



# THE MILL WHISTLE

Vol. 37

Eden, N. C., Monday, October 23, 1978

No. 7



Mebane's first mill, the Nantucket Mill, as it looked in 1912.



Benjamin Franklin Mebane  
...A Man With An Idea...

## Fieldcrest History Nears Completion

"Fieldcrest in 1893 was just a section of land and one man's idea..."

So begins "Fieldcrest: Promise and Pride; Challenge and Achievement," a short, pictorial history of Fieldcrest Mills, Inc. which will soon be distributed to all employees and retired employees as a commemorative memento of the 25th anniversary of the formation of the company.

Although Fieldcrest Mills, Inc. was formed only 25 years ago, in 1953, its origins actually go back as far as 1893 when a man named Benjamin Franklin Mebane bought 600 acres of land in what was then the Leaksville-Spray-Draper area of Rockingham County with the idea of building "a mill a year."

Mebane actually built six mills, the first of which was the Nantucket Mill, built in 1898. In the ensuing

seven years, the American Warehouse, Lily Mill, Spray Woolen Mill, Rhode Island Mill and the German American Mill all went up on schedule.

Little could he have foreseen that this group of six textile mills in a small North Carolina community would, over the next three-quarters of a century, become a nationally known corporation with sales of over \$416 million, more than 13,000 employees, an annual payroll of \$125,716,000, manufacturing operations in five states in the U. S. and another under way in Europe.

The 64-page history chronicles this development from 1893 to the present, tracing the growth of the company as well as the personalities and events affecting that growth. Much of the story is told via historical photographs obtained

(Continued On Page Two)