

Know Your Company — Fieldale Towel Mill

The Fieldale Towel Mill is one of the largest towel operations in the nation. Ranging from medium to high-priced towels, a complete line is available in Jacquard, dobby and cam terry towels. Included in the products are fancy, plain and reversible as well as beach towels, finger tip towels, bath mats and wash cloths. These towels feature pucker-proof borders, and are finished either bleached or in piece or yarn dyed colors.

The Fieldale mill carries through the entire manufacturing process, including bleaching, dyeing, finishing and shipping. Its continuous process dyeing and bleaching equipment is among the most modern in the industry. The warehousing facilities were greatly expanded and an extensive modernization and expansion program covering processes in yarn manufacturing and weaving was completed in recent years.

The mill had its inception in 1916 when Marshall Field and Company, having established sources for blankets, sheeting and gingham, felt it desirable to also have a source for towels to meet the demand from its customers.

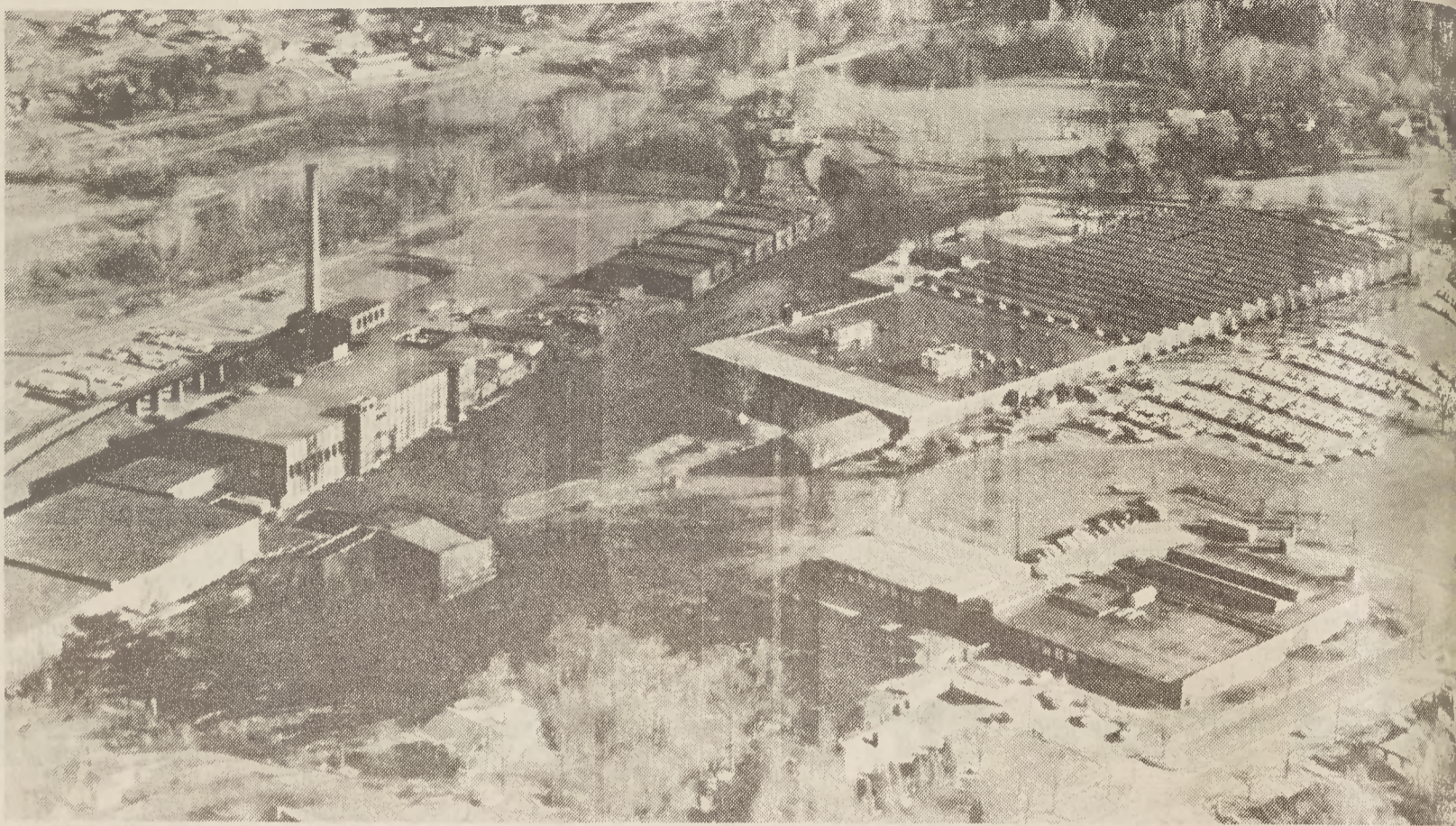
As land suitable for a mill site was not available in the vicinity of Spray or Draper (now Eden), a desirable location was found in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains four miles north of Martinsville, Va., at the junction of the Norfolk & Western and the Danville & Western Railways, and the Smith River.

In 1916, after inspection of the site by officials of Marshall Field and Company from Chicago approval of the purchase was given for 25 tracts of land totaling 1,841 acres all within one boundary.

Clearing of the land and building operations began in 1917 and with the erection of 87 houses the town was named "Fieldale".

The first unit of manufacturing consisted of 215,066 square feet with 30,000 square feet of warehousing space.

Awaiting the completion of the



THE FIELDALE TOWEL MILL at Fieldale, Va.

mill and installation of equipment, 12 towel looms were set up at Draper and in 1918 the first production of samples and "Pullman" towels was begun. In 1919 those looms were moved to Fieldale and together with the new equipment, operation was started with 19,200 spindles and 500 looms. There were 333 employees.

The present-day Fieldale Towel Mill has 680,831 square feet of manufacturing space and 215,270 square feet for warehousing. There are 51,528 spinning spindles and 853 looms. The mill normally employs approximately 1,500 people.

During its 56-year existence, there have been numerous building additions as the mill was expanded to meet the needs for increased production. The mill has continued to install new equipment in order to stay modern and up-to-date. This has been done through a loom replacement program, complete revamping of the yarn manufacturing facilities and continu-

ing improvement in the bleaching, finishing and warehousing operations.

Under way at present is a \$3-million modernization program which began in 1973 and is scheduled for completion in mid-1975. Major projects include the purchase of additional new looms and modern loom cleaning equipment, modernization of the Weave Room air conditioning with refrigeration and the installation of high-speed more efficient drawing machinery.

In 1974, the company joined with the Henry County Public Service Authority for the building of a regional waste water treatment plant, which will serve the Fieldale Towel Mill. Fieldcrest's share of the project's cost will amount to \$1,100,000 over a three-year period. The company, in lieu of upgrading its own waste water treatment plant, is cooperating with the public service authority in helping defray the cost of the regional facility.



EUGENE PETERS — Weaver, Weave Room



BOBBIE DEAL — Hemmer-Towels, Sewing Department.



DOVIE SHELTON — Unloader, Packing Department

THE MILL WEI