
- 1944: Bill Norberg, plant superintendent and co-developer of the Ro-Way door, left Rowe and partnered with Ray Neisewander to start Raynor Manufacturing Company in Quincy, Ill. In the 1940s, Rowe doors were distributed nationally as employment reached a peak of 335.
- 1957: After the death of Alvin Rowe, his son, Dale H. Rowe, became president. Dale led the company into manufacturing fiberglass and steel doors.
- 1968: Dale Rowe participated in the founding of the National Association of Garage Door Manufacturers (NAGDM), the predecessor to DASMA.
- 1969: Rowe purchased Quincy Manufacturing of Tiffin, Ohio, considered to be a pioneer in steel garage doors. The deal also included the Tiffin Operator line.
- 1970: Rowe in Galesburg employed about 280.
- 1973: Dale Rowe sold the 65-year-old firm to Frantz Manufacturing of Sterling, Ill. At the time, Rowe employment had dropped to about 180 workers. Citing several reasons for selling, Dale Rowe especially noted the presence of lower-priced doors and increased competition in the industry. He said that, by the early 1970s, Rowe's aging facilities required major renovation, and an attractive offer from Frantz seemed preferable to reinvesting in new buildings and new equipment.
- 1980: All Galesburg operations were closed, and remaining assets were moved to Frantz in Sterling.

Sources: Dale H. Rowe and the Galesburg Register-Mail newspaper.