

*Sam's Vol 2. (1916)*  
*"me photo"*



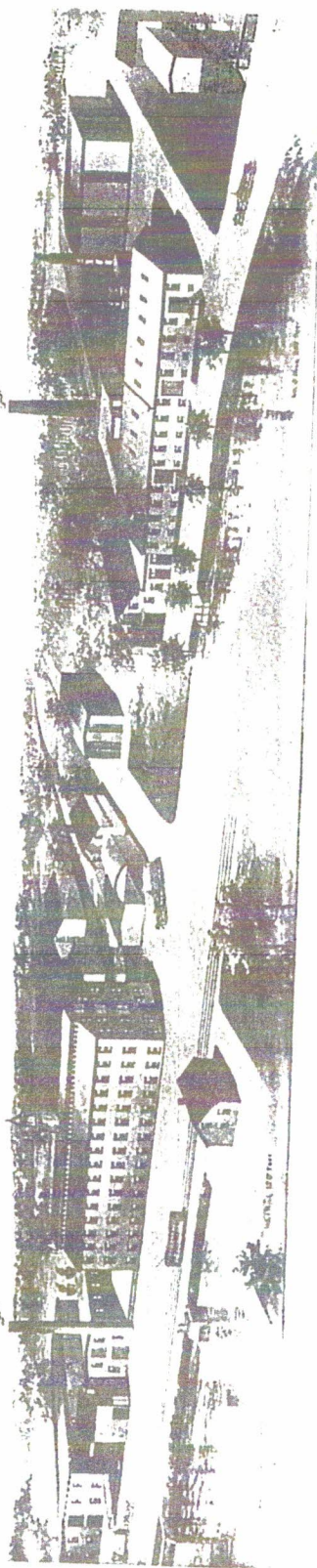
**I**N December, 1812, John Mason of Swansea, Joseph Strange of Taunton, a blacksmith, and Job White of Westport, a housewright, associated themselves together for the purpose of making yarn for the weaving of cloth. They purchased a site in Westport, Mass., comprising 70 acres of land "with a saw mill thereon standing, and a stream of water and all the privileges thereof, and the privileges of flowing the land above the mill dam necessary for said pond or the works thereon erected". The purchase price was \$1,200., and an association was formed under the title of the Westport Cotton Manufacturing Company, with a capital stock of \$20,000., divided into forty shares at \$500. per share, and disposed of as follows:— Edward Borden of Westport, one share; Nathan Lincoln of Westport, one share; Levi Chace of Westport, one share; John Gray of Somerset, four shares; John Earl of Swansea, one share; William Earl of Swansea, one share; Daniel Hale of Swansea, two shares; Daniel Dwelly of Tiverton, one share; Zachens Gifford of Westport, four and one-half shares; Job White of Westport, four and one-half shares, and the remaining 19 shares either being left in the treasury or held by the promoters.

The business had inception at a period when the stimulus of a market closed to foreign production was giving an inflated encouragement to domestic enterprise. The mill was not ready for operation when peace was declared. A revulsion came, cotton cloth decreasing 50 per cent. in price. Throughout the country, a general depression ruled. Many cotton manufactories suspended, and the strongest struggled on with difficulty. Thus the new enterprise lagged. A reorganization, however, took place in 1814, consisting of Joseph Gray, Samuel Gray and Hanan Wilbur, all of Somerset; Daniel Hale, William Hale, Amos Martin, William Marvel, John Mason, John Andrews and John Earl, all of Swansea; Levi Chace, Job White, Zachens Gifford, Isaac Macomber, Job Gifford, Ephraim Macomber, Alfred White, Joseph Strange, Paul White, Simeon Burt, Nathan Lincoln, Edward Borden and Stephen Chace, all of Westport; William B. Mason, James T. Slocum, Asa Nichols, all of Dartmouth; and Daniel Dwelly of Tiverton. These parties purchased of Henry Freeclove 200 acres of land additional, at a cost of \$3,897.50. A mill was built of wood, and painted red, and was subsequently known as the "red mill".

For some considerable time the depression continued, and dissatisfaction among many of the stockholders resulted in a large proportion of the holdings exchanging hands. Early in 1815, Mason and Strange, who had been prominent in the company, sold their interests to Job White for \$2,250; Zacheus Gifford purchased a three-eighths interest in the plant for \$7,500., which was par value; Joseph Gray of Somerset took a tenth, and several members of the company increased their holdings. The tariff of 1816 stimulated the cotton industry, but for some reason the Westport Cotton Manufacturing Company was not a success. Mills had become quite numerous in Rhode Island and Connecticut, and these were controlled to better advantage. For instance, they had wagons at their disposal which facilitated them in distributing, among the farmers' wives and daughters of the neighboring towns, yarn to be woven, which, when in a finished state, was called for by the same wagons. The Westport Cotton Manufacturing Company to some extent followed the same course, but without success. The stock again changed hands, and Messrs. Bradford and Daniel H. Howland, Jr., acquired a controlling interest, conducting the factory until April 7, 1822. Enoch Wiswall, of Watertown, and Samuel Allen, of Brimfield, were the next purchasers, and the name of the company was then changed to its present (1916) style, the Westport Manufacturing Company. Within a short time, Mr. Allen purchased the entire plant, paying his partner for his interest \$8,350.

About the year 1826, 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 which he at that time owned. Towards the latter part of 1828, while the new factory was in process of erection, the property changed hands again, Richard Allen of Westport being the purchaser. The price paid was \$15,000. May 29, 1829, Richard Allen sold to Henry and Joseph Allen, both of New York City. Included in the sale at that time were "five turning engines, two small lathes, one common lathe, one double-gear'd lathe, one cutting engine, six iron vises, 12 double engine cards and 64 spinning frames, together with main gearing to operate the same." September 10, 1830, Joseph bought Henry's interest, and December 7 of the same year, sold the entire plant to William H. Allen of New Bedford. January 4, 1834, Mr. Allen sold the plant to John Avery Parker and the latter's son, Frederick. October 2, 1837, it reverted by sale once more to William H. Allen, the price paid therefor being \$30,000. A period of business depression throughout the country then set in and continued for several years. July 7, 1841, William H. Allen sold a half interest in the factory property, including "a stone factory and a stone barn", to his brother Gideon, for \$15,000. The business depression of the country still continued, and February 16, 1843, William H. Allen made an





*Westport Manufacturing Company  
Fall River, Massachusetts*

JAMES H. LANE COMPANY

assignment of his property for the benefit of his creditors, and Gideon Allen became the sole owner of the cotton mill property. A firm named Coats from England operated the mill for a while, and they were succeeded by the Shoves, who made a certain yarn, which, when woven, was an imitation of a cloth originally brought from China, much in vogue at that time, made of a species of cotton naturally yellow in color. A New York firm named Morris then became operators of the mill, their product being 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 fell back into the possession of Gideon Allen.

In 1854, George W. and Elijah R. Lewis, brothers, about twenty-five and twenty-seven years of age respectively, were engaged in successfully operating the Eagleville Mill, leased by them in Tiverton, R. I., doing a business similar to that for which the Westport mill was built. Their lease expired about this time and the owners of the mill doubled the rent of the plant for future use. The repairs needed on the leased mill were to entail a considerable expense and the brothers concluded it more profitable to apply the amount, which by renewing their lease would necessarily have to be expended for repairs, on the purchase of some property and consequently negotiated for the plant at Westport, the transfer of which was made the same year at a purchase price of \$8,000., \$1,000. in cash and the remainder in instalments of \$1,000. a year for seven years, with interest added. The property purchased comprised 130 acres of land with mill privileges, stone factory, barns and dwelling houses thereon, together with all the privileges and appurtenances to the same belonging. A short time after the purchase of the property by the two Messrs. Lewis, there were taken into the company their half-brother, Wm. B. Trafford, and Augustus Chace, who were then in the same business in Tiverton (Fall River), under the firm name of Chace & Trafford. Mr. Chace retired from the firm about six years later. The business was successful and in 1870-71 the mill was enlarged, doubling its size and capacity, and a stone ell followed shortly and was used as a "Picking Department". George W. and Elijah R. Lewis gave attention to the manufacturing end and William B. Trafford served as agent and treasurer from the time he became interested until his death in 1880. William C. Trafford, and his brother, Andrew R. Trafford, were admitted as members of the company in 1872. These young men had for a number of years been employed by the company, and upon the death of his father, William C. succeeded him as treasurer.

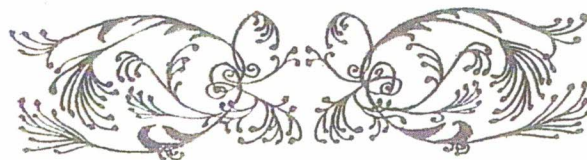
In 1872, another stone mill was built on what was called the "Forge Privilege" owned by the company. This mill became known as the "Lower Mill", and not a great while afterwards an ell to this mill was also added, and used as a "Picking and Opening Department". To the plant subse-



quently was further added four storehouses and an "Assorting & Baling Department". The Westport Assorting & Baling Department being taxed to the limit in handling stocks from the New Bedford Mills necessitated the establishment of an Assorting and Baling Department at Fall River, and this plant is (1916) located in North Main Street.

The stock used at the Westport mill consists (1916) of waste from cotton, made by mills manufacturing cloth and yarn. The plant of the Westport Company is (1916) run by water power (about 400 H. P.) a greater part of the year. During the dry season, steam power is used. The company also at this writing conducts a large corporation store, which supplies other people in the vicinity, as well as the employees. The products of the company, comprising carpet warp, mop yarns, cotton wrapping twines, cotton batting, and candle, miners' and calking wicking, are (1916) well-known throughout the United States and Canada, and the demand for them has been such that the mills have up to the present writing always been run on full time. In addition, the company is a very large collector of cotton waste of all kinds, contracting with mills in both cities, as aforementioned, their specialty in this department being stocks used by knitting, woolen and yarn mills. About 300 operatives were employed in 1916.

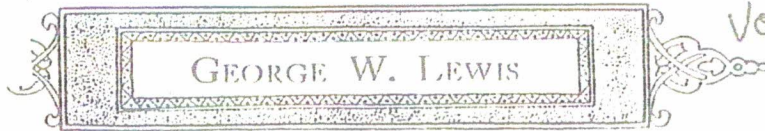
Since the original purchase, the company has acquired from time to time adjacent land, so that their present (1916) holdings include about 1,400 acres, 100 of which are cleared, and the remainder wooded. The village at this writing (1916) consists of 38 company houses and 30 private residences, a Protestant church and parsonage, Catholic church and a large two-story Union schoolhouse. A rolling dam about 70 feet in length has recently been built by the Dartmouth and Westport Street Railway Company and the Westport Company, the village having been brought into prominence by the opening of the above-mentioned electric railway, which connects the cities of New Bedford and Fall River, as well as by the conversion of Lincoln Park into a pleasure resort, the latter being only a short distance from the plant of the Westport Manufacturing Company.





*Lamp's  
(1916)  
vol II*

*center*



**G**EORGE W. LEWIS was born in Bakerville, Bristol County, Mass., July 11, 1827. He was the son of John and Sarah (Trafford) Lewis. So closely connected with the destiny of our subject was the war between England and France, that had it not been for this international quarrel, this sketch, in all probability, would have remained unwritten. John Lewis, the father of George, while playing upon a wharf with other small boys in a seaport in France, attracted the attention of a Captain Baker, commander of a merchant's vessel, sailing from America to foreign ports. He became so attached to the little fellow, who was then between the age of six and seven, that he obtained permission from his parents to carry him back to America, signing papers to the effect that the lad was to be given a common school education and subsequently brought back to his home. After an absence of about ten years in America, upon the boy's return to France at the age of seventeen years, he found the port under blockade by a British Fleet. This, of course, made it impossible for him to land, so he returned to Massachusetts, where later he married Sarah Trafford, and settled in Bakerville, South Dartmouth. Thus his interests became established in America and he never again even visited his native land. In 1829, after the birth of our subject, and another son, Elijah (see sketch, *ibid.*), he removed with his family to Fall River. Here George, at the tender age of seven years, when he was so small that he had to stand on a box to reach the machinery, went to work at putting color on seives for the calico printers in the Globe Print Works, receiving therefor the munificent salary of seven Yankee shillings per week. Either the work or the pay did not satisfy him, for he soon secured a better place in a small batting mill, located where the R. S. Reed Company block, Pleasant Street, Fall River, now (1916) stands. Other changes followed during the next few years, notably among which was his sojourn to Israel Buffinton's batting mill, on the site of the present (1916) Estes Mill, the power for the machinery at Mr. Buffinton's plant being supplied by a patent steed, which, exposed to wind and weather, operated a windlass similar to those used to-day (1916) for moving buildings.

Mr. Lewis' first position of responsibility came to him in the Oliver Chace Mill, Flatville, where he was given charge of the spinning room. By



this time, he had passed the age of seventeen, and after nearly eleven years of work in the mills, he caught the whaling fever, so common among the boys of his generation. Shipping from Somerset in the old bark, "Pilgrim", he set out for a two years' cruise under Capt. Charles Pettey. The vessel was owned by the Hoods, of Somerset, who had fitted her for a voyage to the Indian Ocean, after sperm whales. Eighteen months of whaleship fare was ample for young Lewis, who, with three companions, planned to desert the ship, and in Fernandino Lost Bay, they slipped over the side and failed to return. Calling on the old native king, they gave him a plentiful supply of beads and calico in return for which he provided them with two guides, who were to direct them to Mozambique, a hundred miles away, through a country which had never before been by white man. On reaching Mozambique, however, the men party found that they had only their trouble for their pains. Their runners on ahead to reconnoitre, and to send back news of the remainder of the journey. Meanwhile, the shrewd Captain, seeing that his missing men would make for Mozambique around there, and the new guides who went out to meet the weary party, not to liberty, but to the lockup, and even completion of the voyage.

Upon his return in 1847, Mr. Lewis went to take charge of the coarse yarn mill operated by Azariah and Jarvis Shove at Newville (now Fall River), Rhode Island, running the mill by the hank. Here he remained for about a year, his next change being made to the Smith Mills, where he was given charge of his second plant, the John Cummings Batting Mill. This year, 1849, was also marked by his marriage. After serving one year at the Smith Mills, Mr. Lewis and his brother, Elijah R., leased the Eagleville Carpet Mill at Tiverton, R. I., and operated the same successfully for four and one-half years. They then decided to purchase a plant, for the owners of the Eagleville Mill had imposed an extensive increase in rent. After due deliberation, they bought of Gideon Allen, the property of The Westport Manufacturing Company, paying therefor \$8,000., \$1,000. of which was in cash and the balance to be in seven yearly instalments. Here they laid the foundation for the business which will be fully described in this work under the heading of "The Westport Manufacturing Company."

Early in his career as a manufacturer, Mr. Lewis began to invest his surplus earnings in New Bedford real estate. The cotton manufacturing movement was just taking form in that city, and he foresaw that land values would greatly increase in connection with the mill industry. His judgment was verified time and again, perhaps never more noticeably than with regard to his very first purchase. This was a tract of thirteen acres,

*Handwritten:*  
 [Signature]  
 He. [Signature]

*Handwritten:*  
 [Signature]



→ *Wayport*  
→ *Wyoming*

*Lamb's (1916)  
Vol II*

231

WILLIAM B. TRAFFORD

WILLIAM BRADFORD TRAFFORD was the son of William Bradford and Sarah (Castino) Trafford; grandson of Joseph and Ruth (Macomber) Trafford; great-grandson of Philip and Mercy (Mosher) Trafford; and a descendant in the fifth generation of Thomas Trafford, who, it is believed, landed at Dartmouth about the year 1690, accompanied by his father and brother. The descendants of Thomas Trafford remained in Dartmouth and there William Bradford Trafford was born, December 5, 1819. His father was a mariner and died at sea, and in consequence William received very little education. At the early age of ten years, he was obliged to seek employment, and went to work in one of the mills of Fall River. Determined, energetic and self-reliant, he could not remain long without advancement, and before he was sixteen years old, he began doing business on his own account, renting machinery for manufacturing purposes.

He made good progress, and in the Spring of 1846, he associated himself with Augustus Chace. They purchased a lot with water privileges, and erected a small mill, which they equipped with second-hand machinery for the spinning of coarse yarn. The machinery being old and of a poor type, it was difficult for them to secure operatives, and as a result, much of the work fell on their own shoulders, which meant long hours, sometimes laboring half the night, but both were young, and full of courage and ambition, and gradually gained a better footing, which permitted their being relieved of many of the burdensome tasks. Chace & Trafford was the firm name under which they operated and the mills became known as the "Wyoming Mills".

In 1854, the firm was able to render financial assistance to, and became interested, with George and Elijah Lewis, in the Westport Manufacturing Company (see sketch, *ibid.*), Mr. Trafford being a step brother of the Lewis's. Mr. Trafford was at once made agent and treasurer of the Westport Company, which was operated in connection with the Wyoming Mills until 1860, during which year the partnership of Chace & Trafford was dissolved, Mr. Trafford taking Mr. Chace's interest in the Westport Mill, and Mr. Chace becoming sole owner of the Wyoming plant. Mr. Trafford from that time on confined his manufacturing interests to the Westport Manufacturing Company, and until his death in 1880 retained the same official positions in the business.



For many years, Mr. Trafford served as a director of the Fall River National Bank. He was a Republican in politics, and as such represented the town of Tiverton in the State Senate in 1857. He was greatly respected for his unassuming worth and strict integrity, and for the liberality with which he met calls upon his benevolence and charity.

Mr. Trafford was twice married. His first wife was Abby W. Borden, whom he married May 15, 1842. To them were born four children,—William Chapin, born January 5, 1846, who became treasurer of the Westport Manufacturing Company; Andrew R., born May 22, 1848, who also became interested in the Westport Company; Charles A., born February 22, 1851, who after attending a business college, for some years managed the Westport Factory Store, later engaged in the wholesale shoe business in Providence, R. I., and subsequently became interested in the insurance business, at this writing (1916) being a representative of the New York Life Insurance Company; and Orrin F., who died November 18, 1880.

Mrs. Trafford died November 2, 1856. Mr. Trafford, April 19, 1858, married (second) Rachel M., daughter of Perry and Ruth (Macomber) Davis, and had four children,—Allison W., who, in 1897, with his brother, Bernard W., established the Sterling Manufacturing Company in Fall River, Mass., for the manufacture of ring travelers, and upon its incorporation became president; Henry Lester, who from 1883 to 1887 was engaged with the Westport Manufacturing Company, and then associated himself with the Equitable Life Assurance Society, in 1894 became general representative agent for the New York Life Insurance Company in Worcester, Mass., and in 1915 became officially connected with the Westport Manufacturing Company; Perry Davis, born November 6, 1866, who was graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy, Harvard College and Harvard Law School, and after 1891 practised the profession of law in New York City; and Bernard Walton, born July 2, 1871, who, after being graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy and Harvard University, went into the employ of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company, and until recently was a vice-president of five of the large telephone companies in the middle west, which, however, were operated as one unit. He is now (1916) a vice-president of the First National Bank of Boston. A most wonderful and strong attachment existed between the four oldest children and the second wife of Mr. Trafford. She nobly filled a mother's place in their young lives, and her kind care and attention was ever much appreciated by them.

William Bradford Trafford, after becoming interested in the Westport Manufacturing Company, moved to Westport, but in 1876 again took up his residence in Fall River, where he died February 4, 1880.



