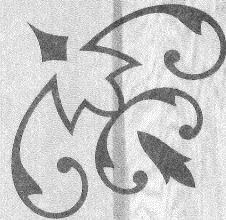
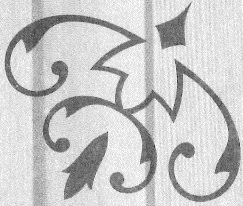


3
Centuries
of
Shelton
from farming
to industry
&
beyond





INTRODUCTION

The City of Shelton has passed through many of the major phases in American history: the Native American village of Pootatuck, the colonial settlement of Coram, the Puritan parish of Ripton, the farming community of Huntington, the industrial borough of Shelton, and the city of Shelton, which is a combination of residential community, light industry, corporate headquarters, farms, and open space. All these eras of United States history have happened here.

When we explore the history of Shelton we examine not only the history of this area but also that of the nation as a whole.

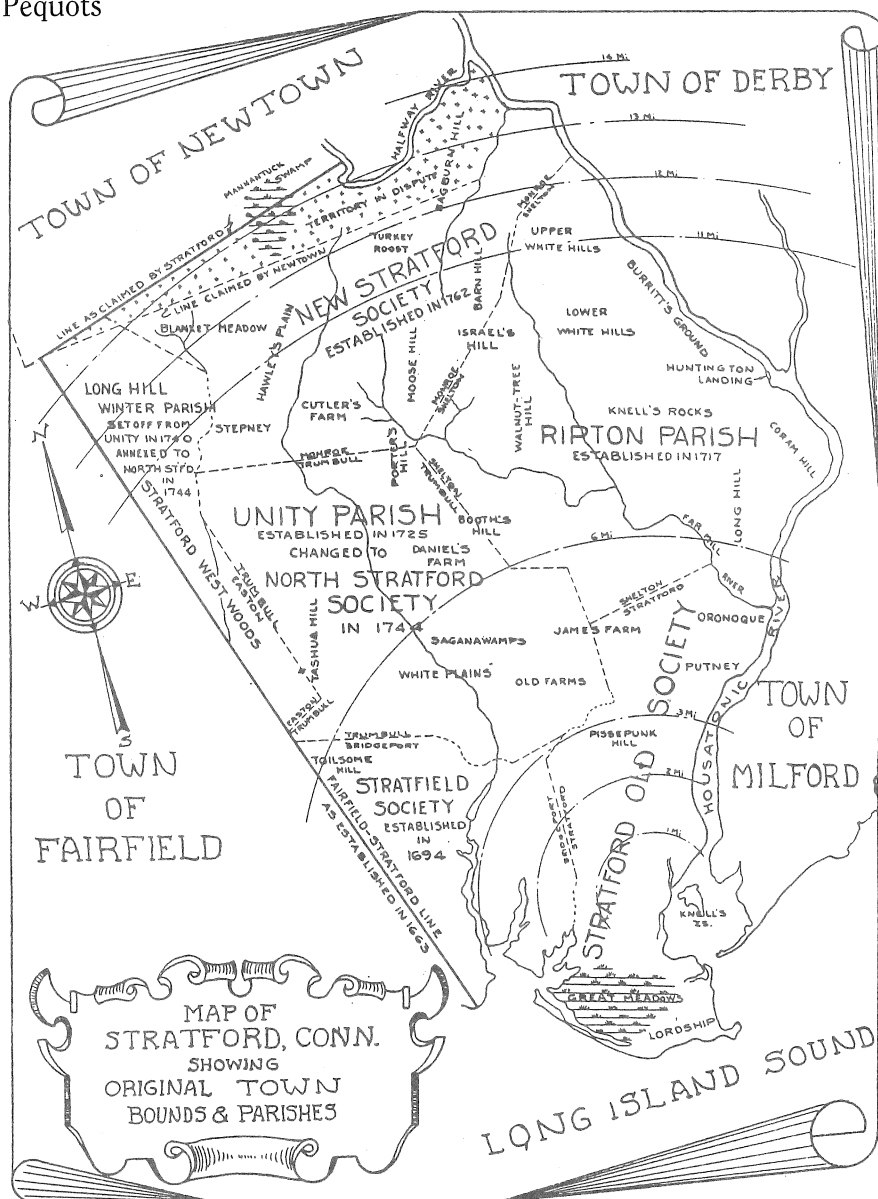
POOTATUCK & CORAM

The original settlers of this area were members of the Paugussett tribe. They were a hunter-gatherer tribe who were also involved in agriculture. The area along the banks of the Housatonic River was known as

the village of Pootatuck. This has led to some confusion because people have mistaken the name of the settlement as the name of the tribe.

The Paugussetts allied themselves with the Pequots during the Pequot War of 1637. The war arose from a series of murders by both the English and the Pequots. The Pequots made two successful attacks, one on the Saybrook settlement at the mouth of the Connecticut River and another at Wethersfield. The English retaliated with an attack on a Pequot village on the Mystic River then trapped the survivors in a swamp near what is now Southport. The Pequots were finished as a powerful tribe, and the lands of their allies were regarded as conquered territory.

English settlers moved into Cupheag, now Stratford, in 1639. As the settlement became crowded, people moved farther and farther away. By 1680 newcomers were migrating into the Long Hill section of Shelton and establishing farms there. The settlement was known as Coram but was still under the jurisdiction of the Stratford settlement. By 1717 there were approximately fifty families in Coram, and they petitioned the colony for the formation of a separate parish. Ripton Parish was established by vote of the General Assembly that year.



Map of Stratford, CT
Illustrated by W. H. Wilcoxson

This map shows how the surrounding settlements grew out of Stratford colony.

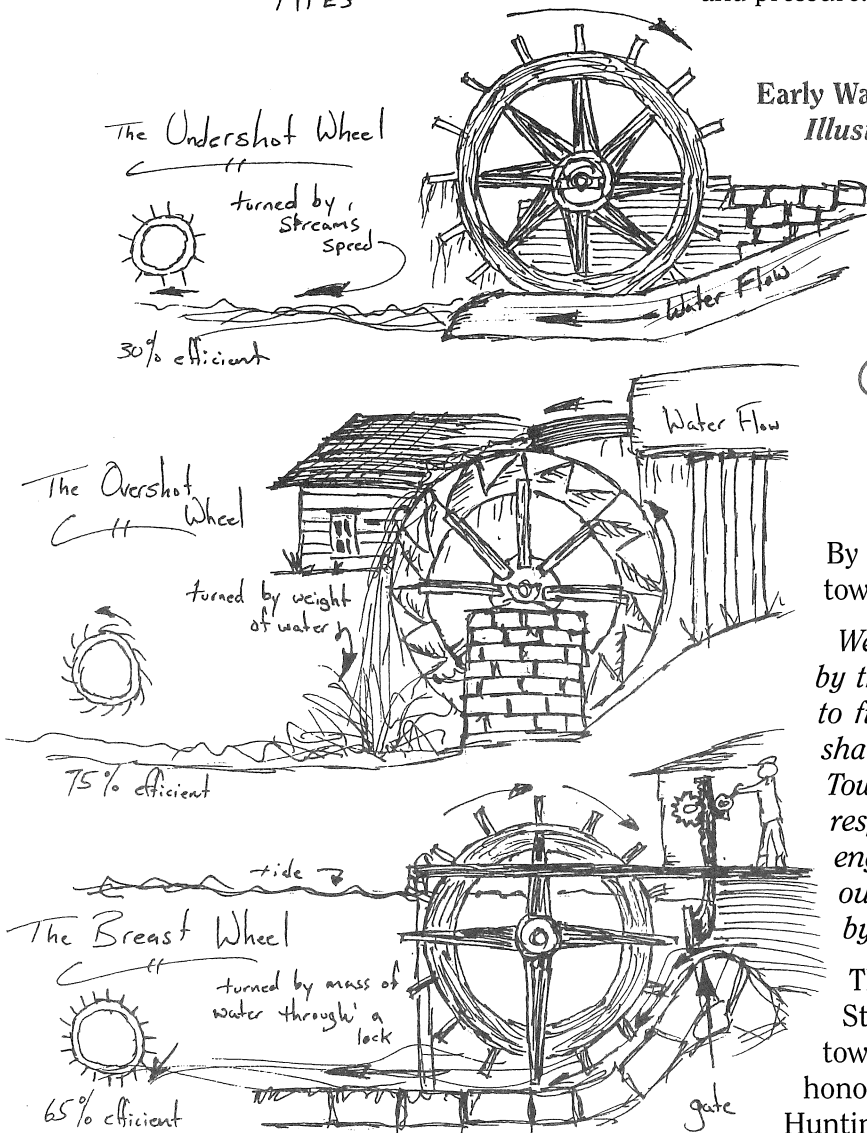
RIPTON PARISH

While the origins of the name Ripton are unclear, it is possible that it originates in Rippon, the name of the town in England from which one prominent citizen, Daniel Shelton, originated.

Ripton Parish was a farming community centered around the present Huntington Green. There were numerous farms in the surrounding area and light industry along the streams and rivers. The Far Mill River was an especially popular center of industry. During the 1676-1740 period there were at least thirteen mills and two dams built along it. The overshot wheel was the most popular in this area. The mills were of various types and included saw mills for cutting timber, grist mills for grinding grains, paper and woolen mills, and fulling mills which created felted cloth through the use of moisture, heat, and pressure.

A Simplified plan of our
EARLY WATER WHEEL
TYPES

Early Water Wheel Types
Illustrated by Robert Fosse-Previs



HUNTINGTON

By 1789 Ripton Parish had increased to the size of a town. In a document that begins:

We the Subscribers being a Committee appointed by the Towns of Stratford and Huntington in order to fix on principles Respecting those Persons who shall be deemed Inhabitants of the Respective Towns; and to prevent any future controversy respecting the same we do hereby covenant and engage in behalf of ourselves and constituents in our Respective Towns to abide and be concluded by the following Principles...¹

The town fathers separated the Ripton and New Stratford Parishes from Stratford and formed the town of Huntington. The new town was named in honor of Samuel Huntington, a Norwich resident. Huntington signed the Declaration of Independence and was Governor of Connecticut from 1786-1796. Many

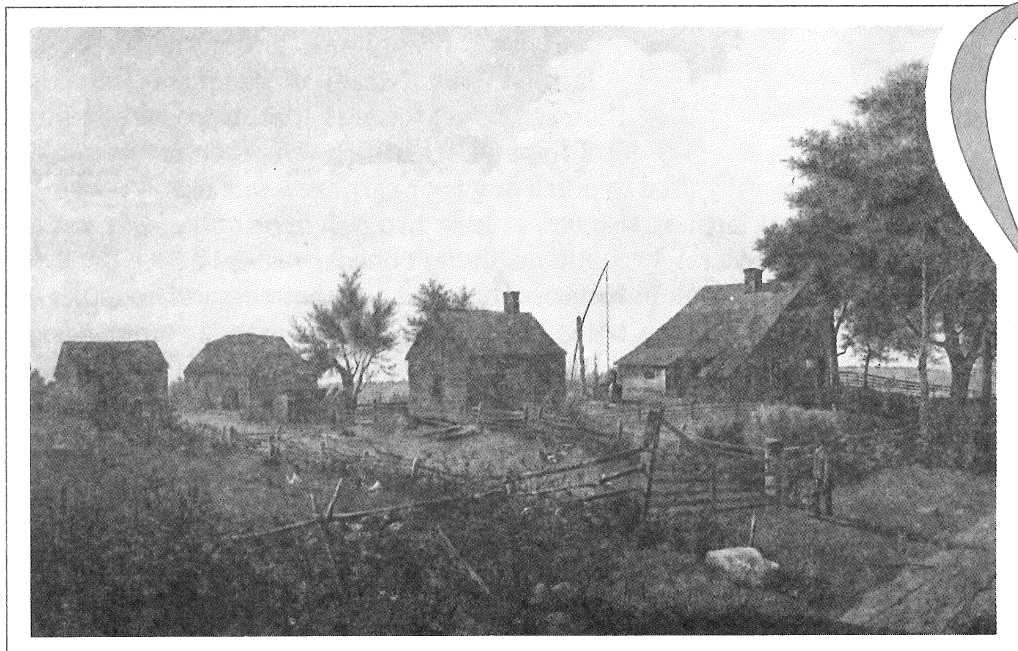
people consider him to be the first president of the United States as he served as the first president of the Continental Congress from 1779-1781. It does not appear that Samuel Huntington ever visited the town named in his honor.

The town of Huntington continued the farming tradition established by the founders of Ripton Parish. The 1800 Census has the first individual listing for Huntington. There were an almost even number of males and females in the free white population of 2616. Over 30% of this category were under the age of ten, which is not unusual in

an age of high infant mortality, death in childbed, and incurable diseases and accidents. Another category lists 143 people as “all other free persons except Indians not taxed”. This category would include indentured servants and freed slaves. Slaves were also listed in the census, thirty-three in Huntington.

**The Captain Joseph
Birdseye House
C. Chemmen, 1868 Oil
on Canvas**

This painting depicts a house no longer standing which was built on Birdseye Road in the mid-1700's. Behind the house stands a contemporary slave house; the man carrying the scythe in the foreground may have been a descendant of one of the slaves of the Birdseye family.



While farming consumed the lives of most resi-

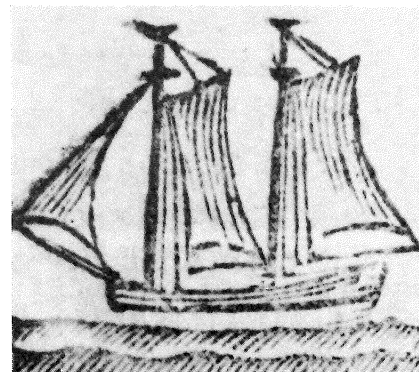
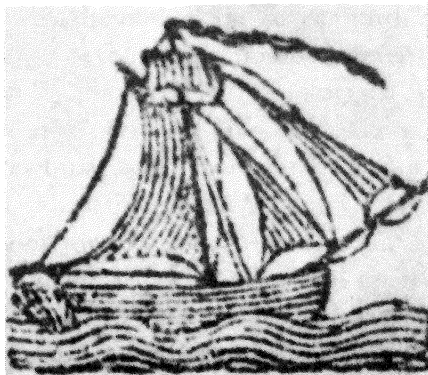
dents, some, like the Leavenworth family, branched off into other endeavors. The Leavenworths owned land on the Housatonic River, near what is now Indian Well State Park. In the late 1700's the family moved from farming into shipbuilding and into competition with the shipyards across the river in Derby. The family constructed sloops and schooners which were used for coastal trade up and down the Eastern seaboard and for trade with the West Indies. The ships, which had names such as *Anaconda*, *George and Jane*, and *Fox*, would carry Connecticut lumber, grain, and livestock, and then return with fruit, wine, rum, sugar, molasses, and manufactured goods from Europe. The peak of Leavenworth shipping was around 1800 but began to decline soon afterwards. This decline was due to the building of bridges across the Housatonic which blocked the passage of ships, the Embargo Act of 1808ⁱⁱ, the Nonintercourse Actⁱⁱⁱ, and the piracy associated with the War of 1812. With the capture of two of their ships by the French, the Leavenworth family was put out of business, and shipping continued in Huntington only in a greatly diminished fashion.

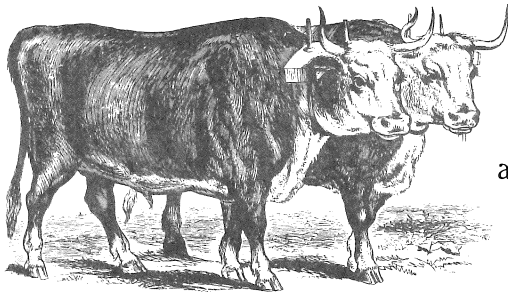
SLOOP & SCHOONER

Fox was a one masted sloop constructed in 1796. George and Jane was a two masted schooner constructed in 1798. These woodcuts are representative of those styles of ships.

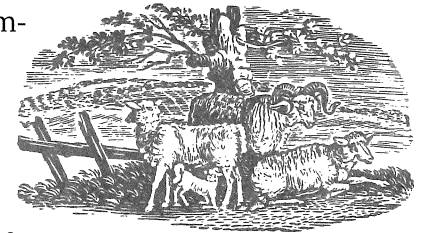
People's thoughts turned once more back to their fields, and by 1810 the free white population had only increased very slightly. The slave population was down to eleven, but the town of Huntington was still the third largest slaveholder in Fairfield County. By 1850 there were fifty “free colored” listed with the census, and the white population

was down to 1251. This drop in population is probably due in part to migration to western land. The population remains under or just over 1,500 people until 1880.^{iv} Population numbers were also affected by the separation of the original New Stratford parish from Huntington in 1823. The new town was named Monroe in honor of the fifth president, James Monroe.

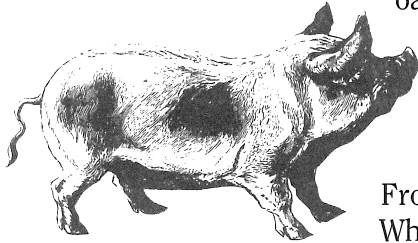




The census records of 1860 are especially compelling as they give us a very detailed image of the farms of Huntington. Of the 206 farms that reported to the census, the size of the average farm was fifty-three acres of improved land, and twenty-nine unimproved. Most farmers had a team of oxen and only one horse. The reason was that oxen were stronger and more dependable and loyal than horses, which were seen as too weak and expensive for the average



farmer. Horses were generally used to pull a buggy or carriage while oxen performed the bulk of heavy farm work. Most farmers also had at least two milch, or milk, cows and a couple of swine. Sheep were only moderately popular, although one farmer did have a flock of 112. Rye, oats, Indian corn, hay, and Irish potatoes were popular crops, with the latter three being used mostly as animal feed. Of the 206 farms, only eight didn't report the cash value of their orchard crops, which averaged nineteen dollars, a reasonable sum in those days.



From the 570 milch cows in the town, 67,850 pounds of butter were churned in 1860. While the equal of approximately two tractor trailer loads of butter may not seem like a large amount, it must be taken into consideration that all 67,850 pounds were collected and then churned by hand. All of this butter was not intended for local use and was sold or traded at local stores for manufactured goods and then shipped for sale to cities such as Bridgeport, New Haven, and New York. This production of farm goods specifically geared for sale in urban markets marks the beginning of a trend that would become especially apparent after the Civil War.

Facing competition from western grown grains and meats, New England farmers steadily turned to the production of perishable products for sale in the cities. These products included fruits, vegetables, milk, butter, eggs, and poultry. Huntington followed this trend, which also included the growth in scientific methods of farming.

ADVERTISEMENTS FROM THE MONTGOMERY WARD & CO. CATALOG

The advent of farm machinery such as seed sowers, corn shellers, and winnowing fans in the 1840's and the increasing use of chemical fertilizers in the 1860's were a reflection of

the farmer's acceptance of the improvements offered by science in the realm of agriculture. Another sign of this acceptance was the proliferation of agricultural societies and granges, which were especially popular and active in the last half of the 19th century.

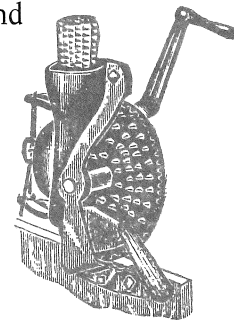
The Cyclone Hand Seeder.



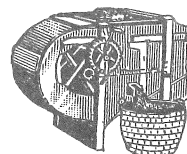
70365 This is somewhat simpler and cheaper made than the Granger, but works on the same general plan. It will sow with ease to the operator 60 acres of grain or grass seed per day. Has a shake feed, and sows perfectly accurate.
Weight, 4 lbs.
Price.....\$2.25

Societies such as the Huntington Agricultural Society hosted fairs which gave people a basis for comparison and a chance to display their best products. The Huntington Fair was held on fairgrounds near Mohegan and Booth Hill Roads for several days in September.

The fair gave cash prizes for the best grain, fruit, vegetables, flowers, handicrafts, and livestock. The yearly fair ran from 1846 until World War I.

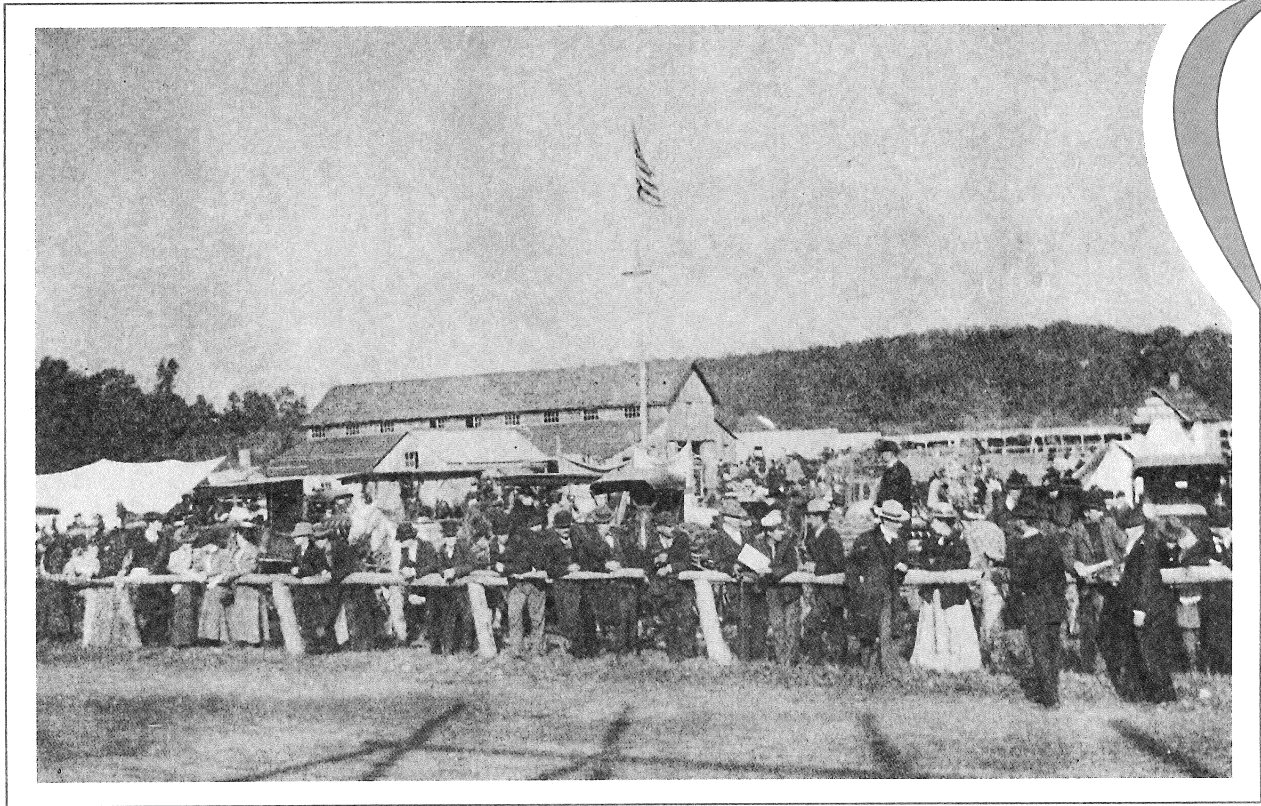


Fanning Mills.
Shipped K. D., First-class.



"Minnesota Chief" Fanning Mill shipped knocked down so as to secure a lower rate of freight; just as good a mill as there is made. Made by a well-known manufacturer; 1 wire wheat hurdle (3 sieves), wheat screen, wheat grader, corn and oat sieve and barley sieve.

Identically the same mill, No. 1 is sold by agricultural dealers for \$20.00 to \$25.00, which we sell for \$11.90.
70424 No. 1 Farm Mill, 120 lbs., sieves 24 in. wide, 60 to 90 bushels per hour.....\$11.90



Huntington Fair
c. 1910

Horse racing was one of the most popular events at the fair. Here people line the track and wait for their favorite trotter to pass by.

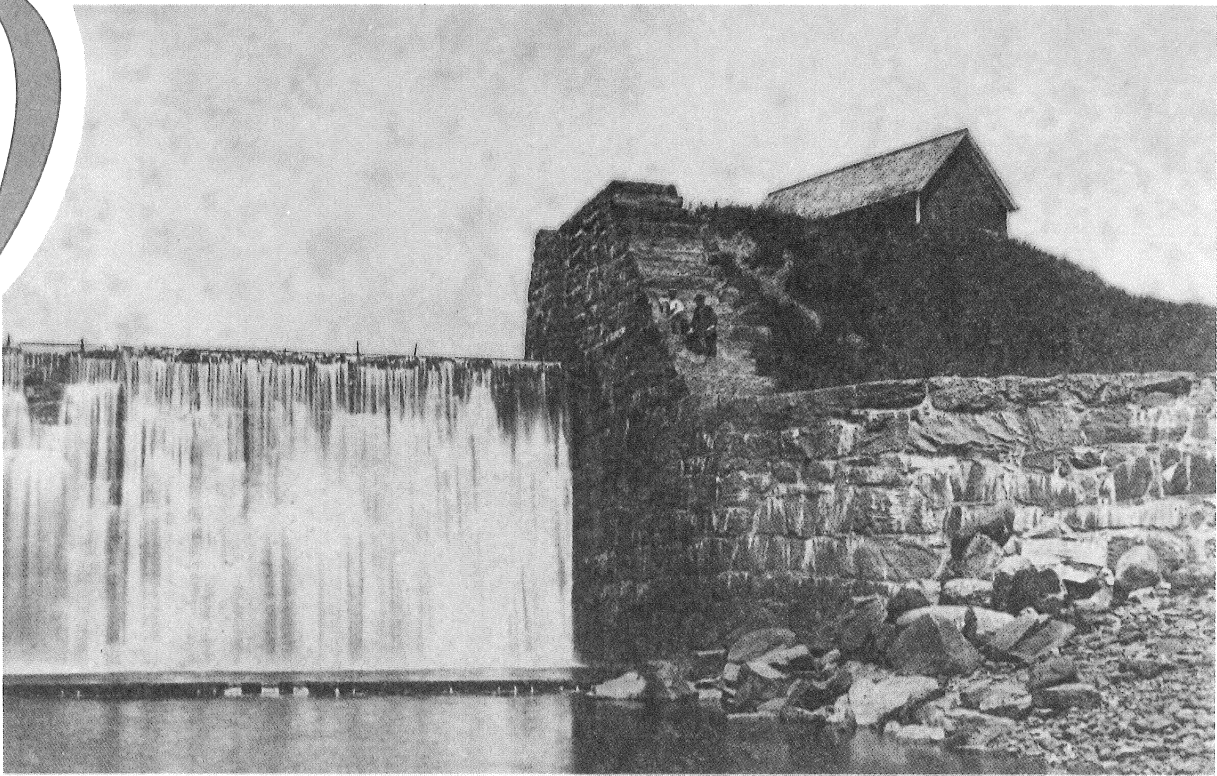
While branching off into new forms of agriculture, Huntington was also taking steps into that period that radically changed American life, the Industrial Revolution.

THE OUSATONIC WATER COMPANY

The Housatonic River, which serves as the eastern boundary of Shelton, is the third largest river in New England. It leads directly into the navigable tide water of Long Island Sound and from there to any port in the world. When these factors are taken into account, it only seems logical that people would attempt to harness the power of the river for the purposes of manufacturing.

The first proposal for a dam was put forward in 1838. Opposition swiftly arose from the shad fisheries further up the Housatonic. Shad, like salmon, migrate upriver to spawn. Beginning in April they entered the river from Long Island Sound and swam to the Massachusetts source of the Housatonic. There they laid their eggs and returned to the ocean in June. It was feared that if a high dam was built across the river that the shad would not be able to migrate and would move on to different waters. The project was abandoned due to the opposition of the shad fisheries and to the high cost of a canal to work with a low dam.

The Ousatonic Water Company was formed in 1863 for the purpose of building a dam and leasing its power to industries. Once again, the shad fisheries objected, but the water company overrode their objections with the promise that the shad would be able to use fish ladders like salmon and by utilizing the political power that the company's members held. The project was stalled by the Civil War and the problems involved with raising \$400,000

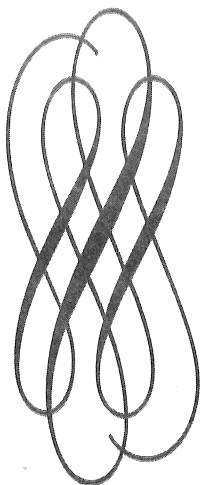


Dam
c. 1880

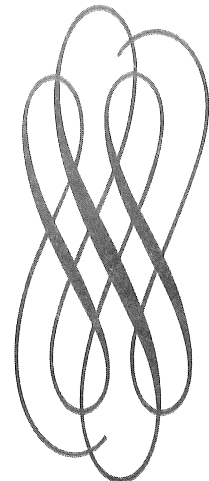
in capital. The money was raised eventually however, and the first stone was laid on July 17, 1867. The dam was repeatedly washed out by freshets^v throughout its construction. On October 4, 1869, one-quarter of the dam was wiped out within ten days of completion. The company persevered however, and the final capstone was laid on October 5, 1870.

The dam that was created was of solid masonry eight hundred feet long and twenty-two feet in height and created a reservoir five miles in length. The environmental results of the dam construction was the flooding of Housatonic Avenue, Spitfire and Buttonball Islands sank, and the shad did not climb the ladders that had been constructed for their use. They gradually moved onto more amiable waters and were totally gone from the Housatonic River by the beginning of the 20th century.

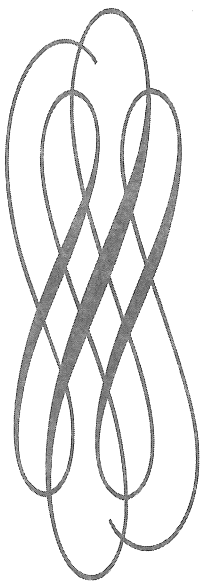
The formal dedication ceremony for the dam was held October 10, 1870, and present were Governor James E. English, Mayor Lewis of New Haven, and numerous other dignitaries and people. There were more than two hours of speeches interspersed with music from the Birmingham brass band. A special poem was composed in honor of the occasion by John W. Storrs:



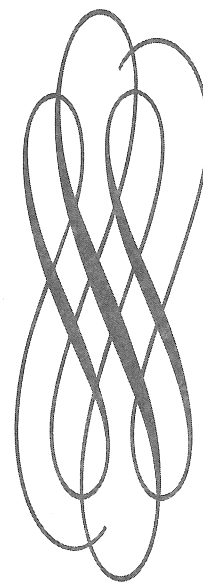
O fair and smiling stream that flows
So sweetly, grandly on,
Beneath the slanting, genial rays
Of mild October's sun;
We come to-day a festal throng,
To give thee joyous hail,
And crown thee in our speech and song
The monarch of the vale.



Upon thy fair and sunny slopes,
 Luxurious homes of ease
 Raise their proud forms, while wealth and art
 Join hand in hand to please.
 Around your rustic cottage door
 The laborer tills the soil,
 And finds in love-'tis all he asks-
 Sweet recompense for toil.



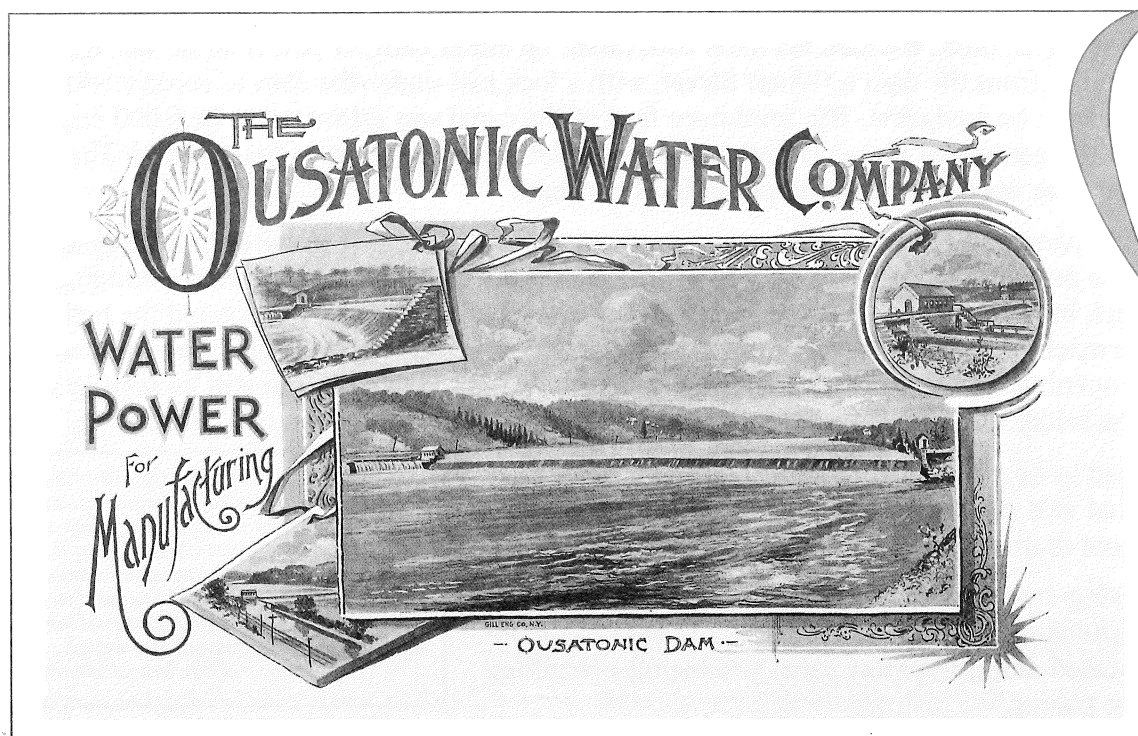
And hark! Along the winding shore
 An hundred giant mills,
 With hammer clack, and screaming gong,
 Re-echo to the hills,
 While forge and wheel and glowing steel
 Take up the glad refrain,
 And sing the song of toil redeemed
 From manacle and chain.



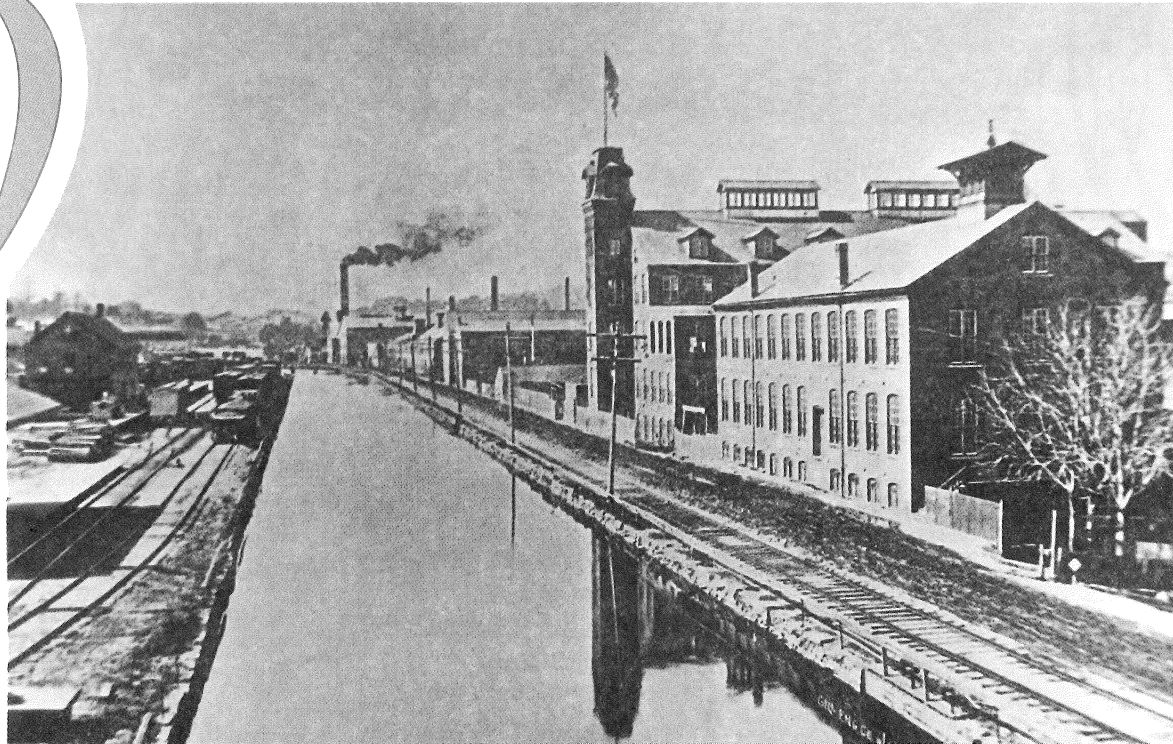
O generous men! heroes of peace
 Whose courage never failed,
 When timid hearts beat faint and low
 And croaking tongues assailed;
 This lesson let us learn from thee,
 That not life's sunny side
 Shall give us strength; that greatness comes
 From battling with the tide.^{vi}

The construction of the dam was heralded as a step into the future and into the industrial greatness found in Lowell, Massachusetts, and other growing cities. The water company set about aggressively promoting the surrounding area

1895



to industries. There were several reasons that made Huntington a desirable site for industry. The key one was its proximity to several major metropolitan areas, including New Haven, Bridgeport, and New York City. The area was connected by water and a rail depot in Derby. Located only two and a half hours away by train, it was possible for companies to have main offices in New York City and manufacturing plants along the Housatonic. A company man could travel from either point and back during a day's work and still make it home in time for dinner.



Canal View
c. 1910

The other advantage to manufacturing in the area was the canal which provided water power to any industry located alongside it. When built, the dam fed water into canals on either bank. On the Shelton side the canal ran approximately two miles from the dam to Wharf Street, with a lock just under the dam to comply with state regulations that any dam built be navigable. The minimum flow of the canal was estimated to be 5,000 cubic feet per second and provided the equivalent power of eighty tractor trailer trucks in a twelve hour period. The reservoir ensured that the water flow was steady and the power level constant.

The water company owned about 260 acres of land below the dam and leased sites to businesses. A factory would be built on the property and tap into the power provided by the canal. Water entered the buildings through a raceway, or tunnel, built under the road. Rushing into the wheel pit of the factory, it rotated the turbine which in turn powered the machinery of the factory through a series of shafts, pulleys, and belts. The water exited the building through an opening on the other side and re-entered the river. These exits can still be seen in the two buildings that flank the bridge over the Housatonic.

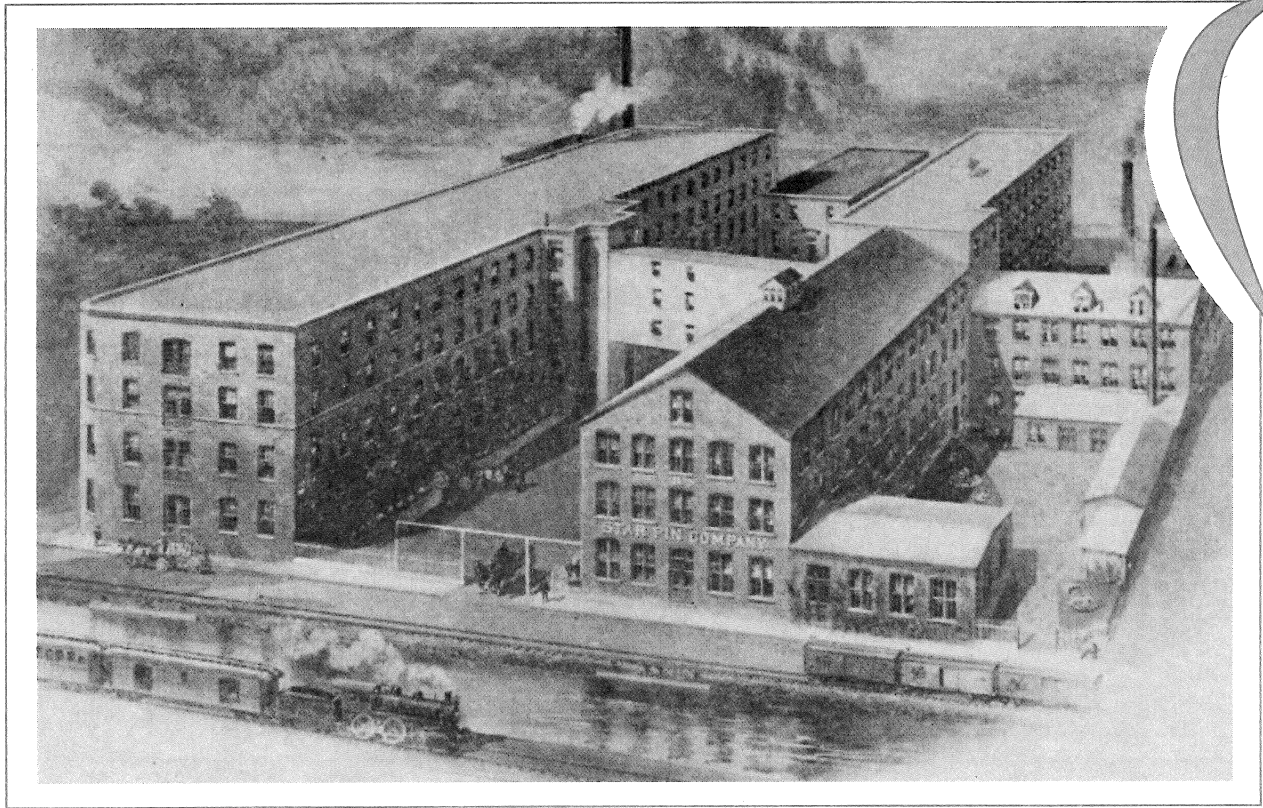
The water had to be stopped from entering the factories once a week so that eels could be removed from the turbines. The canal itself was drained yearly for cleaning.

The advertising methods of the Ousatonic Water Company were successful and by 1896 there were over twenty-five manufactures located along the west canal producing everything from "pins to pianos."

BATHING SUITS NECESSARY

Complaint has been received from the managers of the Birmingham Brass Co. that boys and young men have been in the practice of bathing in the canal near their factory without suitable clothing, making it very embarrassing for the numerous young lady employees of the company. The borough ordinance makes it a misdemeanor to bathe in any part of the canal or other water in the borough limits without having the body covered from the neck to the knees, and any found without such clothing may be arrested.

Reprint from the Ansonia Sentinel - June 28, 1898, Thursday



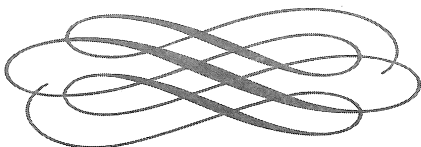
The Star Pin Company
1908

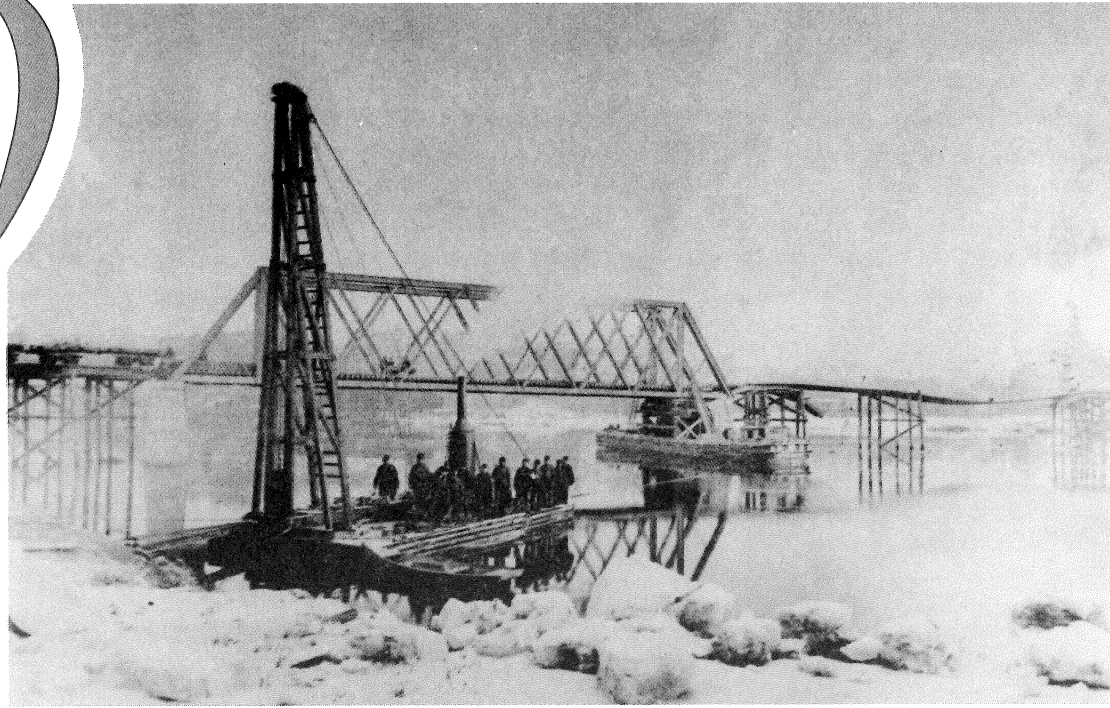
THE RAILROAD

the city were unimproved roads, the railroad stop in Derby, and barges that traveled the river. Travel overland was slow and costly. The railroad could only be reached by first transporting goods across the river to Derby, which could be difficult for large or heavy loads. Barges often got stuck in ice during the winter months and had to wait for the spring thaw to continue their journey.

To further development it was necessary to bring the railroad to Shelton. This happened in 1888. The rails crossed the river from Derby and entered Canal Street across from Center Street. It ran along the canal and continued towards Newtown and from there to the eastern rail hub in Maybrook, New York. It was necessary to lay a second track in 1911 due to the heavy volume of freight being moved along the rails.

The major attractions for industry to the area were a cheap source of power, a local labor force, and its proximity to New York City. In 1870, when the dam was completed, the three methods of transport to **Huntington Piano** c. 1901



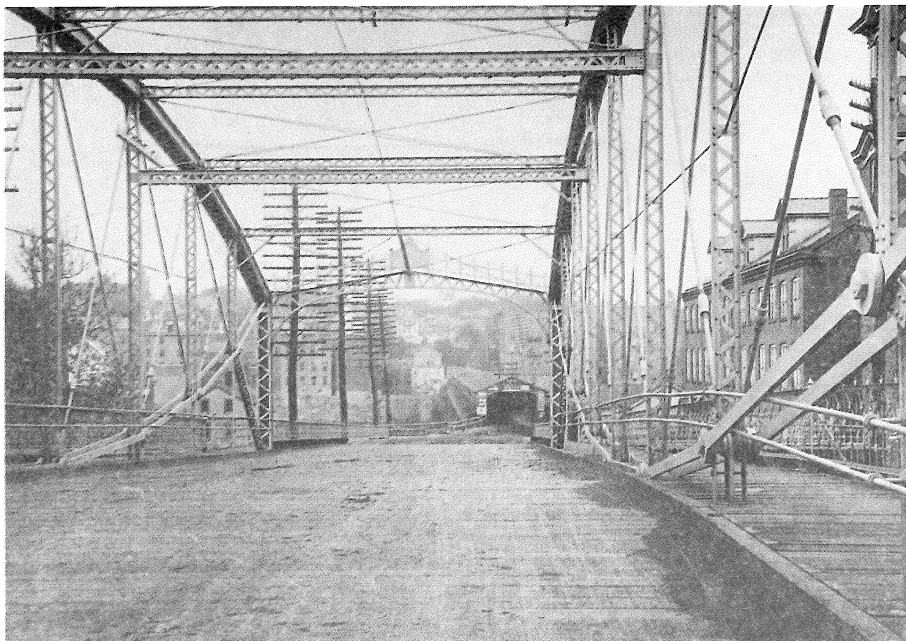


Building of the Railroad Bridge
Winter 1888

THE VIADUCT BRIDGE

rather distinctive and was a widely known aspect of downtown. The decision was made to replace it in 1973 with the concrete structure that is there today.

With the arrival of the railroad it became necessary to elevate Bridge Street over the railroad, canal, and Canal Street. This problem was solved by the construction of an iron bridge by the Berlin Iron Bridge Company in 1888. The viaduct bridge was



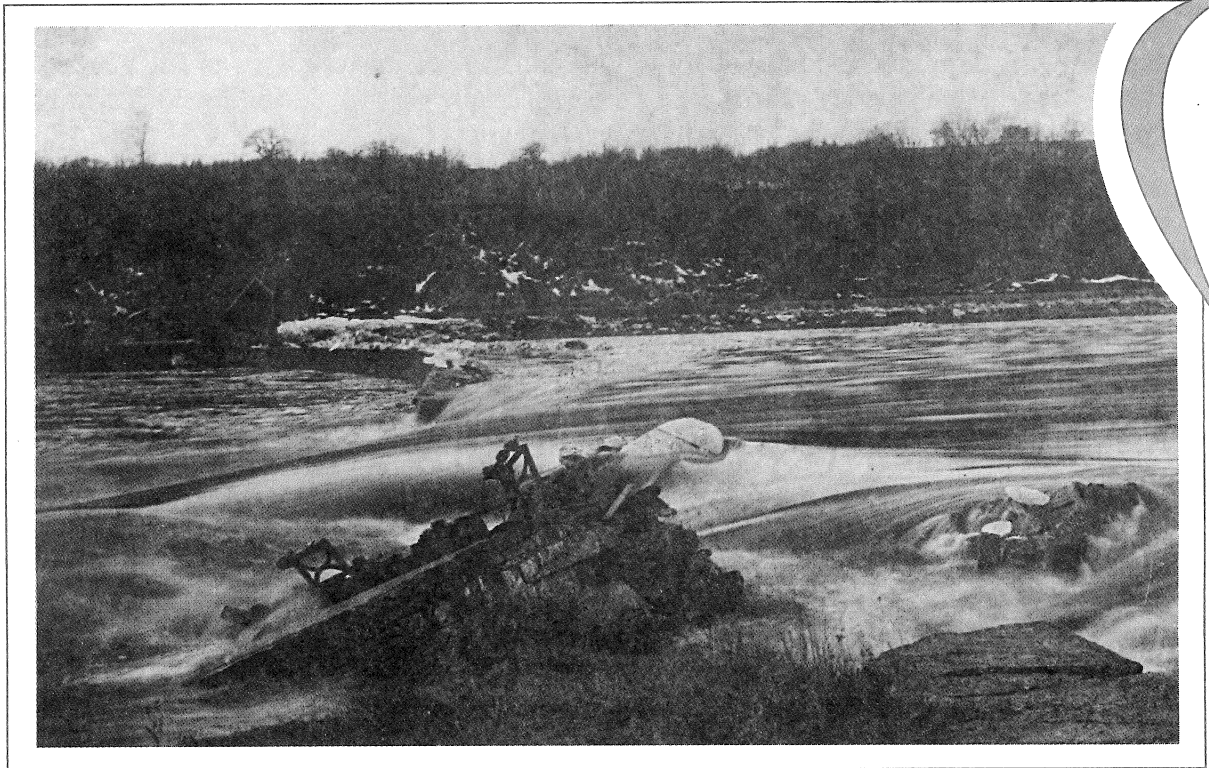
View of Viaduct Bridge from Shelton
c. 1890

This photograph was taken by someone standing in the middle of the viaduct bridge. The covered bridge that connected Derby and Shelton until 1891 can be clearly seen.

THE WASHOUT OF 1891

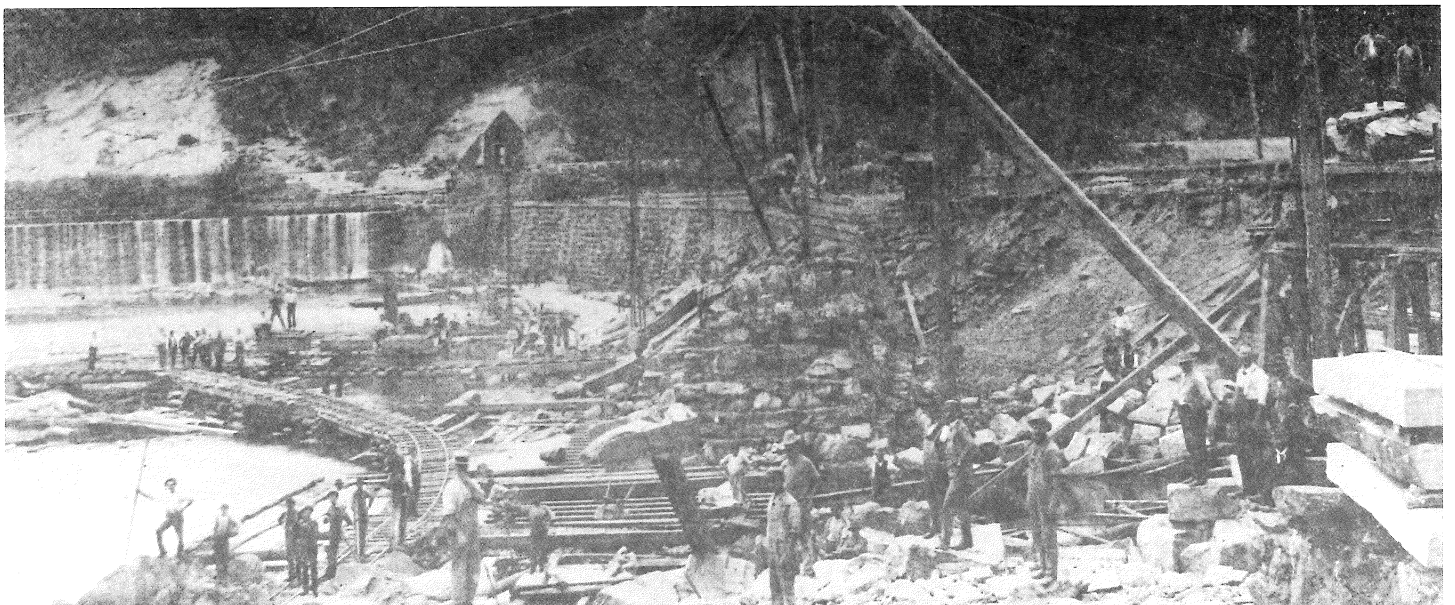
On January 21, 1891, the whistles in the factories blew, and the employees evacuated the buildings along the river. Shortly after, the dam washed out due to a backlog of ice and an overflow of water. The steep drop of

the dam also contributed to the undermining of the foundation. Reconstruction began in the spring and was completed by October. The present dam is a result of this construction which utilized a sloping apron, eliminating the cause of the washout.



Dam Washout
January 1891

Dam Under Reconstruction
July 1891



SHELTON INDUSTRIES

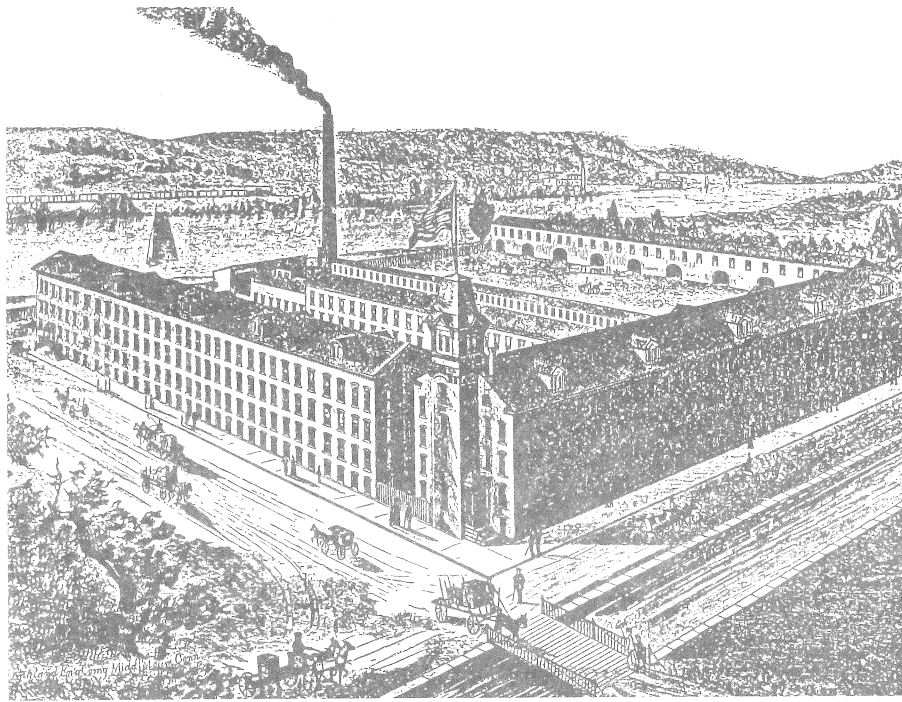
The pre-World War I period was the heyday of Shelton industry. Up and down the canal, industries turned out the consumer goods demanded by the nation. Pianos, brass beds, pins, novelty coconut ladles and spoons, corsets, knitted underwear, stockings, and

numerous other products were manufactured. Two examples of the companies along the canal are the Derby Silver Company and the Sidney Blumenthal Company, also known as the Shelton Looms.

The Derby Silver Company is one of the numerous businesses whose name proves to be confusing and illustrated the close ties between Derby and Shelton. The main offices of the company were in the Birmingham section of Derby while the factory was in Shelton. The building still stands on the left side where one enters Shelton from Derby over the bridge crossing the Housatonic River.

While the company began production in the flatware line and dabbled in sterling silver and pewter, it became best known for its silverplated hollowware. These pieces were especially popular during the Victorian period and were within the price range of many middle class families.

The company merged with several other silver and silverplate manufacturers in 1898 to form the International Silver Company. The Shelton factory became known as "Factory B" and continued production until 1933 when it was consolidated with other plants in Meriden as a result of the Great Depression.



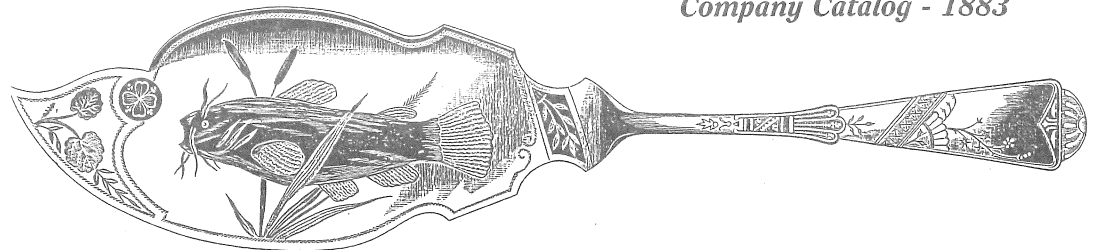
*The Derby Silver Company
from the "Souvenir History of Derby
and Shelton" 1896*

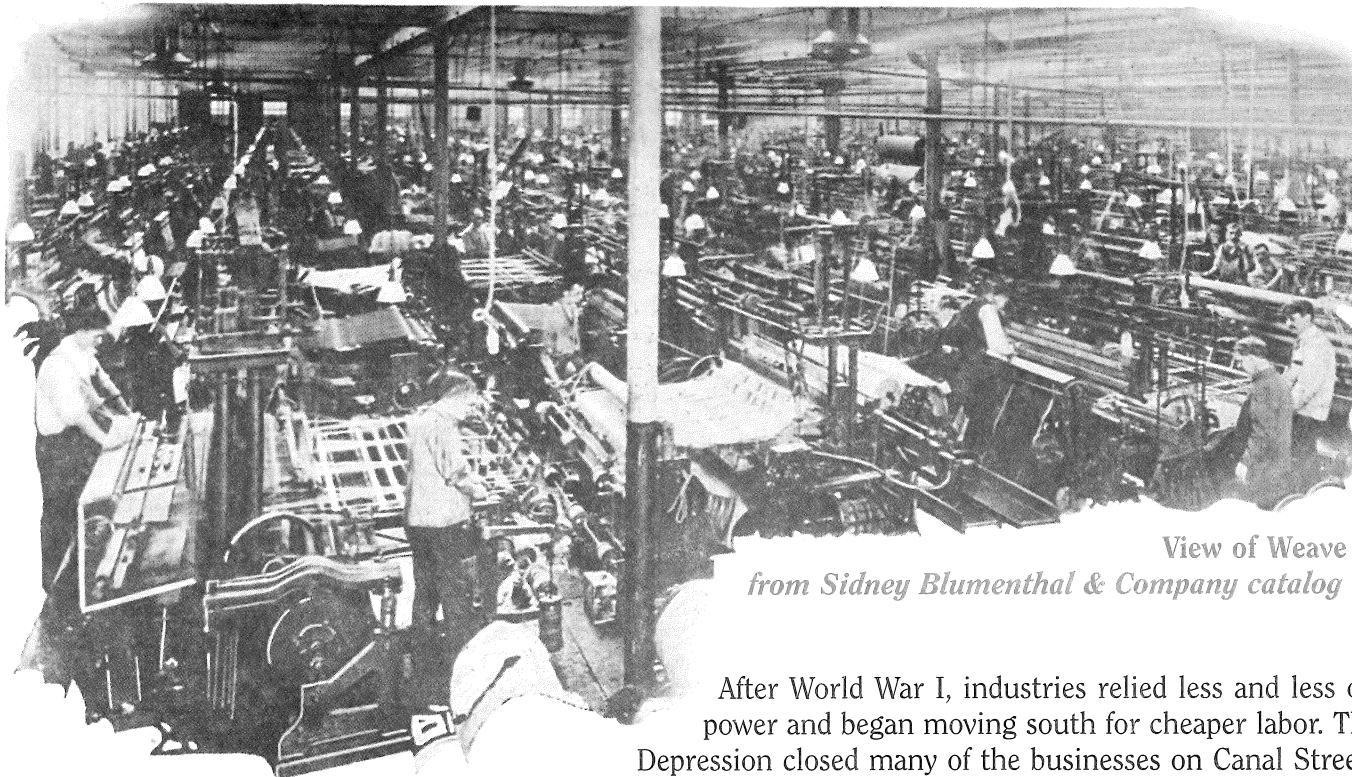
The Sidney Blumenthal Company began in New York City in the late 1880's under the name I. & A. Blumenthal as a producer of silk ribbon. The company moved into the manufacture of pile fabrics, such as velvet, as a sideline that eventually took over production. Moving to Shelton in 1897 for more room, the company became a leader in the velvet manufacturing field, with

such trademarked velvets as "Velour du Nord", "Recontre", "Omeomi", and "Blumenthal plush" for the millinery trade. The company not only was on the cutting edge of trends but also, as in the case of "Blumenthal plush", created the demand for its products through promotions and dynamic salesmanship.

The company branched off into such lines as fake furs, car rugs, bath mats, and various types of upholstery. Demand dictated production for Blumenthal, and eventually economics dictated its move South in the early 1950's and its absorption into Burlington Mills.

*Fish Knife, Harvard pattern
from the Derby Silver
Company Catalog - 1883*





View of Weave Room
from Sidney Blumenthal & Company catalog - 1923

After World War I, industries relied less and less on water power and began moving south for cheaper labor. The Great Depression closed many of the businesses on Canal Street. While some recovery was provided by the war industry of World War II, it wasn't enough to keep major manufacturing in downtown Shelton.

The canal south of Bridge Street was covered in 1947 to make room for buildings and parking. By this time most of the industries along the canal had ceased to use water power and turned to electricity. Although no longer used for power, the canal still serves a purpose to this day. Two companies alongside it, Chromium Process and Spongex, use water from the canal for manufacturing purposes.

DOWNTOWN LIFE

quickly grew into a borough, and there was much debate as to what the name of the borough should be. Suggestions such as "Ousatonia" and "West Birmingham" were forwarded, but eventually the area was named in honor of Edward N. Shelton.

Mr. Shelton was one of the founders of the Shelton Company, the first business to machine produce tacks in the United States. The Shelton Company was formed under the name Sanford & Shelton in 1836 in Derby. Edward Shelton bought out his partner in 1854, changed the company's name, and relocated it to Shelton in 1871. The

With the damming of the Housatonic River in 1870, the downtown area began to boom. Immigration to the area increased as jobs became plentiful. People came from the farms in Huntington and the surrounding area and in waves from Germany, Ireland, Italy, and the Slavic nations. The downtown area

company continued producing tacks, nails, and other fasteners until it closed in 1936. Along with his manufacturing interests Mr. Shelton was also one of the main proponents of the dam and helped found the Ousatonic Water Company. He also served on the boards of numerous banks and was heavily involved in the Derby-Shelton Board of Trade which helped to promote the area and further its development.

E. DE F. SHELTON, Pres. and Treas.

BENJAMIN HOBART, Sec'y and Asst. Treas.

ESTABLISHED 1836.

SHELTON COMPANY,

Manufacturers of

TACKS, BOLTS, Etc.

DERBY AND SHELTON, CONN.

Shelton Company advertisement
City Directory, 1898

THE NEW CENTURY

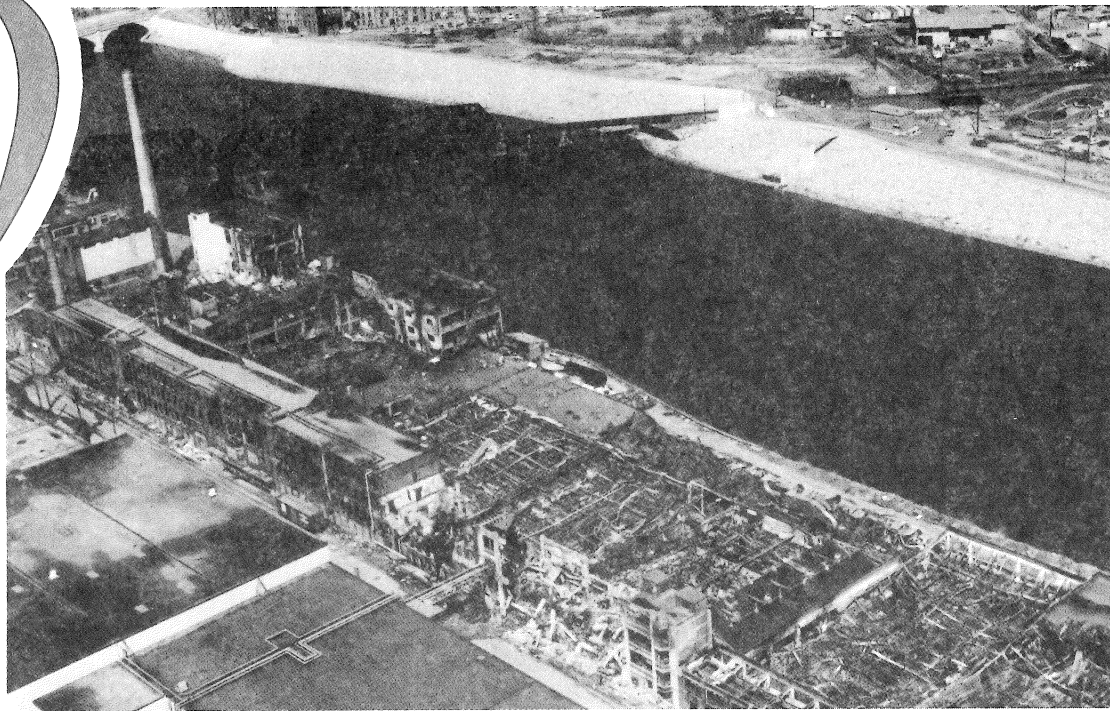
Shelton became the accepted name of the Huntington borough in the 1870's and by 1882 was its legal name. By 1919 the City of Shelton was officially established, and the town of Huntington was incorporated within it by popular vote.

With the arrival of the trolley line to Shelton in 1899, the borough became even more accessible. People would live and work in Shelton, shop in Derby, and on holidays go by trolley to such places as Pine Rock Park in Shelton, Parlor Rock Park in Trumbull, or Savin Rock Park in West Haven.

The farmers in Huntington were still making a living off the land but found a profitable sideline by taking in summer boarders. People fled the city and spent the summer in private homes enjoying the fresh, country air. Many of these summer boarders became rather attached to the area and purchased homes here. This was the beginning of the area's movement into being a residential community for people who worked as far away as New York City.

As Shelton moved further into the 20th century, two different forms of life continued in the city. Near the river, life was dominated by the industries lining the Housatonic. People worked, lived, and shopped in the downtown area. Away from the river, the farming tradition continued in producing goods for sale in nearby urban areas.

Industry in downtown Shelton was dealt a severe blow on March 1, 1975. The Sponge Rubber Factory, which had taken over many of the Shelton Looms buildings, was deliberately burned by its owners for insurance money. Hundreds of people in the area were out of work and had to seek employment elsewhere.



Sponge Rubber Factory
March 2, 1975

Over 350 firefighters from 15 towns were needed to douse the flames in the Sponge Rubber complex. It took more than 8 hours to bring the fire under control. One major problem in fighting the fire was the ice that formed over everything on the chilly night. Ladders on the aerial trucks became especially dangerous.

As often happens, when one door closes another swings wide. The opening of Route 8 in 1975, after many years of construction, connected Shelton with Bridgeport and Winsted. This made it possible for people who worked in cities such as Bridgeport, Stamford, Waterbury, and New York to live in Shelton. As a result this area has built up in recent years into a residential community where people live and raise their children while working in other cities.

Residential and corporate development of the area and the economic boom of the 1980's threatened the rural character of Shelton that had attracted many of its residents. Bridgeport Hydraulic Company, the largest landholder in the city in the early 1990's began to talk of selling property for development. This threat forced the open space issue, and in 1992 an open space plan was adopted by the city. Since then, acres of land have been set aside in public trust to remain undeveloped.

THE NEXT MILLENNIUM

and over 36,000 people. While many of the city's residents work outside its boundaries, there are a growing number of corporate offices and light industries relocating here. The farming tradition of the settlers continues with local farms focusing on dairy products, poultry, orchards, sweet corn, Christmas tree farms, and "pick your own" fields of strawberries, blueberries, and pumpkins.

The turn of the millennium sees a Shelton much different from that of a thousand years ago. Instead of a Native American settlement of farmers, hunters, and gatherers, there is now a vibrant city of 31.4 square miles of land



**Phil Jones at
Jones Family Farms
1985**

The Jones Family Farms is a 400 acre site that is being worked by the fourth, fifth, and sixth generations of the Jones family, continuing the family tradition of farming in this area.

Shelton is a microcosm of many of the major events in American history. From the Native American village of Pootatuck, to the Puritan parish of Ripton, to the farming community of Huntington, to the industrial borough of Shelton, to the present day city of Shelton, it has all happened here. The scope of United State history can be better understood by examining the history of a city such as Shelton.



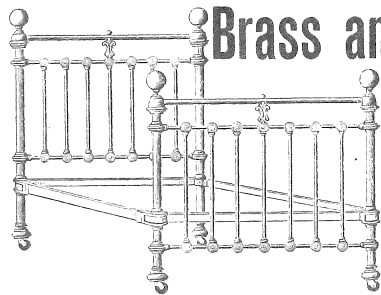
SHELTON INDUSTRIES

The heyday of Shelton Industry was before World War One. Below is a select list of some of the industries that once produced goods in this area.

Adams Manufacturing Company Inc. (1827 - ?)
Produced fabrics for the millinery trade.

PIONEER WORKS.
The Whitcomb Metallic Bedstead Co.

Manufacturers of



Brass and Iron

Bedsteads.

Spring Mattresses, &c.

POST ADDRESS, DERBY

Factory, Shelton, Ct.

WAREROOMS, } (NEW YORK, 874 BROADWAY.
BOSTON, 78-80 WASHINGTON STREET.
PHILADELPHIA, 1023 FILBERT STREET.

Griffin Button Company (1846 - ?)

Company founded in Botsford but moved to Shelton in 1890. Produced buttons out of horn. Received supplies from slaughterhouses, especially those in Chicago. The Griffin family donated money to build Griffin Hospital, Derby.

Huntington Piano Company (1894 - 1922)

A subsidiary of the Sterling Piano Company, Derby. Was created out of the need for a more affordable piano. Moved to Shelton around 1897. Building burned in 1922 and forced the company to close. Building later became the Boys and Girls Club, which burned to the ground in 19??.

MAX LOEWENTHAL. T. S. BASSETT.
U. S. RUBBER RECLAIMING WORKS,
Manufacturers of
RECLAIMED RUBBER,
POWDERED, DEVULCANIZED and SHEETED.
GRAHAM BDG., 127 DUANE ST., NEW YORK.
WORKS, CANAL STREET, SHELTON, CT.

Company was responsible for production from the raw cotton to the finished product. The Shelton factory at 185 Canal Street was the finishing factory. Other plants were in North Scituate, RI and Putnam, CT.

Birmingham Corset Company (1870 - ?)

Also known as J.W. Birdseye & Co. Producer of the "Tricora" corset. In 1896 the daily capacity of the factory was 150 dozen corsets a day with 200-250 employees. Also was involved in the piecework system that had people, mostly women and young children, complete work at home. Moved to Bridgeport in 1898.

THE BIRMINGHAM BRASS CO.,
Manufacturers of
Brass and German Silver

In Sheets, Rods, Tube and Wire. Suspender Buckles, Lamp Burners,
Brass Safety Chain, Jack Chain. Metal Trimmings
and Specialties.

Factory, Wire and Rolling Mills, CANAL ST., SHELTON, CONN.

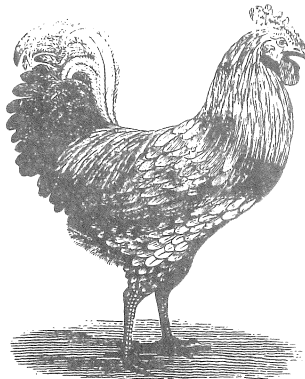
Maltby & Stevens Silverplating Company (? - 1882)
Produced dippers from coconut shells with silver-plated handles. Also made spoons and other coconut novelties. Factory destroyed by a boiler explosion in 1882.

Radcliffe Brothers (1871 - c. 1920)
Producer of woolen hosiery and underware. Building is now Conti Associates on Howe Avenue. The painted Radcliffe Brothers sign is still visible on the river side of the building.

Whitlock Machine Company (1888 - 1936)
Printing machinery manufacturer. Printed U.S. currency in the 1920's and stamped postal cards until the factory closed. A paper shearer they manufactured in 1890 is still in use at a book bindery as of January 1998.

The Silver Plate Cutlery Co.,
Manufacturers of
Finest Quality Plain and Fancy Silver Plated
FORGED TABLE CUTLERY
Carvers, Knives, Forks, Pix and Crax, Silver Plating,
Nickel Plating, and Fancy Etching.
Works at Shelton, Conn.

A paper mill and pulp works. When the original building burned on November 4, 1878 the factory was rebuilt in brick with a sprinkler system, quite an innovation for the time.



S. N. E. Telephone No. 8.
THE DERBY PAPER MILLS CO.,
MANUFACTURERS OF IMITATION ENGLISH
HARDWARE PAPER,
TAG AND SUPERFINE MANILLAS.
TINTED AND BLACK BRISTOL BOARD AND COVER PAPER
CANAL STREET, SHELTON, CONN., U. S. A.

FREDERICK MEYER,
IRON FOUNDRY
Small Castings a Specialty.
Wooster Street, near the Railroad, - Shelton, Conn.

Wilcox & Howe Company (1870 - c. 1935)
Produced bicycle forgings and carriage hardware.

Wilkinson Brothers & Company
(1871 - c. 1906)

THE NATIONAL FOLDING BOX AND PAPER CO.
MANUFACTURERS OF ALL KINDS OF
FOLDING PAPER BOXES,
PRINTED WRAPPING PAPER, BAGS, ETC.
Main Office, 319 to 325 Congress Avenue, New Haven, Conn.
Factory No. 1, Canal Street, SHELTON, CONN.
N. Y. OFFICE, 132 FRANKLIN STREET.

Endnotes

- i The original document is in the manuscript collection of the Shelton Historical Society.
- ii The Embargo Act outlawed trade with warring countries. It grew out of British and French harassment of neutral American shipping during the Napoleonic Wars. It was extremely unpopular and was repealed in 1809.
- iii The Nonintercourse Act replaced the Embargo Act and prohibited trade with only England and France.
- iv Population numbers available from the U.S. Census: total population for Huntington, 1800 - 2792; 1810 - 2770; 1820, 1830, 1840 statistics not available; 1850 - 1301; 1860 - 1477; 1870 - 1527; 1880 - 4006; 1890 - 5572.
- v A freshet is a sudden overflowing due to melting snow or heavy rain.
- vi The entire text of the poem is available in The History of the Old Town of Derby, by Samuel Orcutt, page 397-399.

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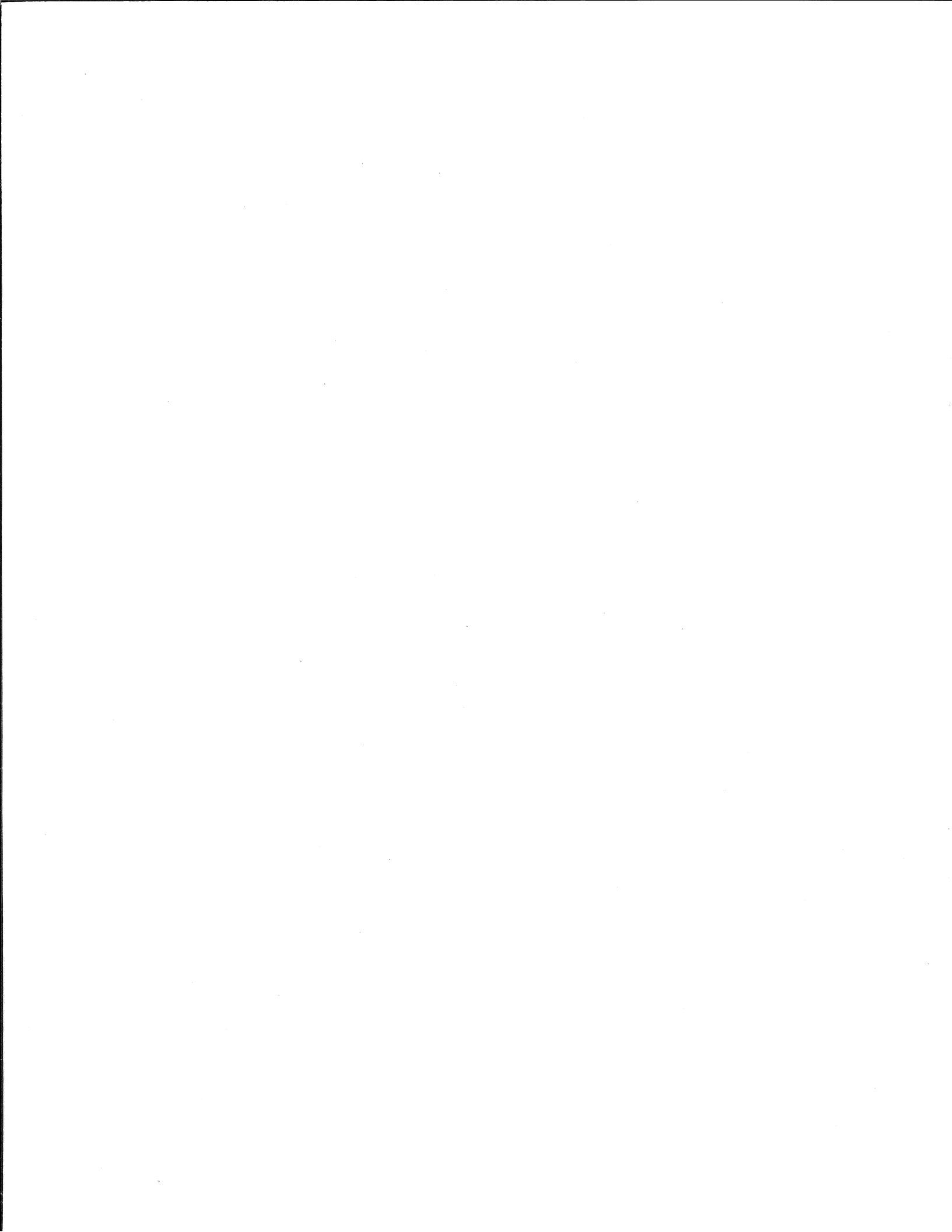
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c. Shelton Historical Society
1998