Wiscassett Spinning Mills Comprise Acres and Acres Most Modern Machinery

Bale of Cotton Little Knows What Its Fate Will Be, With Dozens of Mechanical Processes to Make It Into Yarn

UTMOST CARE TO KEEP MILL IN PERFECT SHAPE

Huge Plant Is a Model of Cleanliness Where Everything Is Kept in Its Place.—Ideal Working Conditions

To make a tour through the Wiscassett spinning mills, even when under the guidance of Superintendent Denning, who knows every nut and bolt on every machine in the building, is a confusing experience to the stranger in a textile mill. Thousands of square feet of floor space crowded with whirling machinery bewilder the observer. On such an immense scale are operations carried out, that it is difficult to grasp what is being done.

The cotton is taken from storage and enters what is called the opening room, where 180 bales are mixed into one pile, to insure as nearly as possible a uniform grade of cotton. There is a difference in color and general appearance between almost all bales. It is to insure a good general average that so much trouble is taken at the beginning. A machine called a bale breaker delivers the cotton to a vertical opener from where it goes through a fan to the C. O. B. machine, during which process the cotton isfurther cleaned by being shaken and air forced through it to take dirt and sand out. From this machine it goes into a bin where 100 to 200 bales are mixed together, this process further contributing to a good general average grade. From this bin the cotton is taken on conveyers to the pickers, machines which form what is called the lap. A regulating device on the conveyers insures the cotton being fed in a steady stream, just enough for the pickers to handle. When the cotton emerges from the first set of pickers, which consists of a series of rollers, it is known as a lap, and in appearance resembles a wide loose roll. Four of these rolls from the first set of pickers which are called "breakers", are fed to a second set of pickers known as "intermediates," and are merged into one lap or roll. After the intermediate pickers they go through a final set of pickers, at the end of which they must weigh within half a pound of a certain standard. The object of the picker machines is to further clean the wool, eliminate short cotton, and build up a uniform grade in the lap or roll. Then the laps go to the carding machines, which are large cylinders with millions of teeth. These machines take out more dust, the wool coming out in the form of a loose rope, the cotton being 120 times finer than when it entered the machine. From there is goes to what is called a sliver lapping machine, which makes a lap or roll considerably narrower than the lap or roll made by the first set of pickers. Six of the laps which emerge from the sliver lapping machine go through another lapping machine which attenuates them, and they are now known as ribbon laps or rolls. Six ribbon laps go into another comber, which takes out all the short stock by means of millions of needles acting like a fine comb, and the wool again emerges in the form of a loose rope. Six of these ropes go through what is called a drawing frame, which helps in the object of all of the former processes of evening the texture and tensile strength of the lap. The next step is to the slubber, where the cotton begins to take the appearance of yarn known in the mill as roving. From this machine the cotton is wound onto bobbins. The yarn from two bobbins is merged into one, on an intermediate slubber, whence it goes to another machine and is made still finer. Next two bobbins go to the jack frame, the yarn getting finer each time it goes through one of these machines. It is now ready to go to the spinneps which make is into thread. From the jack frame the yarn on two bobbins are merged into one in the spinning frame, which also winds and gives tension to the yarn, which by now is in the thread stage.* The thread is wound on bobbins, and as they get full they are sent onto the spoolers and are replaced with empty bobbins. In the spoolers the thread is wound on spools. Cotton thread is shipped in a variety of ways, as bobbins; skeins, ball warps; cones and tubes, according to the orders of the customers of the mills. From the various machines which put the thread up in the form specified, the thread goes to the shipping floor, and is packed in wooden cases or rolled in packing cloth, according to the way in which it has been wound for shipment.

In the Wiscassett Mill, where there are large resources and ample storage facilities, as a rule a large stock of yarn ready for shipment is on hand at all times waiting the most favorable times to make sales.

SOME TYPICAL HOMES IN THE WISCASSETT MILL VILLAGE

Wiscassett Hosiery Mill Is Attracting Attention With Its Full Fashioned Hose

Recent Installation of the Latest Type of Machinery Has Already Been Mastered by the Organization

ALREADY EXPERTS ON FULL FASHIONED

Although the New Machinery Has Been in Use Only Six Months Staff Is Turning Aut High Grade Hosiery

The hosiery department of the Wiscassett Mills has come in for a good deal of attention in the textile trade recently by reason of an installation of new machinery made six months ago by the leading firm of German spinning machinery manufacturers. The new machinery is said to be the most modern of its kind, and is used in the production of full fashioned hose. While up until now the mill has confined itself to the manufacture of dyeing cotton and lisle hose, it is the intention of the management to gradually work into production of silk hose as well. Some very complimentary letters have been received by the mill from large New York jobbers, one of which stated that a recent sample of full fashioned cotton and lisle hose, which came to the attention of the firm, was regarded as the best of the kind they had ever seen. This is looked upon as impressive, in view of the fact that it is generally recognized that operators of the new German machinery take about two years to learn the details of manufacturing. Mr. Gaddy, the superintendent, started with an organization, which while thoroughly accustomed to making hose with the ordinary knitting machines, known as circular hose, was entirely unfamiliar with the full fashioned process of manufacture. Within six months, instead of the expected two years, the Wiscassett hosiery mill is turning out hose which will compare with anything in the country of similar quality, according to Superintendent Gaddy.

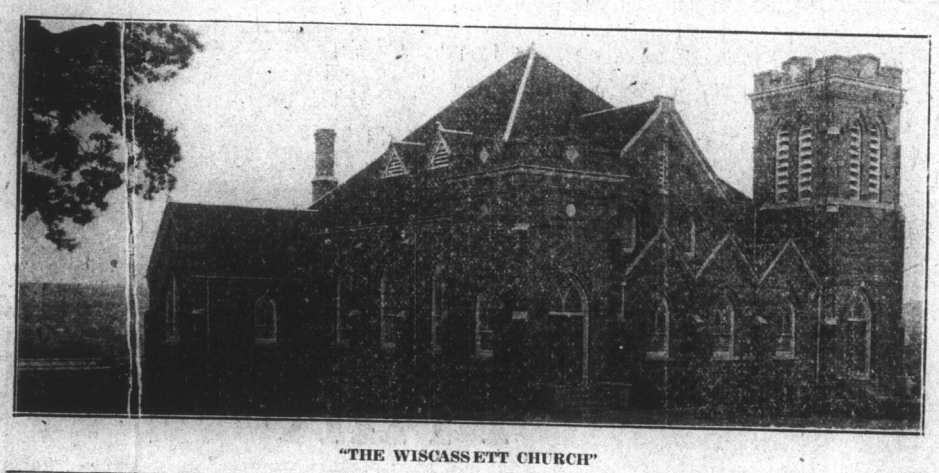
Process of Manufacture.

Explaining the process of manufacture, the superintendent first showed how knitted hose were made. The knitting machine makes the ribbed part of the hose, from where it goes to the footer, which knits on the foot and heel, completing the hose with the exception of an opening at the toe. In making full fashioned hose the process is entirely different, and a much greater labor expense is involved, equal in labor alone to about five times the complete production value of the knitted hose. In this process the one machine makes the leg, from the hem at the top down to the heel tabs, leaving the foot to be put on by a footer. The hose comes out flat, unlike the knitted hose which is knitted in circular form. In the footer the full fashioned hose is transferred to a row of needles on a frame by hand, extreme precision being required by the operator to get the needles in exactly the right places. This is called the transfer bar, and the operator through long training transfers the hose almost as rapidly as it comes from the machine. The transfer bars then go to the footer, which knits on the foot, leaving an opening for the toe. The hose then goes to the looper, which closes the heel and toe, then to the seamer, which seams the back.

Dyeing Department.

In the dyeing department the hose goes into a dyeing vat for one to two hours, then into a washing vat for about an hour; then through the dryer, after which it is singed in a gas flame, and then into the softening machine where the natural oils are restored and the hose again becomes soft. Then it is put on metal forms and dried and put in an hydraulic press. The next step is inspection for the purpose of rejecting imperfect hose and for pairing. After that it is stamped with the trade mark, a gold transfer placed on the toe, after which it is ticketed and boxed. In the Wiscassett Mills the company makes all its own boxes, a large room being filled with special machinery for this purpose.

Certain atmospheric conditions are necessary in a hosiery mill, the doors and windows being kept closed at all times. An air conditioning plant insures an even temperature at all times, there being a complete change of air throughout the whole building every ten minutes, so that the temperature in the mill is practically the same every day in the year.



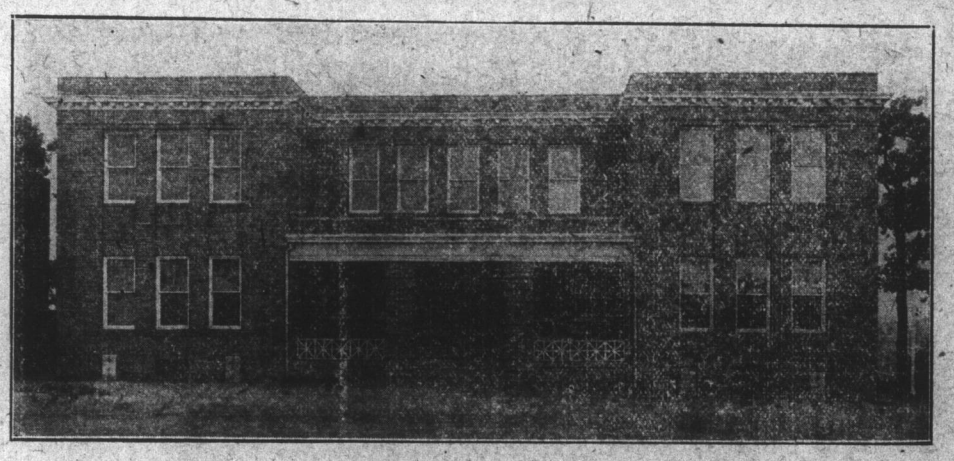
"THE WISCASSETT CHURCH"

FINE RECREATION GROUNDS FEATURE WISCASSETT LIFE

All Kinds of Outdoor Sports Are Pleasantly Provided For

The social centre of Wiscassett Mill village, and to a large extent of the city of Albemarle, is the public recreation grounds provided and maintained by the Wiscassett Mills manegement. Located on level high ground overlooking the mill, it is surrounded by handsome homes, built by the mill for the executive and clerical staff of the mill.

Surrounded by shade trees and carefully tended bushes and flower beds, a large roofed pavilion with open sides forms a fine community centre, and is used for dances, roller skating, and public meetings and concerts. The Wiscassett band gives a weekly concert in the pavilion during the summer months, which is largely attended. Every imaginable kind of swing and device for children's enjoyment is found in the recreation park, which also has tennis courts, basketball courts and other means of healthy outdoor enjoyment. The park is in use by night as well as by day, being brightly lighted with electric lights.



"THE WISCASSETT MILL SCHOOL"

FINE SCHOOL FOR MILL CHILDREN AT WISCASSETT VILLAGE

Instruction Given Through Eighth Grade in 14-Room Brick Schoolhouse.

Educational facilities in the Wiscassett Mill village are regarded as highly important by J. F. Cannon and his assistants. A few years ago a frame building was used as a schoolhouse, but with the growth of the mill this became inadequate to accommodate the students, and a modern brick fireproof 14-room schoolhouse was built. The mill provided all of the money for construction and equipment, although the school is part of the county school system. Sixteen teachers are employed, all being engaged by the mill management. Children attending this school have the benefit of eight and one-half months tuition in place of the usual six months, as is the general rule in rural schools. The mill contributes largely to the support of the school in the way of paying part of the teachers' salaries and bears the entire expense of operating the school during the extra two and a half months while school is open after the usual rural schools have closed for the year. With an average enrollment of 600 pupils, the daily average attendance is about 500.

Mr. Boger, the secretary of the mill, represents the mill in school affairs, and in addition is a member of the Albemarle Board of Education.

Instruction is given through the eighth grade. The school is pleasantly situated on high ground on the main street of the mill village, close to the large recreational grounds which the company maintains for the benefit of the public and the mill employees. O. D. Ritchie is the school superintendent.

ALBEMARLE MAKING MODERN STREETS NOW

In Albemarle city, the Wiscassett Mills finds a civic body to deal with which believes in co-operation. Recognizing the importance of the mills in the business life of the city, every effort is made to meet the milling interests at least half way, in connection with all public affairs. An example of this is found in the street paving program being undertaken by the city, where street improvements are being made which will greatly facilitate traffic between the mills and the business section.

BANDMEN OF THE WISCASSETT MILL ARE WELL TRAINED

Mill Provides Instruments, Instructor and the Music

Started as a medium of entertainment, the Wiscassett Band was organized some years ago, the mill management providing the instruments, music and the instructor. S. J. Ludwig is the bandmaster and instructor, devoting his whole time to this work between the Wiscassett Band and the band of the adjoining Efird mill. The Wiscassett band has 50 pieces when at full strength, and sometimes plays in combination with the Efird mill band, thus giving a total of 90 pieces. Both bands are in much demand, owing to the thorough way in which they have been trained, and contribute much to the social life of the Albemarle community by giving weekly concerts in the recreation grounds.

"THE WISCASSETT MILL OFFICE"

MILL SECRETARY ON SCHOOL BOARD

Fine Spirit of Co-operation Between City and Mill Interests.

An example of the fine spirit of co-operation existing between the citizens of Albemarle and Wiscassett Mills is found in the election to the board of education of Mr. Boger, secretary of the mills. He was at one time a school teacher, before entering the textile business, and has always taken a keen interest in education matters.

WISCASSETT MILLS GOES TO GREAT LENGTHS TO PROVIDE GOOD LIVING CONDITIONS

(Concluded from page Seventeen)

giving advice, which costs nothing. It includes services of a very practical kind, which costs real money. Thus the company buys fuel, using its large resources and its buying organization to secure the lowest possible prices and retails to the mill employes at exactly the cost to the company. Thus cases have been known where the city dealer, paying $10 to $12 a ton for coal, was compelled to sell to the consumer at an advance in order to make a profit, while the mill employes were buying in their coal at cost through the mill for $8.

The mill maintains at up todate boarding house for the single man, where they are comfortably boarded and lodged at a nominal weekly charge.

Many fine vegetable and flower gardens were to be seen to the front, side and rear of numerous mill homes, the employes having plenty of space on which to raise a good garden. In addition some of the mill village residents keep pigs, others keep cows, the company providing the necessary barns.

KNITTING MACHINES MOST MODERN TYPE

The Knitting Department of the Wiscassett Mills Co., is the most up-to-date hosiery mill in the South. The present equipment consists of 450 knitting machines, 125 ribbers, 85 loopers and fourteen sewing machines. Complete with dyeing, finishing and paper box plant. The heating and ventilating is controlled from a central station which furnishes warm fresh air in winter and cool fresh air in summer.

"A COUPLE OF HAPPY KIDDIES AT WISCASSETT"

NURSING SERVICE IS MAINTAINED FREE FOR WISCASSETT PEOPLE

Attractive Day Nursery at Disposal of the Mill Families

One of the most attractive buildings in Wiscassett Mill village is the nurses' home and day nursery, built and maintained by the mill management for the benefit of the employees. Two full time nurses are employed who visit the homes of the employees and give instruction in personal hygiene, care of children and act as nurses and advisers in cases of sickness and disease. As a result of the careful policy of nursing inspection, the death rate in the Wiscassett Mill village is unusually low, and there is a gratifying freedom from epidemic diseases.

The day nursery is a delightful institution where the kiddies from one to ten years of age can be left amid ideal surroundings in the care of experienced nurses while the parents are at work. Miss Josephine Copeland and Miss Lucile Cook are the nurses.

The Carolina Cotton & Woolen Mills Co., Inc., has started construction of a one-story addition to its plant at Roanoke, Va. The new building will be 48x69 feet, and is to be used as a weaving department, requiring about 100 operators.