



Even before cigarette paper was made at Pisgah Forest, the Champagne Paper Corp. was sending booklets of cigarette paper from Transylvania County to all points of the world. One of the companies incorporated separately from the Ecusta Paper Corp., the Champagne business was moved here from New York and was in production by June, 1939. French cigarette paper was used in the hand operation until Ecusta cigarette paper was available. Another operation was in the Stitching De-

partment where rubber bands were stapled to booklets. The booklet assembly was speeded up with the installation several years later of machinery that allowed unwinding many bobbins at once, all feeding into a channel and knife assembly to yield a predetermined number of papers. In addition to cigarette paper, the machinery is used today for processing specialty products such as hairwave papers.

Two newspaper articles, one in 1947 and one in 1963, recount the effect of Ecusta Paper Corporation in ways that bear repeating.

Following is an excerpt from Chester S. Davis's long article about Ecusta in the Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel in July, 1947:

"Ecusta means much more than profits. This plant, a unique combination of an idea, technical 'know-how' and risk capital, represents the salvations of the economies of such scattered cities as Winston-Salem, Reidsville, Durham and Richmond. Without Ecusta, the wartime cigarette shortage would have been a famine and the nation's smokers reduced to the pipe and cigar or the plug and the snuff stick.

"In this day when the lunatic-fringe belly-aches that the 'American Way' is decadent, and many of us are torn with doubts, an operation like Ecusta is as refreshing as the air from the mountains in which it thrives.

"Ecusta is the American way and at its best. It combines the Yankee ingenuity, the finest Southern labor, the dollar which dares a risk, and then steps out and produces something just a little bit better (and produces it just a little bit

cheaper) than anybody else, anywhere else, has done so far.

"The Ecusta industries are more than a tribute to any one man. This plant in the Carolina highlands represents a way of living and a way of doing things."

John Parris, staff writer with The Asheville Citizen, wrote the following article November 1, 1963, repeated in full:

"The effect of the Pisgah Forest operation of Olin Mathieson Chemical Corporation on the area has been miraculous.

"Twenty-five years ago when the first plant opened the per capita income was \$255. Today it is more than \$1,500.

"In 1940 Olin's annual payroll here was \$1,200,000. Now it is \$15 million.

"The total county tax evaluation has jumped from \$5 million in 1940 to \$30 million in 1963.

"In 25 years the county's population has increased 70 per cent, from 10,000 to 17,000. In Brevard, for the same period, it has grown from 3,000 to 6,000.

"As Olin President N. Harvey Collisson expressed it this week, 'population growth is not important itself - it simply means more people.

"But the comfort, well-being, and the opportunities of these people is the important thing," he said.

"And he pointed out that since 1939 nine new schools have been built in Transylvania at a cost of \$2.5 million.

"In 1940 Brevard had an inadequate hospital of 12 beds. Now it has a 46-bed hospital with all modern facilities.

"In 1939 there were nine doctors and dentists in the county. Today there are 20.

"The county had only 250 telephones in 1939. Now it has 3,800.

"School expenditures in 1939 were \$92,500. In 1963 they were \$1,186,000.

"Transylvania County uses 520 per cent more kilowatt hours than in 1940.

Collisson disclaimed credit for the progress.

"Many others contributed to this outstanding record," he said. 'All I'm saying is that we share with our neighbors a sense of pride in this progress.'

"But you talk to the home folks and they will tell you that Olin has made this country."

Announcement in late 1949 that Olin Industries would add cellophane production to its newly-acquired paper mill at

Pisgah Forest was music to the ears.

The Ecusta Paper Corporation, whose year-round payroll had brought the area to life a decade earlier, was going through a rough time in the years following World War II; as were many of the employees. Servicemen returning from war were reinstated in their earlier jobs, and the economy after the war had sagged discouragingly. For the first time in Ecusta's short history, there was a surplus of personnel and a lay-off.

The cellophane plant brought the needed boost. It also fulfilled the goal of the Ecusta founder, the late Harry H. Straus, who had made known his desire for a broader product line at Pisgah Forest to produce more jobs. Ecusta's power and steam facilities were a ready-made resource, and both plants required cellulose as basic raw material. Adding to the strong supporting relationship between the two plants was the fact that many Ecusta employees formed the cadre of the new Film Division.

While construction of the plant was underway southwest of the Ecusta plant, the people who would operate it were at Clinton, Iowa, undergoing