

History Of Kings Mountain Interesting

(Cont'd from page one this section)

characteristic of all mining communities a carefree atmosphere of pleasure prevailed. Wages and capital alike were lavishly spent for amusements and the gratification of desire. A livery stable with five saddle horses, and a bar-room and supply store were profitable to those who operated them nearby. At the peak of activity more than 200 people, including the families, were directly connected with the mining.

Mr. Coolidge of Philadelphia seems to have been one of the most successful operators. He built the first stamp mill. During his regime the story is told of John Lynch, an old Englishman employed as watchman. He was entitled to a pension from the British government and he made a trip to the Mother country to secure it. Disappointed he returned to the mine. One day he took his gun and dog, telling his wife he was going to shoot a hawk and went into the woods. Later she heard the report of his gun and saw smoke going to the spot she found his dead from the gun wound and his clothing on fire. He was burned under an old oak tree near the present paved highway.

Mr. Horton was perhaps the greatest visionary of all. He had dreams of untold wealth hidden in the gold veins beneath the earth.

In anticipation of what he expected to receive, he spent from \$30,000 to \$40,000 in building another large stamp mill in constructing a railroad to carry ore from the shafts to the mills and various other improvements. Consequently, when he found shafts and excavations inadequate he had no more funds to carry on.

Tin was first discovered in the Town of Kings Mountain. A student of the Kings Mountain Military School boarding at the home of Capt. Bell, at the corner of Gaston and Mountain streets (not now owned by Dr. J. M. Garrison) found a rock containing tin ore in the yard. A Mr. Ledoux opened the first prospect in the Southwest section of the town in 1888-1889. Some years later a snappy old Englishman — Prof. Furness, in Prince Albert coat and high silk hat, came with his family to prospect and promote tin mining. In 1897, came the Blue Ridge Tin Corporation — owned by the Fosters of West Virginia. They opened the Parker mine located west of Southern Highway at Piedmont street crossing. The shaft which they sunk has now crumbled in and the large wooden mill has decayed, so now all that remains is a sunken hole of rubbish and rock. There are still occasional efforts at tin mining around the town (S. S. Weir, Plonk and Creighton property south of Town) but tin has never proven profitable.

The Co-operative Colonization Society Teutonia Incorporated in N. C. (with 100 shares capital) July 16, 1885. Bernhard (Bang, President, Chas. Blensack, Treasurer.

This was a colony of German people formed in Philadelphia for the purpose of settling on new lands in the South to farm and establish industry. A Mr. Brantley, a Swiss school teacher, came South to find a location and he selected the mountain land from the Mountain View Mill over Crowders Mountain to Yellow Ridge in the direction of Kings Mountain. This tract comprising some 4000 acres was acquired from the Garrett, Baker and Dilling interests, though in about four years it reverted to the original owners because of the failure of the colony.

Failure was due to the fact that the country was not thickly populated enough to support industries and also that the colonists were not practical farmers. They had wild schemes for the development of their colony — for instance a car line from Crowders Mountain to Kings Mountain town. They planned to level the mountains to facilitate farming. One reporter from the north said the mountains would be pasture land all winter — mistaking the green pines for grass.

While some of these Germans became discouraged and returned to the North, other availed themselves of better land and settled here permanently, the descendants being among the most substantial farmers in our midst.

The best known Germans who came were (1) Mr. Rockley — a stone cutter — at one time president of the colony. Leaving Kings Mountain he went to Atlanta where he took a job on building the Atlanta Constitution Building. (2) Mr. Brantley — the Swiss School teacher worked at the gold mine and later was superintendent dairy farms in Chester, S. C. and Charlotte, N. C. (3) Mr. Bittzer was a woolen weaver who had been working in mill in Camden, N. J. He brought his family first to the town of Kings Mountain in 1882 — living for two months near where the Pure Oil Filling Station now stands. He then moved near All Healing Springs (Linwood) at foot of Crowders Mountain. The Bittzers had originally belonged to the Amana German Society in Iowa, but leaving in 1882

for Camden they became members of the Philadelphia colony going to N. C. Fond of his vineyard and often becoming intoxicated by the wine, Mr. Bittzer was urged by the Philadelphia minister to destroy the vineyard. However, he did not comply. Mr. Wm. Hira, step-son, a respected and well to do farmer lives at the home place in a modern brick home.

(4) The Richales and Pfiums were silk weavers. They brought their families with them. Richales first lived on colony land, but later bought the Lynn place from W. A. Mauney — east of the well known Dairy Hill on Kings Mountain-Bessemer Road. (5) The Pfiums settled on Kings Mountain near Sparrow Springs. The descendants now live in the same section. (6) Mr. Meier was a shoemaker. He first lived on colony land and then moved to town where he operated a shoe shop (located at site where is now Sealey Motor Co.) Later he bought a farm near Kings Mountain (mtn.). His descendants now live near and in Belmont, N. C.

Other Germans were the Kuhns, Kramers, Jacobsens, Ames. (Alme was a dwarf and a chicken farmer. He was rather simple-minded and the black-sheep and laughing stock of the crowd.)

Mr. Jacobson opened a carpet factory in 1884 at All Healing, N. C. The Kramers were associated with him. Their products were carpets woven in many shapes and patterns. The looms were operated by hand. The output of the plant was sold in Charlotte.

These last named families returned to Philadelphia.

Having the name of the famous Revolutionary Battle has brought distinction and recognition to Kings Mountain that otherwise it would not have enjoyed. Patriotic from the earliest days its citizens have engaged in many celebrations of the battle, beginning with the Centennial in 1880, and continuing till the Sesqui-Centennial, 1930.

Several elaborate celebrations have been staged on the battlefield (1880-1909-1930) but it has proven more convenient and satisfactory to hold the festivities in town so many anniversaries of the battle have been observed with parades pageantry and public speaking here. These have drawn many thousand people and such well known speakers as Sen. Copeland of N. Y. (1923), Sen. Folk of Missouri (1911), Wm. Jennings Bryan (1412), Sen. George of Georgia (1925); and President Hoover (1930) and others.

The most unique of these celebrations was in the 80's when a huge flag was raised on the pinnacle of Kings Mountain. The speaking and festivities were held about one mile this side of Lake Montona on the Gold mine tract — in a clearing facing the pinnacle.

The various activities described above have been compelling forces in the development of the business and social life of our community. In the "good old days" of the 80's and 90's the town was a bustling center during week-ends when folks from the country-side came to lay in supplies for the days ahead. Jostling elbows with the Scotch Irish and Penn. Dutch settlers were the newcomers — some adventurous English miners, some plain homely Ger-

mans who still spoke Dutch, some dignified educators from the North. In times of celebration added to this concourse of people were visitors from far and near and all of whom have left some imprint upon the life and manners of the town.

So, we see as we turn the pages of history, many faces have come and gone, many interesting events have taken place, in connection with the development of Kings Mountain. All of us can turn our thoughts backward in reminiscence, some seeing much farther than others, but all can look far enough to realize that through the years we have had a steady substantial growth — industrially, socially, culturally and spiritually.

While we gaze in retrospect upon the toilers and builders of the Past, may we realize that the Present is for us — to make as we shall choose. What WE make of the Present will determine what the Future is to be. May we prove worthy of the heritage into which we have come both in our ideals and our service to this community —

"Let me but live my life from year to year
With forward face and unreluctant souls
Not hurrying to, nor turning from the goal;
Not mourning for the things that disappear
In the dim past, nor holding back in fear
From what the future veils — but

And happy heart, that pays its toll to Youth and Age
And travels on with cheer."

Brief History Of Kings Mountain Mfg. Co.

(By S. A. Mauney, Sec'y-Treas.)

Fifty one years ago or early in the year 1888 a goodly number of the citizens of Kings Mountain and the vicinity met in a called meeting at the depot building which was at that time located in the business center of the Town and W. A. Mauney was chosen as chairman and I. N. Garrett as Secretary of the meeting.

At this meeting it was reported that \$16,000.00 had been subscribed for building a cotton mill, but it was not until 1889 that the original Capital Stock of \$39,750.00 was made up and the mill begun the manufacture of cotton yarns.

Early in 1889 J. M. Rhodes was elected Secretary and Treasurer of the mill instead of I. W. Garrett and served for about two years or until F. Dilling was elected in 1891 who also served in this capacity for about two years or until relieved by J. S. Mauney in 1893.

At a May meeting in 1896 J. S. Mauney was elected as General Manager of the mill and the present Secretary and Treasurer, S. A. Mauney, was elected, and is now serving in this capacity.

After the mill had operated for a short time as a yarn mill it was thought advisable to put in weaving, but it was found during the year 1906 that it was very difficult to make the mill pay on cloth, so a change back to yarn was made, and the mill since that time operated as a yarn mill and very few changes as to number of yarn has been made. W. A. Mauney served as President

of the mill for forty years and J. S. Mauney was active as Secretary and Treasurer and General Manager for similar period.

The mill has had as Superintendents for the entire time of operation five men, viz: J. M. Williams, C. E. Neisler, P. A. Carpenter, J. P. Long, and C. Q. Rhyne.

Up until the year 1927 there had not been but two years that the mill showed an actual loss in operation, and those were the years directly after the world war when almost every article that the mill had to deal with showed a very great shrinkage in value, and practically every one who was at all optimistic took more or less loss for the years 1921 and 1922.

There doesn't seem to be on record any financial statements showing the operation during Mr. Rhodes management, and only one on file for the two years that Capt. Dilling had charge.

Statements are on file showing the operation of the mill for each of the past 45 years.

Since the slump in 1921 and 1922 when most mills had a very heavy shrinkage in their inventories the textile business has been anything but satisfactory, and the stockholders haven't received but one cash dividend in this period, but for the past fifty years the mill has paid to the original shareholders an average of more than 6 percent per year as cash dividends and an average of 3 percent per year in stock dividends on the Capital paid in.

The mill has replaced most of the old spinning and the physical condition of the plant both in point of production and upkeep is fairly good.

Forty-nine of the 55 corn club members of Green county completed their projects and records for the 1938 crop and produced 2,500 bushels on 49 acres or an average of 51 bushels to the acre. The corn cost an average of 35 cents a bushel to produce and is valued at 60 cents a bushel.

From the standpoint of nutrition, 40 to 60 per cent of family diets of white employed city workers appear to be in need of improvement and the same is true for about 60 per cent of the diets of Negro families, the Federal Bureau of Home Economics found in a recent study.

Egypt, facing difficulties similar to those of American cotton growers, has established a Cotton Advisory Council composed of Cabinet members, growers, merchants, and spinners.

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