



Maze Nails is a sixth-generation family-owned business that stands alone. Once sharing the stage with many domestic nail companies, it is the only one remaining that can claim its nails are 100 percent “Made in the USA.”

Its lineage stretches back 169 years. The company was started by Irish immigrant Samuel Nesbitt Maze, who arrived in the United States in 1836 from Castleblaney, County Monaghan, Ireland. He worked as a masonry contractor for several years before deciding in 1848 to try his hand at the lumber business, locating his modest yard in the small town of Peru, Illinois, on the banks of the Illinois River. The yard stood just a few hundred yards from the south end of the new Illinois-Michigan Canal. Dug by men

and horsepower, it was also 1848 when the canal first linked Peru and the Illinois and Mississippi rivers to Lake Michigan.

Maze had a small barge built—named the Elk—and used mules to haul loads of local grain to Chicago by way of the I-M canal. Before leaving Chicago to return to Peru, the Elk was loaded with white pine from the huge timber stands in Wisconsin, for sale to Samuel Maze’s contractor friends, and later to everyone, when farmers and others asked him to bring them lumber.

In the late 1800s, the Maze Lumber yard was selling a great many cedar shingle roof jobs. The shingles lasted fine, but the bright steel-cut nails that Maze Lumber sold, though they were the best available at the time, just didn’t last. The result was blow-offs of the wood shingles due to nail failures. The lumberyard, then operated by Samuel’s son, Walter, bought a used nail machine to make

their own, higher-quality nails from pure zinc strips.

It was fortunate that LaSalle-Peru was also home to M & H Zinc and Illinois Zinc—suppliers of the zinc needed to make the cut cedar shingle nails that the small nail machine produced. Pure zinc nails, while they didn’t drive extremely well because they were rather soft, accomplished the Maze goal of providing a long-lasting, “rust-proof” nail to customers, especially in short lengths.

Maze Lumber promoted its cedar shingle roof packages far and wide. They even gave away the zinc cut nails free if the rest of the job was purchased at their yard. So the little nail machine now had to run more hours a week to keep up with the growing demand.

It didn’t take long for word of these fine zinc nails to spread to lumberyards outside the area and soon other area dealers arrived by wagon, flat-

sixth-generation family-owned business



← Zinclud nails being loaded into 100-pound wooden cases.



This contractor is loading 5-pound boxes of Maze Zinclud Nails into his wagon full of cedar shingles at Maze Lumber around the turn of the 20th century.



The first Maze delivery truck, a 1925 one-and-a-half ton Federal was purchased new by Maze for \$423.

boat and sidewheeler. As Maze Lumber began selling nails to other lumberyards, the nail machine eventually ran full time—then was joined by additional machines as nail orders poured in. So was born the Nail Division of W.H. Maze Company.

In the early 1900s, when the cost of the base metals such as zinc began to skyrocket, the fledgling nail mill devised a way to conserve zinc by making steel nails, then dipping them into a vat of molten zinc. These ZINCLAD® nails drove much better than the old pure zinc cut nails, but still had the excellent rust-resistance to which Maze customers had become accustomed.

For years, Zinclad nails were dipped manually using a small basket to lower the nails into the molten zinc.

As nail sales climbed to the point where this manual nail dipping method just didn't keep up, the Maze engi-



Zinclad, the nails that started the Maze Nails division of the company.

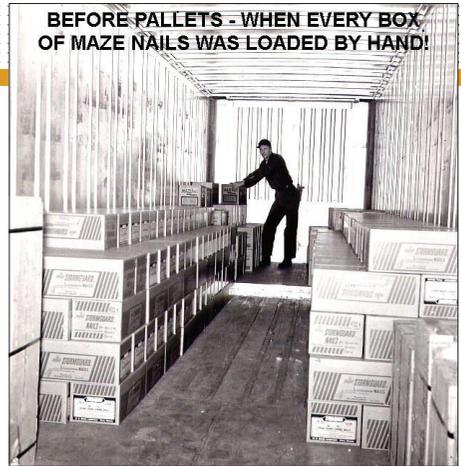
neers went to work on a new design. The first automated nail dipping line was completed in 1955 when Double-Dipped STORMGUARD® nails were born. Double-dipping the nails precluded pinholes, globs of zinc and other imperfections, further guaranteeing homeowners that Maze hot-dipped nails would give them decades of rust-free service on their roofing, siding and decking jobs.

Maze Nail engineers were responsible for many other major innovations in the nail business. As building materials changed and improved, it was imperative to develop new methods of fastening them. Maze developed spiral shank threading to increase the holding power of their nails, reducing the problems caused by nails backing out of roofing and siding products.

Maze Nails was also the first mill to pack nails into both 50-pound and 5-pound boxes—quite a departure from the old 100-pound kegs considered standard packing.

Maze Nails has always been on the leading edge of developing nails to apply ever-changing and modern building materials. For example, when hardboard siding first entered the market, contractors found that regular box nails and siding nails didn't drive well through the new, tough materials. Maze Nails was quickly contacted, and within several weeks had developed high-carbon steel, small-headed Stormguard sid-

BEFORE PALLETS - WHEN EVERY BOX OF MAZE NAILS WAS LOADED BY HAND!



ing nails. Those nails soon became the industry standard for hardboard siding nails, and they continue to hold that distinction.

Maze Nails also had the first pressure treated lumber (P.T.L.®) nails to hit the market after the strong emergence of treated lumber. Maze Nails is now providing both bulk and collated hot-dipped nails for the huge, emerging fiber-cement siding market.

Of course, during wartime, Maze was always a dependable supplier of special nails to the military.

In 1990, Maze Nails added to its corporate family with the purchase of Independent Nail, founded in 1915 in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, by the Stone family. Independent Nail was once the nation's largest supplier of specialty nails. Its STRONGHOLD® nail line was a brand name that most other nail makers were unable to match for many years.

The acquisition of Independent Nail further galvanized Maze Company's position at the top of its industry, providing an even greater diversity of quality products, including stainless steel nails, copper nails, plastic head cap nails, metal head cap nails, paneling nails, hardwood trim nails and aluminum nails.



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