

O N T H E C O V E R

The name of the company was changed to the Westport Manufacturing company. Wiswall and Allen conducted the business until May 1822, when Mr. Allen purchased the entire plant, paying his partner \$8,350 for his interest.

About the year 1823 the "red mill" was burned. Subsequently Mr. Allen commenced the erection of a stone mill, the stone being supplied by Anthony Hathaway of New Bedford, from a ledge just east of where Lincoln park is now situated,

During the years 1828 to 1843 the property was sold many times, the owner in 1843 being Gideon Allen.

A firm named Coats, from England, ran the mill for a while, and then came the Shoves, who made a nankeen yarn. A New York firm, named Morris, then started in there and made rubber boots and shoes, but this venture proved unsuccessful and the mill was again closed.

The property was several times disposed of, but as many times came back into the possession of Gideon Allen.

In 1854 George W. and Elijah R. Lewis, brothers, were engaged in successfully operating a mill leased by them in Tiverton, doing a business similar to that for which this mill was built. The lease expired and the owners of it doubled the rent of the plant for future use. The repairs needed on the mill were to entail a considerable expense and the brothers concluded that whatever repairs they made in the future would be upon their own property, and consequently negotiated for the purchase of the plant at Westport, and the transfer was made the same year. The terms for the property were \$1,000 in cash, and the remainder in installments of \$1,000 a year for eight years. The property purchased comprised "one hundred and thirty acres of land, with mill privileges, stone factory, barns, and dwelling houses thereon, together with all the privileges and appurtenances to the same belonging." These parties met with success from the start, but soon found that the business required more capital than they could command. William C. Trafford and Augustus Chace were engaged in similar business in Fall River. The parties all agreed to come together as one firm at the Westport factory. They met with good success and were able to enlarge the mill by doubling its size.

The old mill was 40 by 70 feet, with a bell tower upon the middle of the roof. Enlarged, it is 120 feet in length. This building is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  stories high. It shows but  $3\frac{1}{2}$  stories on the street side, but on the west side the full height can be seen. The street has been raised since the mill was built for the purpose of raising the dam to the pond and at the same time bring the street up to the grade. There are three other mill sites on the stream. This company utilizes two of them, the upper and the lower, the latter being half a mile down the stream. The two mill privileges between have formerly been utilized to some extent, one for sawing logs and the other for grinding grain. The lower mill is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  stories high and 48 by 250 feet in area, and of stone. Another building is 26 by 100 feet and 3 stories high. Still another, operated by the "opener and lapper" department, is 48 by 26 feet, and is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  stories high.

There is a stone barn about 40 by 50 feet. The company had three 4-horse teams, which were used in collecting the raw material at mills in Fall River and New Bedford and in taking to those cities the manufactured goods for shipment in filling orders. These teams were on the road daily to either one or the other cities named, usually being loaded both ways. The distance from the factory to either city is about equal - nearly seven miles.

The stock used is principally that which has been thrown out by the mills making cloth and yarns on the account of some defect. Sometimes the cotton becomes soiled from some cause, or it may not have been first class when shipped. At the Westport mill there were arrangements for separating and culling the cotton.

The mill was run by water power the larger part of the year. During the dry season steam power was used.

The company carried on a large "corporation store" which supplied the people in the vicinity as well as their employes.

The village comprises about 30 houses, two thirds of the number being the property of the company.

The larger part of the property of the company is in the town of Westport, and the remainder in Dartmouth. The old thoroughfare between the Head of Westport and the Hix meeting house passes north and south between the two towns. The pond and the office of the company are in the town of Dartmouth, and the road forms the dam. The factory and other buildings are in Westport.

A "Village Hall" on the west side of the street, answers for public meetings, dancing parties and exhibitions generally. A large two story "Union" school house, supported by the towns of Westport and Dartmouth, is on the Westport side of the road.