



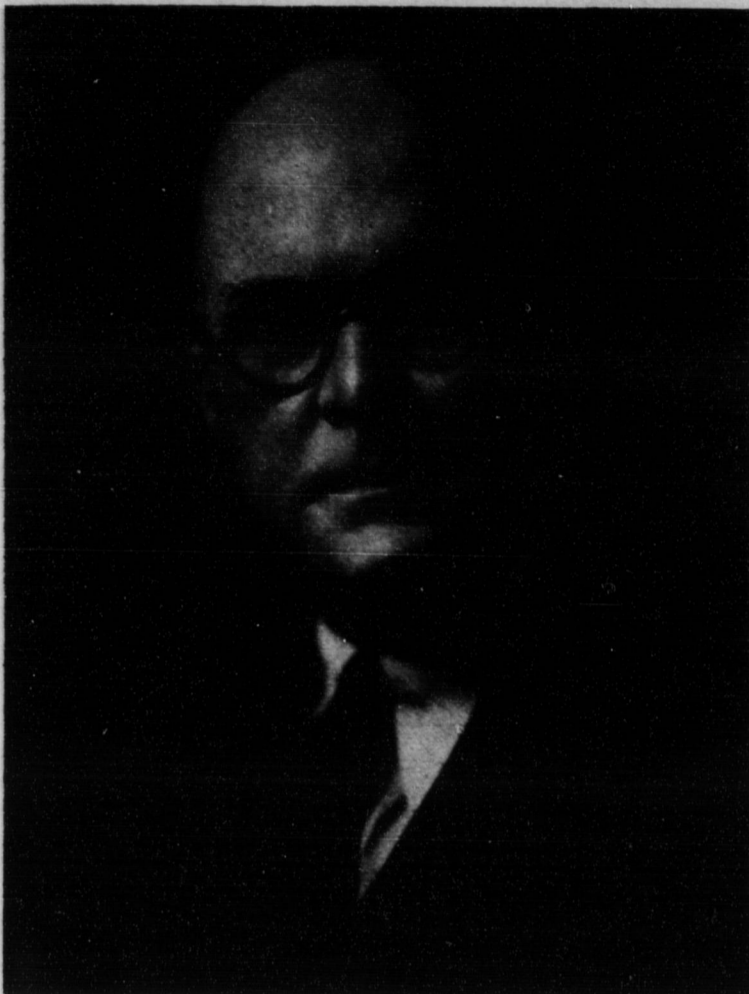
THE ERWIN CHATTER



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Mr. K. P. Lewis Dies June 29

The entire Erwin Mills organization paused at 3:30 P.M. on Tuesday, July 1, in respect to Mr. Kemp Plummer Lewis, Chairman of the Board of Directors, who passed away suddenly at midnight on June 29.

Mr. Lewis had been with the Company since 1900. His first job was counting brick. He also counted payroll money during his early weeks of employment but was soon made secretary to Mr. W. A. Erwin. Mr. Lewis became thoroughly familiar with every phase of cotton manufacturing and identified himself completely with the life of the people and the spirit of the mill. By working closely with Mr. Erwin he absorbed the successful business principles upon which our Company was founded.

In 1927, Mr. Lewis became Secretary and Treasurer of Erwin Mills and was made President in 1932. Under his leadership the Company expanded, gross sales increased from \$6,395,017.86 in 1932, to \$54,574,487.40 in 1948. In that year he resigned as President and became Chairman of the Board of Directors.

His many honors included presidency of the N. C. Cotton Manufacturer's Association and of the American Cotton Manufacturer's Association, director of the Fidelity Bank and the Durham and Southern Railway, member of the Council of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, trustee of the University of North Carolina and many others. In 1948, Mr. Lewis was presented the Civic Award of the Durham Chamber of Commerce in recognition of years of outstanding service to the community.

The *Durham Sun* expresses the feelings of all who knew Mr. K. P. Lewis in saying, "In his passing, Durham has lost a leader and a Christian gentleman."

Will Probated

Mr. Lewis' will was probated July 8. Among his bequests were \$5,000 to St. Philip's Episcopal Church of Durham and \$2,000 to the Thompson Orphanage in Charlotte. He also remembered his servants Maryland Jones, Aaron Moore and Janie McCoy as well as his secretary Miss Zoe Young. The balance of his estate was divided between his four daughters.

Over 2½ Millions In New Equipment

Improvements Voted By Directors for Durham, Cooleemee and Erwin

The Board of Directors voted more than \$2,650,000 for new equipment last month for Cooleemee, West Durham and Erwin Mills.

Almost half, nearly \$1,250,000 will be spent on 800 new X-2 looms in No. 5 Mill, Erwin, a humidification system in the weave room, and changes in the slashers to accommodate larger loom beams. Delivery is expected to begin in November.

Over 300 new looms are on order for Cooleemee, and with new roving frame, the costs of modernization of Plant No. 3 will come to 600 or 700 thousand dollars.

New Combers at No. 4

No. 4 Mill will receive a new unit of combers and necessary auxiliary equipment to increase the combed percale production. Two hundred and seventy-five new looms for percale sheeting will be installed, plus long drafting cradles in the Spinning Department and changes in creels and top rolls.

Slubbers will be moved from No. 4 to No. 1 Mill. Spinning will be changed to a super long draft, and pneumafil attachments will be added. Costs for No. 1 and No. 4 Mills will be about 665 thousand dollars.

A new 84-inch Morrison Sanforizer to shrink sheeting for making contour sheets—and equipment for vat-dyeing sheets will be installed in West Durham's Bleaching and Finishing Plant at a cost of about 125 thousand dollars. This equipment is expected to be in operation late in October or early

The First Six Months of This Year

A REPORT BY PRESIDENT RUFFIN

THE first six months of this year witnessed one of the toughest periods of competition we have ever seen in the textile business. Most authorities in the textile industry say that it has been worse than the depression of the '30's as far as prices for mill products go.

We have regretted to run so much short time in our mills, but I am sure that you know that this has been the case in most textile mills.

The market for sheets and pillow cases has been, for us, the worst of all. The market price for sheets and pillow cases got so far below cost that we had to seriously consider closing down Nos. 1 and 4 Mills and a good part of the bleaching and sewing room department here in West Durham.

Needless to say, we were most reluctant to even consider that but the conditions were, and are, that bad. You realize, of course, that it would have meant serious losses for our Company to close down these plants in Durham and to carry on all the expenses that would have to be borne whether the mills were running or not.

Decision Made

However, we decided that it would be best for all concerned to continue to run no less than three days per week. If we shipped our goods, for a while, below costs and absorbed more losses we could keep our people on our working force. Then, too, we knew that it was important to keep our sheets and pillow cases in the market.

We, therefore, are keeping the mills in Durham running as best we can. We are hoping to see the market picture improve. Goods will have to be shipped at heavy losses, however, for the Durham plants through the next three months at least. It is more important than ever for us to get the highest possible efficiency in our operations with a low percentage of seconds and high production in our mills.

Fortunately, some of our other mills are doing better and we hope on the whole that our Company will not have to show a loss for the year's operations.

In spite of the above discouraging news, our Company is determined to keep its equipment modern and our mills in the best possible operating conditions. We know we cannot compete and stay in business unless we do that.

New Equipment Ordered

With that in mind our Company has placed orders for considerable new equipment including larger roving frames for No. 1 Mill and new drafting equipment for the roving frames in No. 4 Mill, new spinning frame attachments for No. 1 Mill and combers for No. 4 Mill to give us enough combed yarn in that plant to run about 275 looms on combed sheets, the same product as No. 6 Mill is now making.

More Percale Production

The demand for combed sheeting is better and the prices, while below cost, are not as bad as they are on the muslin sheeting made in Nos. 1 and 4 Mills. Changing some of No. 4 Mill to combed sheeting, we hope, will enable us to run fuller time on the rest of the machinery in No. 4 Mill and in No. 1 Mill.

We have also placed orders for over 300 new looms for the Cooleemee plant and for all new looms in No. 5 Mill at Erwin. We have also ordered a sanforizer, which is a shrinking machine, in order to make fitted sheets in West Durham. We have also ordered dyeing equipment for West Durham for colored sheets.

What I have said about the purchase of new machinery is one of the best ways of telling you that I have confidence in our Company and in its employees, looking to the future. I hope that you in turn will pledge us your best efforts and best cooperation in meeting the hard competition against which we have to strive.

Your Help is Needed

I want to ask that each employee think about how to reduce our costs and get more efficient operations in our mills. If you will jot down on a piece of paper any thought you have along those lines and hand it to your supervisor, it will have the serious consideration of all of us. May I add that we want to try to keep you better informed about conditions in the textile industry and news of various kinds about our Company. I think that you are entitled to know these facts about our operations. "Fair treatment" has been the creed of the Erwin Mills for 60 years. We want to make sure that you understand what we are doing from time to time and why we are doing it.

I need not tell you that there are many mills to the South of us making the same products that pay very much lower wages than we

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November of this year.

This is not an expansion program. The equipment and changes will help us maintain our position in the market by increasing our efficiency and reducing costs. Conversion from muslin to percale production is being made at West Durham to take advantage of a stronger demand for percales.

Vacation Pay: \$378,556

Hourly employees collected the following amounts in vacation pay this year:

Durham	\$130,962
Erwin	142,375
Cooleemee	73,411
Stonewall	26,195
Neuse	5,613
Total	\$378,556

We hope that the money bought a lot of fun and interesting trips, good food and rest. Let's hear about your trip. See your CHATTER reporter.



Union Hearings In Durham July 22

United Textile Workers (AFL) Presents Case To National Labor Relations Board—Plants at Cooleemee, Erwin, Neuse and Durham Involved—Decision To Be Made About Election

As we go to press, the date has been set for hearings July 22 before the National Labor Relations Board in Durham. The United Textile Workers, A. F. of L. are asking the Board to decide that they, rather than the Textile Workers of America, C.I.O., should represent Erwin employees.

The National Labor Relations Board will then decide whether or not elections should be held at Durham, Erwin, Cooleemee and Neuse to settle the question.

Meanwhile, the contracts in force will be respected in every detail, just as they have been in the past.

President Gives Assurance

Mr. William H. Ruffin, President, speaking before a meeting of supervisors at Erwin, July 2,

brought up the subject of the NLRB hearings, and said: "It is distressing to see that our people are being pulled one way then another in this controversy between the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. Unions. I would like to assure each and every employee of Erwin Mills, Inc., that he should have no fear of losing the benefits he now enjoys regardless of whether an election is held or not. If such an election is held he will continue to enjoy those benefits regardless of the outcome. C.I.O., A. F. of L., or no-Union. Our Company will do the best for our people. We have always done that. We can't do more than our best, and we certainly don't intend to do less."

We will try to keep you informed of the facts in the columns of THE CHATTER.