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THE STORY OF COTTON

AND ITS MANUFACTURE INTO CLOTH

IN

NEW BEDFORD

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By Henry H. Crapo

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THE STORY OF COTTON

The Old Dartmouth Historical Society traditionally exploits the romance of whaling. Yet during one third only of the three hundred and more years of Old Dartmouth have whales played an important part in our lives. For the first hundred years, which unquestionably were the hardest, the pioneers, when not engaged in asserting their antagonistic religious creeds, were occupied in clearing the forests and cultivating a reluctant soil for their subsistence. Their wives and children were engrossed, among other things, in spinning and weaving, by hand in their homes, wool and flax and other fibres for clothing and household use. It was during the next hundred years that Dartmouth vexed the seas, chasing and killing whales, and furnishing the world with light. During the last one hundred years, roughly, the people of New Bedford have busied themselves in spinning and weaving cotton by machinery in factories for the use of the world at large.

Without abandoning our allegiance to the royal mammal of the Ocean it is fitting we call to remembrance that other master of our destiny, — King Cotton.

KING COTTON

Cotton is obtained from the gossamer filament enveloping the seed of a plant indigenous in Southern India before the earliest days of recorded history, — long before Jonah made his intimate acquaintance with a whale. It is an annual plant, dying down in the autumn and planted from seed in the spring. Its flower is something like a mallow, cream turning to pink. The seed vessel, or boll, in which the snowy white fibre is tightly packed, is about the size of a walnut.

This cotton fibre, once called "vegetable wool", has proved of astonishing importance in the social, economic, and political history of the modern world. Within the last few hundred years its manufacture into cloth and its distribution, have been controlling factors in the development of the British Empire

and the prosperity of the United States. Cotton, in fact, has been vastly more important than whale oil in the human drama.

Primitive man's first wants were food and protection against weather. The aboriginal man soon found that twisting fibres, either animal or vegetable, helped him in obtaining food, —by bow strings, cords, fish lines, etc. In this sense spinning was in use long before weaving. Then the women (I am sure it was women who were originally responsible for the textile industry) began to twist various strands of wool and flax and jute, — whatever they could find — , and weave them into nets, raiment, coverings, tents, and other conveniences for themselves and their men folks. Wool and flax were, at first, the more available fibres. The use of cotton seems to have been due to a desire to create something luxurious and aesthetically satisfying. The arts of design, of colored patterns, of fine textures, were certainly stimulated by the discovery that the fragile fibre of the cotton plant, and the cocoon webs of the silk worm, could be spun and woven into delicate cloth.

For thirty centuries the cotton plant has been grown in Southern India, and its fibre used for textiles. Persians, and other Eastern peoples, at an early date, decorated cotton fabrics with elaborate designs. No doubt fine India muslins were early imported into Egypt, where the main textile crop was flax grown on the Delta and along the river shores of the Nile. Most of the exquisite fabrics found in the tombs of the ancient Egyptians are of linen. Slowly, however, and apparently in defiance of religious taboos, (no doubt founded on economic reasons), the Egyptians, several centuries before Christ, discovered their soil and climate were especially available for the cultivation of the cotton plant. Egyptian cotton, because of its long staple, has been one of the most desirable cottons of the world. Because of its restricted areas of cultivation, and short seasons, the supply has been limited.

It is somewhat astonishing that the very earliest specimens of highly wrought and decorated cotton textiles are of Peruvian origin. Centuries before Columbus discovered America cotton was grown in Peru, Chili, Mexico, and the islands of the Caribbean Sea. This fact raises an interesting speculation whether the cotton plant was indeed indigenous in South America, or whether it was brought across the Pacific Ocean from India. If, indeed, the cotton seed was brought from India, it is one of

the many indications that the early civilization of the Americas was derived from Asia.

The knowledge of cotton was slow in penetrating modern Europe. Alexander the Great brought it to Greece. The Phoenicians and others carried the fabrics to Italy and Spain many years before the Christian era. When Columbus, in 1492, discovered what he supposed was India, he found the natives using cotton cloth, and took back to Spain specimens of cotton boll as evidence that he had, indeed, reached India. He little knew that in those seed vessels was potential wealth immeasurably exceeding all the treasures of gold and precious jewels which Spain subsequently extracted from the western world.

When Cortes conquered Mexico (1519) he sent back to his emperor, Charles V. "cotton mantles, some all white, others mixed with white and black or red, green, yellow and blue; waist-coats, handkerchiefs, counterpanes, tapestries, and carpets of cotton." The royal robes of Montezuma and of the Incas were of cotton dyed and studded with jewels. Yet it was not cotton the Spaniards craved. With their destruction of the civilization of the Aztecs and Incas the high cultivation and the fine weaving of cotton ceased. The plant, however, continued to grow wild in South America, Mexico and the West Indies, and, to some extent, was used by the natives for coarse cloths. For two and a half centuries and more after Columbus it is doubtful whether cotton was indigenous or cultivated to any extent in any part of the territory now included in the United States, although cotton cloth was not entirely unknown to some of the North American Indians.

It was, indeed, not until shortly before the American Revolution that cotton was actively cultivated in what are now our Southern States. Certain planters in Virginia, grown rich by the cultivation of tobacco, had used cotton bushes in their elaborate gardens as decorative shrubs. Gradually cotton was raised in Georgia and the Carolinas as a subsidiary crop. Not until the nineteenth century did our Southern States become far and away the greatest producers of raw cotton in the world, supplying England and all other countries with the fibre which had then become all important in the commerce and industry of civilization.

India, Egypt and, finally to a greater extent, the Southern States of the United States, became and still are the important

producers of cotton, although a number of other localities have instituted and in some degree succeeded in raising the plant. There are various varieties of cotton, usually classified by the staple length of the fibre. Egyptian cotton is of the longer staple, and the Sea Island cotton, once grown abundantly off the coasts of Georgia and Florida, and now, to some extent elsewhere in our Southern States, is also of high grade. It is the long staple cotton, desirable for the finer weaves of goods, which, during the last half century has been the type largely used in New Bedford mills.

The man who, above all others, is responsible for the amazing increase in the world's use of raw cotton was a Yankee named Eli Whitney, born in Westboro, Massachusetts, in 1765. Graduating at Yale College he obtained a position as tutor in Georgia. Visiting the family of the widow of General Nathaniel Green, of Revolutionary fame, he happened to be present at a dinner company, perhaps on Cumberland Island, where certain planters were discussing the intolerably slow process of extracting the seeds from the cotton fibre by hand, as had, of course, always been done from the earliest days. Mrs. Green (who had married Phineas Miller, a college chum of Whitney's) said: "Mr. Whitney, why don't you get up something to do the work? You seem able to do anything!" Whitney replied: "As for cleaning cotton seed, I shouldn't know it if I saw it." The next day, however, he watched cotton being separated from the bolls by the sweating slaves, and soon went to work in earnest.

This story, I fear, may be somewhat apocryphal, certainly as to the conversation, and possibly as to the locus. At all events it was my privilege, last Spring, to visit Cumberland Island and stand on the site of General Green's mansion, now torn down, where it is said Whitney received his inspiration. Nearby still stands the low tabby building which General Green used as an Office, and which, very likely, Whitney used for experimental drafting. In the days of General Green, and for half a century later, more than one thousand slaves cultivated "Sea Island cotton" on Cumberland Island, now covered with pitch pine forests and semitropical vegetation.

Eli Whitney did, in fact, devise a machine called a saw-gin ("gin" is merely a colloquial abbreviation of en-gin(e)). The result was incredibly revolutionary. A single gin had the capacity of three thousand pair of hands in separating the fibre from the seeds. In 1792, before the invention of the gin, the

United States exported only 130,000 lbs. of cotton. In 1810, only a few years after the invention, 35,000,000 lbs. were exported. The maximum production of raw cotton in the United States has since exceeded 5,000,000,000 lbs. forming the most valuable money crop of the country.

Whitney obtained a patent in 1794, signed by George Washington in Philadelphia. As so often is the case with inventors Whitney derived no adequate pecuniary reward for his epoch making contrivance, which so immensely stimulated the cultivation and production of cotton in our Southern States, bringing vast wealth to the planters, and largely contributing to the secession of those States from the Union in 1862.

Within a year or two there has been found in Wilkes County, Georgia, an original hand driven Whitney cotton gin. Mr. Victor S. Dupres, who now lives on the old Eli Whitney farm in Westboro, has interested himself in obtaining this machine together with the old gin-house in which it was used one hundred and forty years ago, for the purpose of bringing it to Massachusetts as a memorial to the man who so largely contributed to the feasibility of the New England cotton industry. Mr. Dupres sent me a photograph of this machine which is now in our Museum.

COTTON MACHINERY

The crude implements used by the Hindoos in spinning and weaving cotton, modified and improved as time went on, yet not essentially changed, continued in use for many centuries in Asia, Africa, and Europe. The hand turned spinning wheel, and the common hand loom, practically similar to those used by the housewives of Old Dartmouth in the eighteenth century (now on exhibition in our Colonial Museum) were the universal implements, and, indeed, to some extent, are still used all the world over.

It was during the latter half of the eighteenth century that, through the ingenuity and enterprise of Englishmen, machines were invented, operated by steam or water power, which transformed the manufacture of cotton textiles from a manual into a mechanical process, and revolutionized the social and the political life of England, and later of the United States.

"The factory system has not, perhaps, produced better fabrics, but it has produced them more quickly, more easily, and in vaster greater quantity." It is only in very modern times that attempts have been made to excel the fine weaves and the incomparable designs of Oriental and Peruvian hand products.

A brief enumeration of some of these mechanical inventions which caused the "English Industrial Revolution" is:—1710. James Hargreaves, the spinning jenny; — 1738. John Kay the fly shuttle; — 1768. Richard Arkwright, the spinning frame; — 1779. Samuel Crompton, the mule; — 1786. Edmund Cartwright, the power loom. In reference to the last named invention it is interesting that Mr. Cartwright was a minister of the gospel, in no way trained to the practical art of weaving. This is another illustration of the numerous remarkable inventions which have been evolved by men who were strangers to the industry involved.

It was some years later, in 1804, that Joseph Marie Jacquard of France, invented the loom which is still designated by his name. Napoleon Bonaparte hearing of this invention sent for Jacquard and asked him: "Are you the man who can do what God Almighty can not, — tie a knot in a taut string?" To which Jacquard replied: "I can not do what God cannot, but what God has taught me to do." The loom was, originally, arranged with weighted strings passing over a pulley and falling into perforated cards. Each motion changed the position of the strings, allowing some to go through the holes and draw up the warp thread so it was skipped, while others struck the cards and left the strands in place to be woven by the shuttle. In this way the weaver could pass his thread over, under, or through the warp as required by the design of the perforated cards. It was the first efficient machine to do elaborate design weaving. As has been often the case the opposition of labor was so great that the loom was destroyed by fire in public places, and Jacquard compelled to flee for his life from France. In New Bedford, which in the last quarter of the last century turned to "fine goods" and "fancies" the modernized cotton Jacquard loom has been largely used.

There naturally have been innumerable inventions and improvements of cotton power machinery. I mention only two. In 1831 John Sharp of Providence improved the spindle by a

ring device. In 1888 George Draper and Sons of Hopedale, Massachusetts, developed a highly efficient power loom, now known as the "Draper Automatic Loom" with which many of our New Bedford mills are equipped.

COTTON INDUSTRY IN NEW ENGLAND PRIOR TO 1845

The art of hand spinning and weaving wool, flax, and cotton was known to many of the first settlers of New England, and its practice encouraged for the common good. In 1640 the General Court of Massachusetts ordered a survey of spinning and weaving, seeking a method of teaching the boys and girls of all towns. In 1656 the Court ordered the Selectmen in every town "to turn women, boys, and girls towards weaving" and decreed that every family in the colony must produce a fixed quota of yarn and cloth, or suffer a fine for failure.

Before the American Revolution such cotton as was used came from the West Indies, and practically all finished cloths, not wrought on household looms, were imported. It was the deliberate policy of the English Government to suppress manufactures of whatever kind in its colonies. With the advent of the stamp act and the secession of the colonies from the mother country, the manufacture of cloth on this side of the Atlantic Ocean sprang into being. Co-operative spinning and weaving was started in Rowley and Ipswich, Massachusetts, and in the South as well. A tentative "cotton factory" was started in Beverley, Massachusetts in 1787. In 1789 George Washington visited this mill and highly approved the enterprise. The mill, however, was not successful yet it actually made cotton goods by machinery before the more famous Slater Mill at Pawtucket.

In 1789 Samuel Slater, who may fairly be called the "Father of the Cotton Industry in the United States" came to Rhode Island. He was born in Belper, Derbyshire, England in 1768. He had worked for Arkwright. He interested Moses Brown and William Almy, men of prominence in Providence, to enable him to build cotton machinery and established a factory at Pawtucket. In 1790 the mill was operating. It was, at first, exclusively a spinning mill, the yarn being sold throughout New England to "cottage weavers." "The old Slater Mill',' of which Rhode Island is immensely proud, still stands on the bank of the rushing Blackstone River, — now a museum.

Within a few years many small cotton mills were built in New England and the Southern States. During the next two decades a few larger mills were attempted in New England. The fever struck Fall River, then called Troy Village. The Durfees and the Bordens were moving spirits. The Troy Manufacturing Company was organized in 1817. Soon other mills were successfully operated by the marvelous waterpower of the river. By 1833 there were thirteen mills in Fall River with 40,000 spindles. Some of the surplus capital of New Bedford was invested in these mills. The Rodmans and Robesons were actively interested. Other, and larger, mills were started in Lowell, Manchester, Lancaster, and other New England cities. During the first half of the nineteenth century the manufacture of cotton cloth, both in the Northern and the Southern States, became one of the most important industries of the United States.

NEW BEDFORD MILLS

Old Dartmouth was slow in paying obeisance to King Cotton. So long as whale oil and whale bone were supremely remunerative the royal Leviathan of the Sea held us in sway. Why, indeed, should we have turned to such a super-antiquated and prosaic source of revenue as the manipulation of cotton fibre? The whale fishery completely dominated the town. Before 1845 there were no "factories" of any kind in Old Dartmouth, save grist mills, a small woolen mill in Acushnet, a small iron factory, called the Gosnold Mill on the river, and sundry industries directly connected with whaling, such as ship building, spar making, rope twisting, cordage, cooperage, sail making, outfitters supplies, candle works etc., etc. Surplus capital of our merchants was apt to be invested outside of Dartmouth, in maritime or commercial enterprises, or the new fangled steam railroads, or iron and nail factories.

A few months ago, dismantling the residence of Captain Joseph C. Delano, a letter addressed to the Captain by George Randall, dated February 15, 1847, was found. Mr. Randall the owner, or part owner, of Fish Island, set this forth a proposal to "improve the north side of the Island — this spot," he wrote "will possess advantages equal, if not superior, to anything in the United States for driving machinery by steam — My present opinion is that a large iron manufactury, and one for cotton

duck, would be very desirable and profitable." Clearly cotton was subordinate to iron. Mr. Randall's dreams did not materialize. The manufacture of iron, or, indeed, of cotton duck were not destined to be developed in New Bedford. As to the north part of Fish Island it is today, nearly a hundred years later, still largely devoted to oil, — but not of whales.

Samuel Rodman may, perhaps, be called the "Father of the New Bedford Cotton Industry". In 1845 he conceived the idea of establishing a cotton mill here. On February 30, 1846, some two months before the speculative incorporation of the Wamsutta Mills, the Massachusetts General Court incorporated Samuel Rodman, Alden G. Snell, William R. Rotch and their associates and successors under the name of the "New Bedford Steam Mill Company" for the purpose of manufacturing "cotton goods and the grinding of corn," limiting the capital to $160,000. The mill, under the superintendence of Alden G. Snell, was built on Rodman's wharf near the foot of Hillman Street. It commenced operating in November 1846, more than two years before the Wamsutta Mills was in effective operation. In 1849, according to the New Bedford Directory, the "Steam Mills" ran 7,500 spindles and turned out 25,000 yards of 39 inch sheeting per week."

In his incomparable diary Mr. Rodman noted in detail his absorption in the construction of the Steam Mill and the difficulties of its operation which were evidently baffling, due to disputes about wages, insufficient capital and, as he believed, a lack of efficiency of his selling agents in Boston. In the end the operation became too onerous for Mr. Rodman and in 1852 it was decided to discontinue it, the machinery being moved to the "Shaker's Mill" at Shirley.

Yet the impulse to manufacture cotton in New Bedford was in the air soon after 1840. Abraham Howland, Joseph C. Delano and Henry T. Wood as early as 1846 conceived the idea of a cotton manufacturing enterprise to be called the "Wamsutta Mills". A charter was obtained April 9th, 1846 by Mr. Howland then a member of the General Court. The incorporators were named as Jireh Perry, Matthew Luce, Thomas S. Hathaway, and their associates. The charter enabled the corporation to manufacture cotton, wool, or iron. Mr. Howland, however, found his fellow citizens cautious about going into such a new and untried industry. The enerprise lagged.

In 1840 Dwight Perry of Fairhaven went to Georgia where he operated a small cotton mill. He had in his employ another Fairhaven youngster — Thomas Bennett. Bennett became enthusiastic about cotton manufacturing and, returning to New Bedford, induced William T. Russell to go with him to Georgia for the purpose of there establishing a mill fostered by New Bedford capital. The plan appearing to the promoters feasible, Joseph Grinnell, far and away the most progressive merchant in New Bedford, was consulted. Mr. Grinnell had been in the India and China trade in New York. He was a banker. He was a member of the Congress of the United States. He had vision and was singularly alive to the ever changing impulses of the world about him. He had already been responsible for the steam railroad to Taunton which opened New Bedford to the world — by land. He was a Quaker. He was not impulsive. After careful consideration he decided to sponsor a cotton mill, but only on condition it be established, not in the South, but in New Bedford, where the investors could watch it.

The public opinion of New Bedford was strongly against "corporations" of any kind. The mechanics were especially against a "factory" because "organized and disciplined labor and longer hours of mill work were inimical to the labor interests". It would, manifestly, be necessary to import trained overseers and operatives to the detriment of the natives. The merchants, also, still engrossed in the whaling industry, were disinclined to embark on such a hazardous voyage as cotton manufacturing.

Mr. Grinnell headed the list of subscribers for the new mill with $10,000, yet it was with great difficulty that only $160,000 could be raised, mostly in small subscriptions. The speculative charter, with the name "Wamsutta Mills", obtained by Abraham Howland, was taken over. Joseph Grinnelll was made President, and so continued for nearly twenty years. Thomas Bennett, to whom Mr. Grinnell graciously gave the credit for the eventual success of the mill, was made "Agent and Engineer", and so acted for twenty-seven years. Edward L. Baker who had been largely responsible for obtaining reluctant subscriptions was made Treasurer.

The original plans called for a mill of 16,000 spindles and 200 looms. In 1853 a second mill was started. Finally there were eight mills having a maximum of 236,000 spindles and 7,300 looms, constituting one of the largest cotton units in the United States. The quality of its products have been appreciated

in many parts of the world. Our grandmothers, and, I dare say, our granddaughters, have considered "Wamsutta Sheets" of supreme excellence.

In view of the fact that the Wamsutta Mills was highly successful, having paid in the first twenty-five years dividends over 300% of its capital, and in view of the fact that the whale fishery continued to decline after the Civil War, it now seems curious that for more than a quarter of a century no other cotton mill was established in New Bedford.

It was in 1871 the "Potomska Mills" was built, Edward and Hiram Kilburn and Andrew G. Pierce, Senior, being actively interested.

In November 1881 came the "Acushnet Mills", Joseph F. Knowles and Horatio Hathaway being the leading spirits.

In March 1882 the "Grinnell Manufacturing Corporation" was organized, Edward Kilburn and Otis N. Pierce, President and Treasurer.

In 1882 the "New Bedford Manufacturing Co." came into existence, William D. Howland being the promoter and executive head. Later in 1888 Mr. Howland organized the "Howland Manufacturing Company" (subsequently the Gosnold Mills).

In 1888 the "City Manufacturing Co." was started with Otis N. Pierce as President. In the same year the "Hathaway Manufacturing Co.", under the leadership of Joseph F. Knowles and Horatio Hathaway came into existence.

In 1889 Frank R. Hadley, Henry Holcomb and others built the "Bennett Mills" and subsequently the "Columbia". These were spinning mills.

In 1892 the "Pierce Manufacturing Company" was established by Andrew G. Pierce, Jr. In the same year the "Bristol" with Thomas H. Knowles as President and Benjamin Wilcox as Treasurer. Also the same year the "Rotch Spinning Company" (subsequently the Passaic Cotton Mills) under practically the same management as the Howland Mills.

In 1895 the "Dartmouth Mills" was promoted through the efforts of Abbott P. Smith and Rufus A. Soule. In later years this mill came under the successful management of Walter H. Langshaw.

In 1895 Messrs. Harding and Whitman of Boston established the "Whitman Mill". This was the first of our cotton mills to be promoted by other than New Bedford Citizens.

In 1896 the "Beacon Mills" under the management of Charles D. Owen and Charles O. Dexter of Providence, Rhode Island, was organized and made cotton blankets and other specialties.

In 1902 the "Butler Mills", named for William M. Butler, and the "Soule Mill", named for Rufus A. Soule, were established. Abbott P. Smith was the promoter.

In 1903 the "Manomet Mills" were built by the Harding-Whitman interests, Charles M. Holmes being the Agent.

In 1904 the "Kilburn Mill", a spinning mill, was organized under the management of Henry L. Tiffany.

In 1906 the "Taber Mill" was built under the leadership of Frederick Taber, his son Frederick H. Taber, Rufus Soule, Abbott P. Smith and others.

In 1906 the "Nonquitt Spinning Mill" was established by Willliam Whitman. In the same year was organized the "Page Mill" under the leadership of John W. Knowles.

In 1909 the "Nashawena Mills" was started by William Whitman, the "Pierce Bros. Limited" by Andrew, Edward and Albert Pierce, and the "New Bedford Cotton Mill" of which William M. Butler was President and James O. Thompson Agent.

In 1910 five more mills were built. The "Holmes Mill", a Harding project, Charles M. Holmes being the manager; The "Booth Mill", Charles E. Riley, President, and George H. Booth Treasurer; The "Neild Manufacturing Co." by John Neild and Joseph W. Allen; The "Quissett Mill", promoted by Abbott P. Smith, William M. Butler being President, Thomas F. Glennon and Edward H. Cook being actively interested; The "Sharp Mills" established by Arthur R. Sharp of Providence, Robert Schofield being manager.

Since 1910 no additional mills have been constructed, although extensions and improvements have, in some cases, been made. Several of the older mills have been torn down. Some now carry new names. A number have been acquired by interests outside New Bedford and operated for various forms of industry other than the production of cotton cloth.

There was one interlude in the history of our cotton industry which had far reaching effects. In 1898 after the failure to make good of most of our then existing yarn mills, Kidder Peabody and Company, a Boston firm of bankers, under the guidance of Robert Winsor, purchased the control of a number of these mills, as well as a few located elsewhere, and organized the New England Cotton Yarn Co., as a holding company. Henry C. Sibley was Treasurer and Arthur Sharp General Manager. During the earlier stages of this enterprise several New Bedford men were connectd with it, Andrew G. Pierce, Jr., Joseph F. Knowles, James E. Stanton, Jr., Thomas F. Glennon, Frank H. Gifford and others. The entire management finally was in the hands of F. Buckley Smith of Worcester. For some years the general office of the Company was in the room in which we are now assembled. The enterprise was a failure and the several mills were sold, one by one, and, for the most part, converted into cloth mills.

Our mills were at first built near tide water, utilizing the salt water for condensing purposes. The average high humidity of the Buzzards Bay atmosphere does not appear to have been a controlling factor in the original development of our cotton industry, although it became an important influence in stimulating the subsequent growth of the business. Mechanical humidifiers have largely nullified this natural advantage.

In the early days each mill was surrounded by a village maintained by the mill where the operatives lived. Young girls from neighboring farms were employed working ten to twelve hours a day, and boarded and cared for in mill boarding houses.

Most of our earlier cotton mills were designed to receive raw cotton, cleaning, combing, and spinning it into yarn of various degrees of fineness, and weaving the yarn into a great variety of cloth "in the grey". The mills generally were planned as complete co-ordinated units. In the early days the woven grey goods were mostly "plain" goods, such as sheetings, shirtings, calicos, and the like. About 1876 "fine" goods for ladies wear, curtains, and other "fancies" were featured. A few mills specialized in yarn production alone. The grey goods were sold to "converters", or directly to wholesale buyers, who ordered them sent elsewhere for "finishing", that is to say, bleaching, dyeing, printing, mercerizing, or other manipulation, transforming them into finished products for final distribution to the ultimate consumers. In New Bedford there have been no con-

siderable attempts to "finish" goods. However, the Mount Hope Finishing Company, situated in North Dighton (1901), (because of chemically pure water), was organized by Joseph F. Knowles, and has since been owned and operated by New Bedford men, under the highly successful management of Joseph K. Milliken, a nephew of Mr. Knowles. The "finishing" of cotton goods is a story by itself.

In the above cursory enumeration of the cotton mills of New Bedford no attempt is made to tell their individual histories, their several noteworthy accomplishments, the multiplicity of their products, their outstanding successes and vicissitudes, or the dramatic stories of the men who conceived and directed them. The struggles, the changing viewpoints, the hopes unrealized, the tragedies involved, would make a thrilling saga of this Old Dartmouth town. To do justice to such a subject many folios would be required.

Forty years ago Thomas B. Reed said of New Bedford — "If it's sturdy people could no longer roam the seas conquering its hugest monster, they could make the spindles whirl with successful life on shore. The Earth has got to be very shifty to get out of the grasp of a people equally at home on land and water." Our spindles have since whirled and our looms woven with such skill and in such volume, that New Bedford became the third largest cotton city of the country, and admittedly the leading centre of the fine goods manufacturing.

At the height of the prosperity of our cotton industry, about the year 1920, there were in New Bedford, twenty-eight cotton establishments, operating seventy mills, having 3,594,138 spindles, 55,679 looms, and employing 41,380 operatives. Our neighbor Fall River was a close rival. Bristol County, as a whole, was by far the largest producer of cotton goods of any locality of the same area in the United States. During the hectic prosperity of the World War period both wages and dividends soared to unprecedented heights.

Then came the debacle. We crashed from our pinnacle in company with most of the cotton mills in New England. The loss in spindles in the country at large has been nearly 50%; the value of the products 30%; with, of course, a corresponding decrease in the return of our wage earners and a very much greater proportionate loss in dividends to the stockholders. Many mills

throughout New England were forced into bankruptcy, liquidated, and torn down.

The cause of this downfall was not solely due to the world's "hang-over" from the orgy of the Great War, a condition which has come to be known as the "Great Depression". For some years previous to the War there had been in the United States a production of cotton goods in excess of the remunerative demand. So far as New England is concerned the old bugbear of Southern competition ceased to be an obsession and became a distressing reality. As a matter of fact the North had again invaded the South, not as it did in 1862 with bayonets and cannon, but with spindles and looms. Between 1921 and 1933 there was a decrease in the square yard production of purely cotton goods (of over twelve inches in width) in New England of 43%, and an increase in the cotton growing states of 77%, the increase for the whole country being only 17%.

In New Bedford we now have only 30, instead of 70, mills; 17 establishments instead of 28; 66% less spindles, 55% less looms, and the number of our operatives has decreased 66%. The nominal capital of the mills has decreased 64% and the market value of the capital stock egregiously more.

The loss of property and the consequent means of livelihood of our citizens has been devastating. It involved the loss of wages of the operatives of the cotton mills and the wages of all other workers, and the loss of income to thousands of our people who had invested their savings in the stock of our mills. To attempt to minimize this withering loss is futile. For not a few of our people their life savings, their thrift, their hope of a reasonable support to make old age independent of charity, have "gone with the wind".

And yet there are indications of a rosier tomorrow.

"For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And, though a late, a sure reward succeeds."

During the last decade the population of the country has increased out of proportion to the manufacture of cotton goods. We may, perhaps, hope for a return of a better economic balance in general business conditions. If so it is reasonable to expect this increased population will call for cotton cloth, or fabrics of which cotton is the base. Then, too, there is the somewhat heartless consolation that "in the ruthless process of the survival of

the fittest the position of the remaining mills has been greatly fortified". At all events we have, fortunately, sustained no such devastating tragedy as the discovery of petroleum oil which once laid us low. We may still believe that the "shifty" earth, as Tom Reed termed it, will *not* get out of our grasp.

Another, even more important, element in King Cotton's set back has been the innate tendency of human beings to invent new needs. For instance, the ladies, who, after all, are the final arbiters of business, saw fit to spurn cotton as raiment. In their affluence they turned to silk. With less expansive times they turned to "artificial silk" now called "rayon". During the last decade there has been, in this country, a considerable production of this new fibre. In 1923 there were 25,000 rayon looms. In 1933 there were 47,000 rayon looms, of which more than half were in New England. Today, doubtless, there are many more.

Rayon, a word of American origin, in England called "artificial silk", is a synthetic glossy fibre made by forcing at high pressure a viscous solution of cellulose through minute holes. Cellulose is obtained from the cell walls of woody shrubs and trees. So extensively have several of our remaining New Bedford mills turned to rayon, used in combination with cotton, that they can hardly any longer properly be called "cotton" mills. It would almost seem that King Cotton has, at least hereabouts, taken a consort to enhance his ascendency. Surely he has not abdicated, nor is his throne in jeopardy. New objectives, new methods, new ministers, will preserve the dynasty. The lately invented mechanical cotton picker may yet vie with Eli Whitney's gin. — If the ladies no longer want voluminous skirts and petticoats, The King can furnish miles of fabric for the construction of state highways, and automobile tires for every man, woman and child in the country. It seems we may reasonably expect that the fragile gossamer enveloping the seed of the ages-old cotton plant will still continue to wield its potent sway.

CONDENSED DATA

relating to New Bedford

COTTON MILLS

Prepared by

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1937

Note. The word "Manager" is used, in most cases, to designate the Executive Head of the mill to avoid the confusion of the various titles of Agent, Superintendent, Treasurer or President.

NEW BEDFORD STEAM CO.

Inc. Feb. 3, 1846

Formed shortly before the Wamsutta, the N. B. Steam Co. was the first cotton mill in the city. It was located near the foot of Hillman St. President George Hussey, treasurer Samuel Rodman, manager Alden G. Snell; Bethnel Penniman, Thomas C. Allen, William R. Rotch were additional directors. The capacity of the mill was 7,500 spindles. Its capital was limited to $100,000 not all paid in. The mill was not successful, and was discontinued in 1852. The corporation was not formally dissolved, however, until 1931.

WAMSUTTA MILLS

Inc. April 8, 1846

Maximum capital		$6,000,000
"	spindles	227,000
"	looms	3,427
"	operatives	2,400

Joseph Grinnell was first president. Edward L. Baker first treasurer, with David R. Greene, Thomas Mandell, Joseph C. Delano, Pardon Tillinghast and Thomas Bennett Jr. directors. The success of the mill may be in large part attributed to the genius of Mr. Bennett, for many years manager. Under his management additions were built in 1854-55, 1865, and 1870. Subsequent managers included Edward Kilburn, Edward R. Milliken, William J. Kent, Andrew G. Pierce, Edward T. Pierce, Arthur L. Emery, William O. Buzzell and Charles F. Broughton. On April 6, 1924 the Wamsutta suffered the worst mill fire in the city's history. The Wamsutta is still operating after 90 years, although part of the original mill, no. 1, was leased in 1935 to the Narragansett Shirt Co.

POTOMSKA MILLS

Inc. 1871

Maximum capital		$1,800,000
"	spindles	117,100
"	looms	2,824
"	operatives	1,200

James Robinson was first president and treasurer of the Potomska, with the following directors: David S. Wood, clerk; William J. Rotch, Charles L. Wood, Andrew G. Pierce, Matthew Howland, William Watkins, and Henry F. Thayer. Operations were begun in 1873. Original capital was $600,000, increased to $1,200,000 when a second unit was added in 1877. Hiram Kilburn was manager until 1884, when he was succeeded by Manly U. Adams. Other managers have been William O. Devoll, Charles E. Brady, Francis O. McDevitt, and Willliam O. Buzzell.

The Potomska was sold to the Potomska Corporation, a subsidary of General Cotton, for liquidation, on Dec. 13, 1934. In 1935 the land and buildings were taken by the city for taxes, and the buildings were demolished as a WPA project in 1935-36.

ACUSHNET MILLS

Inc. Dec. 22, 1881

Maximum capital		$2,000,000
"	spindles	114,240
"	looms	3,534
"	operatives	1,450

The Acushnet was organized in 1881 with Horatio Hathaway as president, and Joseph F. Knowles manager. Other members of the board of directors were Jonathan Bourne, William W. Crapo, Thomas H. Knowles, William A. Robinson, Francis Hathaway, Loum Snow Jr., Gilbert Allen, and Thomas E. Brayton. The mill building, located on the waterfront north of Cove Road, was completed in 1883 and operations were begun in that year. A second mill was built in 1887. Subsequent managers included Robert H. Bartlett, J. F. Knowles Jr. and James E. Stanton Jr. On Feb. 27, 1897 the mill was the scene of the worst boiler explosion in the history of the city, when two men were killed and others injured. Although the mill was modernized in the 20's, on Nov. 21, 1929 the directors voted to liquidate. After the machinery had been sold, on March 6, 1931 the contract was awarded to tear down the building. The final liquidating dividend was paid March 8, 1932.

GRINNELL MFG. CO.

Inc. March 14, 1882

Maximum capital		$1,500,000
"	looms	126,000
"	spindles	3,135
"	operatives	1,000

Edward Kilburn was original president of the Grinnell, with Otis N. Pierce, treasurer, Wm. J. Kent, manager, and James W. Allen, bookkeeper. Other directors included Stephen A. Jenks, William F. Draper, Thomas M. Stetson, Joseph A. Beauvais, Andrew G. Pierce, Thomas B. Wilcox, John W. Macumber, Charles W. Plummer, and Horatio Hathaway. Subsequent managers included N. B. Kerr, Joseph W. Webster, Treas. and Fred Steele. Liquidation of the Grinnell was voted Jan. 7, 1927. Part of the property was sold to the Revere Copper and Brass, Inc. The remainder was sold to William Rocklin for dismantling.

N. B. MANUFACTURING CO.

Inc. 1882

Charles W. Clifford was first president, with William D. Howland, treasurer and Byron F. Card, general manager. Directors: — Oliver P. Brightman, Charles W. Clifford, Edmund Grinnell, Charles W. Plummer, Edward T. Pierce, William D. Howland, and David Wood. The plant, located at the foot of North St., was originally a spinning mill with 17,088 spindles and finally increased to 40,000.

The New Bedford Manufacturing Company went into insolvency in 1897, was taken over by its creditors, and a new corporation was formed called the New Bedford Spinning Company with Edward Kilburn as president, Frank H. Gifford, treasurer, Thomas F. Glennon, manager, and the directors included Edward Kilburn, Frank H. Gifford, Gilbert Allen, William W. Crapo and Otis N. Pierce.

This mill continued under that management for two years until 1899 when the New England Cotton Yarn Co. was formed and this plant together with other yarn mills was purchased by the New England Cotton Yarn Company.

In 1917 it was sold to the Passaic Cotton Mills, later the American Cotton Fabric Corporation. In 1924, 300 looms were added. In July 1925 it was sold to Amory Browne & Company who sold it in 1932 to Jacob Genensky.

HOWLAND MILL

Inc. 1888

William J. Rotch was first president with William D. Howland, treasurer, and Byron F. Card, manager, and the following directors:—Horatio Hathaway, Thomas B. Tripp, Charles W. Clifford, Morgan Rotch, and Charles W. Plummer. The original capital was $350,000. A few years later the capital was increased and No. 2 mill erected. The plant, located at the south end of Orchard Street on Clark's Cove, became financially involved in 1897 and was reorganized and continued operations under the direction of Andrew G. Pierce, Jr. It continued under that management until 1899 when it was sold to the New England Cotton Yarn Company. In 1902 it was re-incorporated as the Gosnold Mill.

HATHAWAY MFG. CO.

Inc. December 1888

Maximum capital		$2,000,000
"	spindles	111,012
"	looms	3,290
"	operatives	1,400

Horatio Hathaway was first president of the mill, named for him, with Joseph F. Knowles, treasurer and manager. Other directors were Jonathan Bourne, Sidney W. Knowles, Francis Hathaway, William W. Crapo, Thomas E. Brayton. Subsequent managers included James E. Stanton, Jr., and Seabury Stanton. The plant is located on Cove Street west of the Dartmouth Mill. It still operates.

CITY MFG. CO.

Incorporated 1888

Maximum capital		$750,000
"	spindles	59,064
"	looms	400
"	operatives	600

Otis N. Pierce was first president of the City, with Benjamin Wilcox treasurer and manager. Other directors included Thomas B. Wilcox, Cyrenius W. Haskins, Thomas H. Knowles, Edward Kilburn, J. P. Knowles, Jr., Stephen A. Jenks, William H. Parker and Charles Tucker. Subsequent managers included Frank S. Wilcox, John B. Strongman, and Samuel F. Winsper. Originally a spinning mill, it operated until 1931. In 1931 it was sold to the Prospect Realty Co. for liquidation. From 1925 to 1931 the City Mfg. Co. operated a cloth mill in Taunton.

BENNETT MFG. CORP.

Inc. 1889

Spindles	120,000
Operatives	1,000

Frank R. Hadley was president and treasurer and Lewis E. Bentley, manager of the Bennett, with the following directors: —Stephen W. Hayes, Antone L. Sylvia, Henry A. Holcomb, W. E. Brownell, Joseph A. Beauvais, Charles W. Brownell, John J. Hicks and William Lewis.

COLUMBIA SPINNING CO.

Inc. 1892

Capital	$500,000
Spindles	80,000
Operatives	600

The Columbia was built by the same group as the Bennett. Frank R. Hadley was president and treasurer, with Charles W. Brownell, Antone L. Sylvia, William Lewis, William E. Brownell, Stephen W. Hayes, Henry A. Holcomb, and J. A. Brownell, directors. Both the Bennett and the Columbia came to serious difficulty, along with some other yarn mills in the city in 1897 at which time the management of both the Bennett and Columbia was taken over by James E. Stanton, Jr., who continued the operations of the mills until 1899 when they were both purchased by the New England Cotton Yarn Company. The Bennett became Depts. 1 and 2 while the Columbia became Depts. 3 and 4. The mills were located together, on the waterfront just north of Coggeshall St. In 1917 the Cotton Yarn Co. sold them to a new Corporation, the Fairhaven Mills.

BRISTOL MILL

Inc. 1891

Maximum	capital	$1,000,000
"	spindles	67,240
"	looms	1,876
"	operatives	650

Thomas H. Knowles was first president of the Bristol, with Benjamin Wilcox, treasurer and manager. Other directors were William H. Parker, Thomas B. Wilcox, Rufus A. Soule and Cyrenius W. Haskins. Operations were begun in 1893. Subsequent managers included Frank Neild, John Neild, Frank S. Wilcox, Edward O. Knowles, Charles A. Morrison, and John L. Burton. The plant, located at the corner of Coggeshall St. and Belleville Ave., was liquidated between 1930 and 1932, when the buildings went to the city for taxes. The mill was torn down as a civil works project, demolition being completed March 24, 1933. 1,900,000 brick were salvaged from the Bristol, and were used to build the High School addition, the municipal garage, the Water Department garage, the Buttonwood Park recreational center, and an addition to the Vocational School. Some of the planking was used to repair the Coggeshall St. bridge.

PIERCE MFG. CORP.

Inc. March 3, 1892

Maximum	capital	$600,000
"	spindles	116,000
"	looms	3,512
"	operatives	1,200

Andrew G. Pierce was first president of the Pierce Mfg. Corp, with Andrew G. Pierce, Jr. as treasurer and manager and Albert R. Pierce, agent. Other directors included Edward T. Pierce, Walter Clifford, Lemuel T. Terry, and Morgan Rotch. The plant is located at Belleville Ave. and is still (1937) operating.

ROTCH SPINNING CO.

Inc. Nov. 5, 1892

Maximum capital		$1,025,000
"	spindles	150,000
"	operatives	2,600

William J. Rotch was first president, with William D. Howland, treasurer, and Byron F. Card, Supt. Charles W. Clifford and Morgan Rotch were members of the directorate. This corporation like several others became financially involved in 1897 and was operated for the next two years in connection with the Howland Mills under the direction of Andrew G. Pierce, Jr., treasurer. The plant was sold to the N. E. Cotton Yarn Co. in 1899, becoming Depts. 7 and 8. In 1916 sold to the Passaic Mills, later the American Cotton Fabric Corp. In 1917 this firm constructed a $500,000 addition, known as the Penrod Mill, with 30,000 spindles. In 1924 the plant was split between the Fisk and Goodyear rubber companies, Goodyear taking Depts. 1, 2 and 3, and leasing part of 4. The plant is located on Orchard St., next to the Gosnold. It still functions.

WHITMAN MILLS

Inc. June 17, 1895

Maximum capital		$3,000,000
"	spindles	177,608
"	looms	4,912
"	operatives	2,000

The Whitman was promoted by the converting firm of Harding and Whitman, with Frank R. Hadley of New Bedford as first president and Charles C. Diman, treasurer. Directors included Abbott P. Smith, Henry A. Holcomb, George E. Briggs, Lewis E. Bentley, Edgar Harding, and William Whitman. Subsequent managers included William A. Congdon, Albert G. Mason, Treasurer and Walter B. Hall. At the time of the split between the Harding and Whitman interests, the Whitman mill, went to Harding. Liquidation of the plant, located on Coffin Ave., east of the site of Manomet No. 1 and 2, was begun in 1931. The corporation was dissolved in 1933, and the buildings went to the city for taxes. In 1934 the weave shed was demolished as an ERA project.

DARTMOUTH MILLS

Inc. Aug. 20, 1895

Maximum capital		$4,600,000
"	spindles	200,000
"	looms	5,700
"	operatives	2,200

Rufus A. Soule was first president of the Dartmouth, with James W. Allen, treasurer, Walter H. Langshaw, manager, and the following directors: Abbott P. Smith, Charles E. Riley, Stephen A. Jenks, Thomas H. Knowles, Gilbert Allen, Thomas B. Tripp, Frederic Taber, Nataniel B. Kerr, Clarence A. Cook, and Arnold Schaer. Subsequently Mr. Langshaw became president and under his management the mill was very profitable and expanded greatly, one addition being known as the Langshaw Mill. In March, 1933, the plant was sold to the Cove Realty Co., for liquidation, but in June of that year it was sold again to the Powdrell-Dartmouth Corporation. It has been reorganized as the Dartmouth Mills, Inc., and is now operating under management of F. A. Powdrell and H. H. Pepler. The plant is located at the east end of Cove St., next to the Hathaway.

BEACON MFG. CO.

Originally incorporated August 17, 1896

Maximum capital		$3,000,000
"	spindles	20,352
"	looms	900
"	operatives	1,600

In 1904 Charles D. Owen, Sr. and Charles O. Dexter of Providence promoted the rehabilitation of an almost defunct concern known as the Beacon Mfg. Co. The building, located on County Street at the head of Deane, had been begun by the Mr. Pleasant Mfg. Co., which failed before the plant was completed. Its successor, the original Beacon, also failed within a year after its beginning. Chas. E. Riley was president of this venture, with A. de Cort, treasurer. The machinery was sold and sent to Paducah, Ky. The property had been vacant for six years when it was taken over by the new management. Henry Taber was first president. Charles D. Owen was first treasurer, and Charles O. Dexter, manager. Under their management the mill became famous as manufacturer of Beacon blankets. Mr. Owen was succeeded by his son, Charles D. Owen, Jr., who died May 24, 1937. The present treasurer is the third Charles D. Owen.

In 1925 one third of the machinery was moved to a new plant at Swannanoa, North Carolina, and in 1933 the removal of the remaining machinery from the New Bedford plant was begun. The building here is being used at present as the company's warehouse.

SOULE MILLS

Inc. Feb. 14, 1901

Maximum capital		$1,260,000
"	spindles	93,000
"	looms	2,300
"	operatives	900

Rufus A. Soule, for whom the mill was named, was its first president, with Frederick B. Macy, treasurer. Abbot P. Smith, Arnold Schaer, Frederic Taber, Charles F. Shaw, and George R. Stetson were the original directors. Subsequent managers included Rufus A. Soule, Jr. and Frederic H. McDevitt. The plant is located on the waterfront, north of the Fairhaven Mills buildings and still operates.

BUTLER MILL

Inc. April 14, 1902

Maximum capital		$2,000,000
"	spindles	125,000
"	operatives	1,200
"	looms	2,800

William M. Butler was first president of the mill named for him, with Nathaniel B. Kerr, manager. Directors included Abbott P. Smith, Rufus A. Soule, Matthew R. Hitch, Guy Murchie, and Frederick B. Macy. Subsequent managers were Walter H. Underdown, Morgan Butler, Joseph W. Bailey and James A. Adams. In 1922 the Butler took over the Nemasket mill in Taunton. The Butler plant, located on Rodney French Boulevard between Ruth and David Streets, was sold to Associated Textiles in 1931. In 1933 it went into receivership, and was abandoned to the city in 1935.

GOSNOLD MILLS

Inc. June 20, 1902

Maximum capital		$3,300,000
"	spindles	141,438
"	looms	4,940
"	operatives	1,700

Formerly the Howland Mill, the Gosnold was formed with Richard M. Saltonstall as president and John C. Rice treasurer. Directors included James E. Stanton, J. Frank Knowles, Henry Endicott, Jr., Joseph Remick, William S. Benedict and Jeremiah Smith, Jr. Subsequent managers included James O. Thompson, John B. Strohman, Charles M. Holmes, and Allan Barrows. The New England Cotton Yarn Co., sold the Gosnold to Harding and Tilton in 1916. In 1929 it was reorganized as the Gosnold Mills Corporation. The plant is located on Clark's Cove at the foot of Orchard St. and still operates.

MANOMET MILLS

Inc. Oct. 3, 1903

Maximum capital		$8,000,000
"	spindles	318,480
"	looms	64
"	operatives	4,500

Edgar Harding was first president of the Manomet, with Arnold C. Gardner treasurer. The original board of directors included William Whitman, William F. Draper, G. Marston Whitin, Charles M. Holmes, George E. Kunhardt, and Charles W. Leonard. Subsequent managers included Jesse A. Knight and Walter A. Fuller. No. 2 mill was built in 1907-8, No. 3 in 1916, and No. 4, the largest single spinning unit in the world, in 1920-22. The first three mills were built together near the Whitman, but No. 4 was built farther west, between Church St. and the railroad. Liquidation of the mammoth plant was begun in 1927. No. 4, which had never been operated at capacity, was sold to the Firestone Rubber Co. in 1927. No. 3 had been sold to the Nashawena and had been converted to weaving, in 1925. No. 1 and 2 were sold in 1928 to the Delaware Rayon Co., and became the New Bedford Rayon Co.

KILBURN MILL

Inc. Aug. 24, 1904

Maximum capital		$2,250,000
"	spindles	126,464
"	operatives	1,250

A spinning mill, the Kilburn was promoted by the Fales & Jenks Machinery Co. and Abbott P. Smith. Edward Kilburn, for whom the mill was named, was its first president, with Henry L. Tiffany, treasurer and manager, and Andrew Currier, agent. Among the original directors were Abbott P. Smith, Matthew R. Hitch, Fred W. Easton and William W. Reed. George B. Knowles later became manager of the mill. The plant, which was enlarged in 1915, is located on Clark's Cove at the beginning of Rodney French Boulevard and still operates.

PAGE MILL

Inc. March 23, 1906

Maximum capital		$1,200,000
"	spindles	64,000
"	looms	1,742
"	operatives	780

Russell Grinnell was first president of the Page, with John W. Knowles, manager. Directors included Henry H. Crapo, Oliver Prescott, Jr., John W. Knowles, Eliot D. Stetson, and John H. Clifford. Walter H. Page subsequently became manager. In 1920 it was purchased by Textile Factors, Inc., a Harding-Tilton subsidiary, and was merged with the Gosnold. In 1927 it was again sold to Kidder-Peabody interests for half a million dollars and was made part of a group of mills under the corporate name of United Merchants and Manufacturers, Inc., headed by Homer Loring. 16,000 spindles from the Manomet were added to the Page in 1928, and 500 new automatic looms were installed in 1933. Operations were suspended in 1935.

TABER MILL

Inc. April 5, 1906

Maximum	capital	$2,000,000
"	spindles	70,720
"	looms	1,800
"	operatives	700

Frederic Taber was first president of the mill, with Rufus A. Soule, Jr. manager. Original directors included Abbot P. Smith, Rufus A. Soule, Frederick H. Taber, Frederic B. Macy, William C. Hawes, Edmund W. Bourne, and George R. Phillips. Subsequent managers included John Sullivan, William E. Kern, Walter H. Page, Andrew W. Macy, and R. G. Ferguson. As originally planned, the spinning department was to have been known as the Quansett Mill, but this name was abandoned. The Taber purchased the Corr plant in Taunton in 1926. The Taunton mill was turned over to a separate corporation, the Riverside Corp., in 1932. The Taber received an R. F. C. loan in 1934 and petitioned to reorganize under the federal bankruptcy act April 30, 1937.

NONQUIT SPINNING CO.

Inc. Nov. 13, 1906

Maximum	capital	$4,800,000
"	spindles	196,000
"	looms	250
"	operatives	1,600

William Whitman was first president of the Nonquit, with Leonard C. Lapham, treasurer and Andrew J. Currier, manager. Original directors included William Whitman, William F. Draper, Charles W. Leonard, Richard S. Russell, George M. Whitin, Arthur T. Bradlee, and Malcolm Campbell. Subsequent managers included Fred W. Hayes, and P. Leroy Lamb. In 1929 the "Spinning" was dropped from the firm name, it being reorganized as the Nonquit Mills, with a weaving department. Mill No. 1 has been leased to the Edgar Weaving Co., and the New Bedford Mfg. Co.

NASHAWENA MILLS

Inc. June 16, 1909

Maximum capital		$7,500,000
"	spindles	275,000
"	looms	6,100
"	operatives	2,700

William Whitman was first president of the Nashawena, with William B. Gardner as treasurer. Original directors included George E. Bullard, Robert H. Gardner, George E. Kuhnhardt, Charles W. Leonard, Richard S. Russell, George M. Whitin, Malcolm D. Whitman and George A. Draper. Managers included John L. Burton and John Kirk. The plant, located on Belleville Avenue north of Manomet Nos. 1 and 2, included the largest weave shed in the world. Additions were built in 1916, and 1920-22. In 1925 the Nashawena purchased and enlarged Manomet No. 3, converting it to weaving. This building, known as B plant, was sold to General Cotton in 1927. The Nashawena closed down in July, 1935. Part of the plant was reopened in January, 1937.

NEW BEDFORD COTTON MILLS

Inc. April 13, 1909

Maximum capital		$1,816,000
"	spindles	73,000
"	looms	1,750
"	operatives	680

William M. Butler was first president of this mill, and Walter H. Underdown, manager. Original directors included Abbott P. Smith, William C. Hawes, and Nathaniel B. Kerr. With the Butler, the N. B. Cotton Mills became part of Associated Textiles in 1929, which has since been liquidated.

ANDERSON TEXTILE MFG. CO.

Inc. May 3, 1909

John C. Anderson was first president of this mill, with Charles S. Kelley, Charles S. Kelley, Jr. and Matthew R. Hitch members of the board of directors. With a capital of $18,100, the concern had 2,400 spindles and employed 18 men. It was dissolved in 1911.

HOLMES MFG. CO.

Inc. May 18, 1909

Maximum capital		$1,200,000
"	spindles	69,552
"	operatives	1,000

Charles L. Harding was first president with Charles M. Holmes, for whom the mill was named, as manager. The original board of directors included Earnest A. Wheaton, J. Henry Herring, Stephen W. Hayes, E. Russell Richardson, William L. Mauran and William A. Congdon. Subsequent managers included Daniel R. Weeden and Joseph D. Murray. In January, 1934 the Holmes was sold to the Kendall Corporation for $60,000 and two years' back taxes. 750 looms were added, since increased to 900.

PIERCE BROS. LIMITED

Inc. June 29, 1909

Maximum capital		$700,000
"	spindles	53,000
"	looms	1,200
"	operatives	500

Andrew G. Pierce, Jr. was original president of this mill, with Edward T. Pierce, treasurer and Albert R. Pierce, manager. After a considerable shut-down, the mill was reopened March 1, 1937, under the management of Fred W. Steele.

NEILD MFG. CORP.

Inc. March 10, 1910

Maximum capital		$1,200,000
"	spindles	62,600
"	looms	1,600
"	operatives	1,000

John Neild was first president of the mill, with Joseph W. Allen, treasurer. Original directors included Charles M. Cole, Frederic H. Taber, Rufus A. Soule, Frank Croacher, F. William Oesting, and Frank S. Wilcox. Frank I. Neild later took over the management. The plant was enlarged in 1925, when an addition was made to the weave shed. It is still operating.

QUISSET MILL

Inc. April 2, 1910

Maximum	capital	$2,306,000
"	spindles	80,000
"	operatives	900

William M. Butler was first president of the Quisset, with Thomas F. Glennon, agent and Edward H. Cook, treasurer. Abbott P. Smith, Frederic Taber and Frank J. Hale were also directors. Operations were begun in 1912. The plant was later converted to include rayon spinning. It is still operating.

BOOTH MFG. CO.

Inc. July 27, 1910

Maximum	capital	$2,296,900
"	spindles	56,164
"	looms	1,770
"	operatives	1,200

The Booth, named for its first manager, George H. Booth, was promoted in part by the Crompton & Knowles Loom Works and the H. & B. American Machine Co. George S. Homer was first president, with Frederic R. Brown, treasurer, and directors including George H. Booth, William L. Mauren, Oliver F. Brown, T. S. Carpenter, C. H. Hutchins, and Charles E. Riley, who succeeded Mr. Homer as president. Subsequent managers included Fred W. Steele, Frank I. Neild, Joseph W. Bailey, Earl C. Miller, Edgar F. Taber, and Allen G. Shaw. The plant is located on Rodney French Boulevard, south of the Holmes. Still operating.

SHARP MILLS

Inc. June 3, 1910

Maximum capital		$3,817,000
"	spindles	200,000
"	looms	1,000
"	operatives	2,000

The mill was named for Arthur R. Sharp, at first treasurer and later president. First president was Joseph T. Kenney. Directors included William H. Bent, Charles P. Curtis, Grank Brewster and I. W. Curtis. Subsequent managers included Robert Schofield, I. W. Curtis, and Frank C. Sawtell. A second mill was erected in 1916-17, and the first looms were installed in 1921. Operations were stopped in 1928, machinery being auctioned in June, 1929. Final liquidation came in 1937, when the buildings were purchased by Rockdale Mills, Inc. "for manufacturing purposes" and razed.

FAIRHAVEN MILLS

Inc. Feb. 3, 1917

Maximum capital		$3,500,000
"	spindles	209,000
"	operatives	3,000

Charles L. Harding was first president, with James Thomson, manager. Other directors were Stephen W. Hayes, Charles M. Holmes, Nathaniel F. Ayer, C. Minot Weld, H. A. Wyman, Edward Burbeck, and Edward A. Taft. The plant was purchased from the N. E. Cotton Yarn Co., consisting of the old Bennett and Columbia mills. Subsequent managers included Charles M. Holmes, Edgar F. Taber and Ernest R. Haswell. The mill was not successful, first step in dissolution being the formation of the Pemaquid mill in 1924. Consisting of Dept. 3 (formerly no. 1 Columbia) the Pemaquid had a nominal capital of $1,050,000 and 33,516 spindles, and was converted to weaving by installation of 456 looms. Mr. Harding was president, Albert G. Mason, treasurer, and Walter B. Hall, agent. Frederic Thomas later succeeded Mr. Mason. In 1932 the Pemaquid was purchased and liquidated by Jerome A. Newman, acting for General Cotton.

The Fairhaven was sold at auction in 1930, to Frederic W. Greene of Newport. Subsequently the Fairhaven Real Estate Co. was formed, formed preferred stockholders recieving common stock. Since then, the Fairhaven buildings have been rented to a number of small enterprises, including silk manufacturers, clothing companies and a pocket-book concern.

Hollinger
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