

History of Massachusetts Industries
Their Inception, Growth and Success
By Orra L. Stone
S.J. Clarke Publishing Co.
4 volumes, 1930.
pages 279-292 (without illustrations)

NORTH ATTLEBORO – CENTER OF JEWELRY PRODUCTION

Oldest among the present-day concerns of North Attleboro is D. Evans & Company, Inc., established in 1805, and with an uninterrupted industrial life of 125 years. Mr. Evans did not become identified with the concern until 1848 and during the Civil War uncounted millions of governmental buttons were made for the United States Government. In 1916, after operating at the Falls for 111 years, the concern removed its plant to the Sommers Building and in 1913 the company was reorganized and today its products are buttons and jewelry. James A. Lavery is president and Clyde R. Barnhill, treasurer and secretary.

In 1830 the Price shop was built on Mount Hope Street, in what is now North Attleboro. It stands opposite the old Price residence, where lived George Price, who, with Calvin Richards, composed the firm which continued in business for twenty-six years.

Fourteen years later, when the concern was known as Ira Richards & Co., steam power was first introduced, this being the initial installation of a steam engine in that section of the state.

While three water power plants furnished power for such manufacturing units as were located adjacent to the water courses, all others were run by horse power. The local introduction of the steam engine was the signal for all sorts of dire predictions on the part of the populace, and later when the Whiting Company erected its big chimney people came from miles around, confidently expecting it to fall as it was being reared.

S. A. Witherell, engaged in the manufacture of gold jewelry in North Attleboro in 1846, in conjunction with a partner. The latter retired two and a half years later and in 1849 Mr. Witherell purchased and rebuilt the factory he was then occupying and at times employed 125 hands.

THE H. F. BARROWS COMPANY

In 1851, H. F. Barrows, who had previously been employed in the establishment of Ira Richards & Company, of Attleboro, engaged in the manufacture of gold jewelry, in North Attleboro. Associated with him were L. A. Barrows and E. S. Richards, the latter having been manager of the H. M. Richards & Company factory in Attleboro. They employed about 100 hands.

In 1854, James H. Sturdy entered the firm and for three years it was known as Barrows & Sturdy. One of the early companies to engage in rolled plate production, it was the first local unit to institute the semimonthly payment of its employees, prior to the adoption of the weekly payment policy.

In 1856, the firm was known as H. F. Barrows & Co., when the senior Mr. Barrows' sons, H. F., Jr., and Ira, entered business with him. Today, the H. F. Barrows Co. employs seventy-five hands, is capitalized for \$150,000 and manufactures rolled gold chains. Donald A. Barrows is president and Florence D. Barrows, treasurer.

In 1855, H. D. Merritt began business in North Attleboro with J. B. Draper, as Merritt & Draper, and after the death of Mr. Merritt, in 1893, the concern, which had been known as the O. M. Draper Corporation since 1861, when Oscar M. Draper entered it, passed into the hands of W. W. Sherman, L. A. Morse, and Donald Le Stage. In its early days the products included rolled plate, fine gilt and nickel chains, and the concern has been closely identified with the chain manufacturing industry. Today it manufactures staple and exclusive gold-filled patterns, and the company is capitalized for \$95,000, and employs 100 operatives. Donald Le Stage is president and treasurer, H. E. Hull, vice president, and F. L. Jones, secretary.

In 1857 V. H. Blackinton began manufacturing a line of jet jewelry in a converted schoolhouse he purchased, at Attleboro Falls, and when it was destroyed two years later he rebuilt and extended his line of production, the present-day unit, known as V. H. Blackinton & Company, being one of the largest concerns in the country engaged in manufacturing society, military metal goods, badges and souvenirs.

Its products are sold throughout the United States and Canada, and the company has executed many large United States Government contracts. H. S. and E. R. Wilmarth constitute the present-day partnership, which employs upwards of seventy-five men and women.

THE BUGBEE & NILES COMPANY

One of the oldest manufacturing jewelry concerns in North Attleboro is the Bugbee & Niles Company, established in 1859, under the partnership title of Smith & Ginnodo, subsequently becoming C. E. Smith & Company, and still later Bugbee & Niles Company, when Samuel H. Bugbee and Gardner H. Niles entered the business, the firm name remaining unchanged to the present. A New York office has been maintained by the company for fifty years.

For upwards of fifteen years the Bugbee & Niles Company was owned and managed by Alpin Chisholm, under whose direction the concern experienced many successful years in the manufacture of high grade gold jewelry. Toward the close of his management the concern successfully entered into the manufacture of high grade watch accessories, and these lines — gold plate, solid gold, and platinum — constitute a large part product at present.

The business was incorporated as the Bugbee & Niles Company many years ago, and the present management continued Mr. Chisholm's policies of employee life insurance and a Christmas bonus, and has added the practice of a vacation with full pay to all persons who have been employed by the concern for a year or more. The plant has run at capacity on full time for several years past.

Under the present management the company's product has been broadened to include all that is latest and most fashionable in wrist-watch bracelets, originating the fourfold balanced mesh type, the expanded block type, exclusive buckle types with ribbon or leather, on all of which it holds basic patents.

The company enjoys a world wide reputation, its products going to Canada, Cuba, South America, Barbadoes, Europe, and even to far off India. It employs from 80 to 100 hands and is capitalized for \$100,000. I. G. Chisholm is president and H. A. Gardner treasurer and secretary.

The William Coupe Company, Limited, was established in 1865, being the oldest tannery in that section of Bristol County.

R. BLACKINTON & COMPANY

The firm of R. Blackinton & Company was established in 1862, when Roswell Blackinton, Walter Ballou, and Thomas Mann formed a copartnership. The concern originally manufactured book clasps, and during the Civil War made clasps for Bibles used by the soldiers. Mr. Mann retired in 1867, and the firm continued without further change until the death of Mr. Blackinton, in 1906. The Ballou and Blackinton families still continue the management of the business, the partnership being made up of W. B. and H. M. Ballou, J. R. Blackinton, F. S. Ross, and H. R. Morss, and the estate of J. R. Morss.

During the early years a general line of gold-plated chains and jewelry was manufactured, and for a long period the output was almost exclusively of sterling silver. During the past fifteen years a line of 14-karat gold novelties has been developed and upwards of 100 hands are employed.

REPRESENTATIVE CONCERNS TODAY THAT WERE ESTABLISHED IN THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES

In 1864, E. S. Richards & Company began business in North Attleboro, later becoming J. J. and J. M. Richards.

J. F. Sturdy's Sons Company was established in 1865 by the late John F. Sturdy. For many years the firm was noted for its chains, but in recent years, the bracelet has displaced chains in the importance of the company's production. The corporation has capital of \$300,000 and employs 200 operatives, H. K. Sturdy being president, H. K. Sturdy, Jr., vice president, and F. E. Sturdy, Jr., treasurer.

The Sturtevant-Whiting Company was founded in 1867 under the firm name of S. B. Fisher & Company. In 1897 the firm of Sturtevant, Whiting & Bigelow succeeded the Fisher Company. In 1906 Mr. Bigelow retired and seven years later Edwin Sturtevant left the concern, Fred B. Brigham, and Louis Kurtz becoming associated with George A. Whiting, under the firm name of Sturtevant-Whiting Co. Upon the death of Mr. Whiting and the withdrawal of Mr. Brigham, George E. White became associated with Louis Kurtz in the conduct of the business. Mr. White is now president and Donald Le Stage is treasurer of the corporation, which has \$40,000 capital and employs thirty operatives in the manufacture of plated jewelry, specializing in the production of costume jewelry.

The firm of E. I. Franklin & Company was established in 1874, by E. I. Franklin and C. W. Fisher. The present members of the partnership are W. G. Franklin, son of the founder, C. W. Fisher, and E. B. Fisher. The company's goods are marketed throughout this country and Canada, and it employs 125 workers in the manufacture of gold filled and silver jewelry.

In 1871 C. E. Sandland & Son began an enameling business in North Attleboro, the firm being bought, in 1890, by J. E. Draper & Co., which had been established, in 1883, to manufacture jewelry and novelties.

The W. N. Fisher Company commenced business in 1877 under the firm name of W. D. Fisher & Company. After the death of W. D. Fisher the business was continued by his son, under the name of W. N. Fisher & Company. In 1912 the firm was incorporated, under its present name, and is engaged in producing a full line of springs, swivels, and spring rings in rolled plate, sterling silver, and gold. The company has capital of \$25,000,

and employs fifty men and women at its Attleboro Falls plant. George F. McIntire is president, and W. P. McAlpine, treasurer.

Frank M. Whiting & Company, silversmiths, began business in North Attleboro, in 1878, the concern being owned by Frank M. Whiting at that time. It was the direct outgrowth of the Whiting Manufacturing Company, which was founded in the town by William D. Whiting in 1840. It has always manufactured a general line of table and hollow ware, confining itself to sterling silver at all times. The business was incorporated in 1897 and has capital of \$150,000, F. L. Whiting being president, and F. A. Howard, treasurer.

In 1879 the late John P. Bonnett established the electroplating and jewelry coloring plant now operated by Oscar Hillman.

NORTH ATTLEBORO CONCERNS FORMED IN THE EIGHTIES AND NINETIES

Cheever, Tweedy & Company commenced business in 1880, under the name of G. W. Cheever & Company, engaging at that time in the manufacture of a line of fine gilt chains, which was subsequently discontinued and supplanted by rolled plate jewelry. With the entrance of John E. Tweedy into the business the firm name was changed to Cheever, Tweedy & Company. Mr. Cheever retired from the firm several years ago and John E. Tweedy is the sole proprietor, employing upwards of fifty hands.

In 1882 G. Herbert French and W. H. Riley established the firm of Riley & French to engage in the manufacture of jewelry, and in 1916 the present G. H. French Company was formed when Mr. French retired. Alton H. Riley is now the sole proprietor, and employs fifty operatives in the manufacture of gold, silver and plate jewelry.

W. H. Bell & Company was established in 1890 and began operations in the old Braid Mill Building, a structure which in years past has housed some of the famous North Attleboro jewelry makers of the present day. Twenty-four years ago Mr. Bell moved his business to its present location in

Robinsonville. This firm manufactures a complete line of ladies' and gents' gold filled chains and bracelets, and carries on an extensive export business. William H. Bell is the sole owner, and employs forty or more hands.

In 1891, J. F. and C. O. Mason began the manufacture of paper boxes in a small building in the rear of their home, under the name of Mason Box Co. A few girls were employed in this small shop to make boxes for the local jewelry trade. It was in these modest surroundings that the owners adopted their present business policies, and under which a successful enterprise has been developed.

The small shop has grown to two modern factories, one containing 65,000 square feet of manufacturing space, and the other having an area of 50,000 square feet, both being equipped with the latest machinery, much of it designed by the concern and in addition to a complete line of boxes of all kinds, and display cases, the concern operates a leather novelty department, a complete printing plant, and a steel die printing department. Two years after the death of Charles O. Mason in 1911, the business was incorporated. The company specializes in containers for mail shipments, these commodities being distributed by it in every section of the United States, as well as in foreign countries.

In the main factory, at North Attleboro, which is managed by Mr. Rhodes, about 300 operatives are employed, while at the branch plant, in Providence, R. I., 125 hands are carried on the roll. This plant is managed by Arthur A. Weller. The New York office is located in the Flatiron Building, at 175 Fifth Avenue, and branch offices are operated in eleven of the larger cities of the country. The Mason Box Co. is well and favorably known as one of the foremost American concerns in its field of production. J. Frank Mason is president and treasurer, Ellen L. Mason, vice president, and Russell I. Rhodes, secretary, of the \$125,000 corporation.

J. H. Peckham & Company, Inc., originators of fine pierced filled jewelry was established by John H. Peckham in 1893. Mr. Peckham and his two sons, Charles S. and William B., are now associated in the business, the firm being engaged in the manufacture of brooches, bar-pins, pendants and

bracelets. It employs upwards of sixty operatives. William B. Peckham is president, Charles S. Peckham, treasurer and John H. Peckham, secretary.

In May, 1893, the H. W. Tufts Tool Company was established, and during the World War furnished the government a vast amount of supplies.

In 1897, the firm now known as Paye and Baker Manufacturing Company started business in Providence, R. I., as Simmons & Paye. Mr. Simmons withdrew in 1900, and when Mr. Baker entered the firm, the present name was adopted. In 1903 the company moved from Providence to North Attleboro and in 1905 it was incorporated. Upon the death of both partners within a relatively short period, the business passed into the hands of Messrs. J. Noble Shawe, Allan A. Gordon, William H. Ryder, Ambrose J. Morawski and Harry E. Paye, and is now operated by this group. Mr. Gordon is president, Mr. Paye vice president, Mr. Morawski secretary, Mr. Shawe treasurer, and Mr. Ryder assistant treasurer of this \$80,000 corporation, which employs seventy-five operatives. The concern manufactures a line of sterling silver and silver-plate novelties, as well as a full line of hollow ware.

G. C. Hudson & Company, manufacturing jewelers, began business in 1899, the original members of the firm being Q. Cheever Hudson, Andrew Morris, Alton H. Riley and G. Herbert French. Messrs. Hudson and Morris have since died and the firm continues under the ownership of Messrs. French and Riley, and manufactures a complete line of jewelry, being capitalized for \$40,000 and employing sixty hands. Mr. French is president and Mr. Riley is treasurer.

The firm of T. G. Frothingham & Company, Inc., a recognized leader in the manufacture of gold rings, is made up of Howard R. Grant, Charles J. Sekowski and Stuart M. Rhodes. The latter is president, Mr. Grant vice president and Mr. Sekowski treasurer and secretary, sixty employees being carried on the company's payrolls.

THE WEBSTER COMPANY

George K. Webster was the founder of the present Webster Company, starting business in the old Whiting Building, where he engaged in the manufacture of plated and gold-front commodities. In 1898, he located in the Whitney Building, and soon outgrowing these quarters, he erected the present Webster factory, on Broadway, and centered his activities upon sterling silver goods exclusively. The concern is one of the largest of its kind in the United States, occupies in excess of 50,000 square feet of manufacturing space and approximately 300 hands are employed. The company has capital of \$175,000. Wallace D. Kenyon is president and treasurer, and R. S. Emerson, secretary.

The Bishop Company, Inc., makers of distinctive optical frames in white gold and gold filled is the only manufacturing unit of this type in North Attleboro, being capitalized for \$80,000 and employing seventy-five hands. Arthur S. Bishop is president and treasurer, and Fred R. Bishop secretary. The company was organized by A. S. Bishop and Frederick R. Bishop about twenty years ago. For the first few years operations were conducted in a small plant in the rear of High Street, but a few years later the concern moved to its present factory. The company's products are extensively sold in Canada and a number of other foreign countries.

The Le Stage Manufacturing Company, organized in 1915, is an outgrowth of the Barden & Hull Company. The firm makes high grade jewelry, chains, bracelets, locket, and other articles, is capitalized for \$150,000, and employs upwards of 100 operatives. Donald Le Stage is president and treasurer, and Fred L. Jones, secretary.

In 1915 the Barber Electric Manufacturing Company was incorporated to manufacture general electrical supplies, and during the late war its production was almost exclusively carried on for the United States Government. It has capital of \$99,000, and employs fifty hands. H. C. Barber is president, John L. Thompson, treasurer and Ernest A. Upham, clerk.

The firm of Swift & Fisher was established and is still owned by Harry W. Fisher and Joseph H. Swift and manufactures a complete line of religious articles. It operates one of the most complete lines of Machinery for making

uniform buttons in the country. Among the large list of customers on the firm's books is that of the United States Government which places many orders with the local concern. Fifty hands are employed.

THE EVANS CASE COMPANY

The Evans Case Company had its beginning about ten years ago as a department of another business and at that time the number of employees could be counted on the fingers of one hand, while it required only about thirty square feet of floor space — but not for long. From the beginning it prospered and in 1922 was incorporated. That year it carried about seventy-five employees on the payroll and occupied floor space of approximately thirty-five hundred square feet, the annual sales amounting to \$235,000.

This growth and expansion continued from year to year until in 1927, the company employed 375 hands, occupied over fifty thousand square feet of floor space in its own three-story building, and did business aggregating \$1,375,000. At the seasonal peak, a maximum payroll of about four hundred and eighty employees is carried, earning \$15,000 a week. Alfred F. Reilly is president, James Lavery, treasurer, and Samuel Haslam, secretary, of this fast growing concern.

BETWEEN FORTY AND FIFTY PER CENT OF MAGNAN TENNIS RACQUETS ARE SOLD ABROAD

Massachusetts manufacturers engaged in the production of seasonal commodities may well ponder over the record of the N. J. Magnan Corporation, of North Attleboro, manufacturers of tennis racquets. Several years ago the officers of the corporation realized that the business in which the concern was engaged being of a seasonal nature, it would be incumbent upon them to seek a market for tennis racquets which would tide it over the slack period, or else turn to the production of some staple product that would keep the sales up to a figure that would avoid red ink entries. Several allied lines were tried such as golf accessories, snow shoes, hockey sticks, lacrosse bats, etc., but in each case it was found that an entire change in equipment and personnel must be effected, and at the end of the survey

the conclusion was reached that the only answer was to look into the markets for tennis racquets, in countries where the seasons are the opposite of ours.

What was the result?

Five years ago the Magnan Corporation did not sell a hundred dollars worth of racquets in any country on the globe save in the United States. Today, the foreign sales of the concern represent between 40 and 50 per cent of the total output, and the company is maintaining twenty-five foreign representatives in the field, and not a week passes that it does not receive inquiries for its products from countries where it is not now doing business. It will be of interest to those who have hesitated to enter the foreign field because of fear of monetary losses to learn that in five years the Magnan Corporation has charged off less than \$25 for bad accounts on its overseas business. Agencies are now operated by the company in England, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, The Balkans, Egypt, India, the Straits Settlements, Australia, X. New Zealand, China, several of the South African states, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Bermuda and Canada.

With capital of \$95,000, the concern employs seventy-five operatives. Wallace D. Kenyon is president, Frederick J. Fitzpatrick vice president, R. G. Thackeray, treasurer, Charles A. Currie, assistant treasurer, and A. M. Achin, secretary.

OTHER LEADING CONCERNS OF NORTH ATTLEBORO

In the designing, die and hub cutting trade the firm of Straker & Freeman ranks high. The partners are L. E. Freeman, A. O. Straker and V. M. Calkins.

The J. J. Sommer Company, manufacturers of high grade jewelry and rings, is an old established concern, having been formed in 1879 for the manufacture of white stone goods. In 1884 it became the Totten & Sommer Co., and upon the retirement of the senior partner in 1896 the present corporate name was adopted. J. J. Sommer is president and Edmund T.

Sommer is secretary and treasurer of the corporation, which has capital of \$100,000, and which employs upwards of ninety workers.

The Charles K. Grouse Company, manufacturers of class and college jewelry, stationery and favors, employs thirty-five salesmen who cover the entire United States. Many colleges and schools deal exclusively with this concern, of which Mrs. Mary A. Straker is president, and Louis E. Freeman, treasurer.

The Nihan Jobbing Company was established in 1918 and makes a specialty of gold and silver soldering as well as soft soldering, doing considerable business for Attleboro and Providence concerns as well as for North Attleboro houses.

The Jewelry & Cutlery Novelty Company, owned by P. J. Cummings, employs forty operatives, and manufactures a complete line of gold, silver and gold filled pocket cutlery for premium uses.

North Attleboro enjoys the distinction of being the home of the Clark Lighter Company, the only local jewelry concern whose stock is listed on either the New York or Curb markets. The Clark Lighter Company is an outgrowth of W. G. Clark & Company, one of the oldest jewelry concerns in the country.

The corporation is capitalized for \$400,000, and employs 125 hands in the manufacture of gold, silver and rolled plate and cigar lighters. E. Foster Clark is president, R. R. Wason, treasurer and secretary, and J. F. Clark, vice president. A report submitted to the New York Curb authorities when the stock of the new company was listed, in 1928, showed that the profits of the concern in 1927 were \$400,000.

The Mason-Lenzen Company is one of the town's newer industries and is predicated on the business axiom that goods well displayed are already half sold. Since its formation, the concern has specialized in display novelties, jewelers' show cases and window display trays, telescopes, and cases. J. Francis Mason is president and treasurer, and J. H. Lenzen secretary of this \$25,000 corporation, which employs fifty hands.

The Standard Mill, one of the units of the International Braid Co., is located at Attleboro Falls, where seventy hands are employed in the manufacture of shoe laces, braids and stove wicks, the plant being equipped with 1,500 braiding machines, two boilers, and a water wheel.

The Bannockburn Mills, Inc. were incorporated in 1927, to manufacture jacquard broad silks, bed spreads and draperies. George M. MacKenzie is president, M. D. Gourlay, vice president and secretary, and Earle C. Warner, treasurer.

J. F. Bride & Co., of Attleboro, operate a branch plant, in North Attleboro; M. J. Brohen & Co., composed of M. J. Brohen and C. J. Rancoutr, manufacture engine turning machines, special machinery, and woven wire chains; The Carpenter Die & Tool Co. employs thirty operatives in producing die and hub cutters, J. A. Carpenter being president, S. F. Angell vice president and R. W. Carpenter treasurer; J. O. Copeland & Co., owned by Charles F. Copeland, manufactures jewelers' findings;

William Creed is engaged in the production of jewelry; the Doran, Bagnall Co., Inc., employs thirty hands in the manufacture of ecclesiastical goods, William M. Miller being president and Joseph P. Bartley treasurer of the corporation; Glines & Rhodes, owned by A. B. Glines and C. L. Rhodes, are engaged in refining gold, silver and platinum; the A. L. Lindroth Co., owned by A. L. Lindroth, manufactures jewelry; Maintien Bros., Inc., of which George B. Maintien is president and Louis E. Morse, treasurer, are engaged in jewelry production; the Mandalian Mfg. Co., owned by S. G. Mandalian, employs ninety hands in the manufacture of mesh bags; Messrs. Martha & Carpenter, a partnership made up of Eugene Martha and C. T. Carpenter, produces belt buckles, bracelets and novelties; H. D. Merritt & Co. is engaged in, the manufacture of jewelry; H. R. Morss & Co., of which Herbert Morss is president, Howard M. Ballou treasurer and Lester S. Wall, secretary, is engaged in the production of table cutlery; the North Attleboro Foundry Co. employs thirty hands in fabricating grey iron castings, John L. Thompson being president, Wallace D. Kenyon secretary and A. B. Cook treasurer; the Presto Cigarette Case Corporation, capitalized for \$20,000, employs sixty hands in the manufacture of cigarette

cases and novelties, Isaac Wallenstein being president and Ralph Wallenstein, treasurer and secretary; C. Ray Randall & Co., of which Alton H. Riley is treasurer, employs fifty hands in the production of gold, sterling and gold-filled jewelry; Roberts & Pike, a partnership which includes W. T. Roberts and G. A. Pike, manufactures tools and cut dies; and the William White Co., owned by William White, manufactures jewelers' hubs and dies.

OPERATING "GOLD MINES" IN NORTH ATTLEBORO

In 1928, one of the most unique demonstrations of Massachusetts thrift was observed in North Attleboro when passersby noticed men digging around a swamp on Ten Mile River, in North Attleboro, and in still another swamp on the property of the so-called "Company Shops," in the same town.

When it became known they were "digging for gold" some thought they were insane, while others became mildly excited about a real gold mine on the soil of the Bay State.

But neither conjecture was true. As a matter of fact, the diggers represented the Richards Real Estate Trust, of which John E. Tweedy, a manufacturing jeweler, is trustee, and the enterprise, while by no means the outcome of a new idea that had been proposed and laughed out of court many times in the years gone by, is a scientific and methodical going concern. Some months before this effort was begun, a group of North Attleboro men scraped up some mud from the swamp at the "Company Shops," had it refined and smelted and then refused to talk about it, but promptly took business steps to develop the "gold workings" within almost a stone's throw of the heart of North Attleboro's business center.

Dried mud from these "gold workings" is sent to the plant of the Attleboro Refining Co., by truck loads, and from there goes, in powder form, to a gold smelting plant, at Newark, N. J. According to the stories current in the town, the largest deposits of gold are being found in the swamp back of the factories. Here, for scores of years, up to about 1880, the jewelers, whose plants were located in the big buildings, were accustomed to dump the sweepings and other refuse from their plants, as well as the water from

their sinks, into Ten Mile River, which passes under one of the big structures.

Those engaged in working the deposits state the reason why the swamp "pays" better than the river itself is not because more gold was dumped there, for, as a matter of fact, more precious metals were dumped there than directly under and adjacent to the "Company Shops," but rather because the action of the water during the spring floods swept much of the gold downstream. In the swamp, to the contrary, almost everything dumped there in the way of gold and silver remains to this day.

Years ago the concerns had no modern cost-accounting methods; they made no effort to launder the clothing of employees for the sake of saving the gold and silver dust clinging to the material, and they never ripped up old floors and installed new ones for the purpose of recovering from the old timbers the gold and silver ground into them by the shoes of the operatives. The dollar and cents value of spending real money to prevent tiny gold particles from being lost or wasted in the local factories began to be appreciated about half a century ago, and since then tremendous strides have been made.

Almost every plant has some individual features designed by its owners or foremen and all scrap, even the tiniest pieces, is most carefully saved. Means are taken to prevent the loss of any filings, benches being carefully swept each day. Special apparatus is installed to catch the minute particles dislodged during polishing operations. Sweepings are both carefully preserved for refining and elaborate measures taken to insure getting every particle from the floors. Every sink is trapped, in some places two or three times, to catch the gold that is washed off.

Within the last few years special high-powered vacuum cleaning outfits have been invented to suck the heavy gold or silver particles from factory walls and floors. Every piece of dry polishing apparatus is carefully protected to prevent gold particles from flying and the screens are reinforced with powerful suction systems.

The work in the Ten Mile River is a bit more complicated than that carried on at the "Company Shops." The mud bottom and sides of the river are carefully scraped off to a depth of a foot or more. During these operations a big gasoline pump is kept working lower down the stream, sucking the muddy water flowing down the river up into a big vat and after the water has run off, this mud is removed and treated.

The idea of recovering this gold is not entirely new. Citizens of North Attleboro, their memories jogged by the Ten Mile River "strike," are recalling what happened to an old jewelry plant on East Street, where the fire house now stands. As the story goes, this plant burned down after having been in use for about half a century and was never rebuilt. After standing in ruins for several months a man bought the buildings, for the sake of salvaging whatever good material might be left in them. People around North Attleboro were confident he was going to lose money.

The buyer proceeded to burn all the remaining debris on the lot and then the townspeople were unanimous in the belief that he was crazy. However, he calmly gathered up the ashes and sent them away to refining plants. This done, he proceeded to send away cart loads of dirt from in back of the factory, where sweepings and other refuse had been dumped for years and he is reported to have made a small fortune from his operations at this one plant.

THERE WERE MANUFACTURING PROBLEMS IN THE OLDEN DAYS

Massachusetts jewelers, as well as textile designers, of this era, who lie awake nights trying to evolve new ideas that will carry an appeal to the whims of customers, really have no more serious problem than that which confronted their predecessors in the long ago.

A recent exhibit of 817 pieces of jewelry, manufactured in the century between 1780 and 1880, arranged by Charles H. Clark, and shown at a meeting of the North Attleboro Historical Society, all loaned by families in that town, showed styles, craftsmanship and specimens all typical of the different eras in which they were fabricated.

Some of the pieces dated back further than 1780 and among these were a pair of unmatched silver knee buckles worn by George Washington. The interesting story of how he came to be wearing unmatched breeches buckles is a tale of a famous old North Attleboro inn, built in 1670, by John Woodcock and his sons. It was the center of many bloody Indian skirmishes and became one of the garrisons or fortifications that extended from Boston to Rhode Island. It later came into the possession of Col. Israel Hatch, who fought in the battle of Bunker Hill and who was the first postmaster of Attleborough — a fascinating character who kept the mail in a huge sideboard. It was while Colonel Hatch was proprietor of this hostelry, which later was christened “Steamboat Inn,” that General Washington stopped on one of his journeys between Boston and New York, probably in 1789. He commented upon the design of Hatch’s silver knee buckles, and the inn keeper expressed his admiration for those worn by Washington. The latter proposed that they exchange one buckle and as a result they parted, each wearing an unmatched pair.

General Washington’s buckles were long and rounded at the ends, the silver rim being heavily chased. They bore his initials “G. W.” in letters of Roman design, which were said to be found on most of his personal possessions. Colonel Hatch’s buckles were circular in form, made of silver and set with crystal brilliants of finest quality.

The two unmatched buckles, in the possession of Mrs. Josephine Whitney, great-great-granddaughter of the famous inn keeper, bear mute testimony to the truth of the story. Recently the tradition received added weight as the result of a visit to Mount Vernon by Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Ryder, of North Attleboro, who, while walking slowly by the glass cases containing articles that once belonged to Washington, or members of his household, had their attention attracted by a familiar object. In the case before them lay the mate to the buckle which President Washington a century and a half before had whimsically proffered the North Attleboro inn keeper.

The North Attleboro Historical Society has photographed the two buckles in the possession of Mrs. Whitney, and Congressman Joseph W. Martin Jr., who represents the district in which North Attleboro is located is endeavoring to discover the final link in the chain, the Hatch buckle.

The jewelry industry of the Colonial period was subject to the same quick changes in fashions and tastes that are apparent in this modern age. Fads and fancies have to be satisfied and the Colonial jewelers were as busy trying to fathom the future whims of milady as are their present day successors.

The era of hair jewelry was followed by the period of butternut products Of the 1830s, and by the day of the bogwood jewels, manufactured from a chocolate-colored wood, fashioned as earrings and buttons. Then came the reproductions of autumn leaves and flowers in two colors of gold, and all the other novelties that have so distinguished the jewelry production of the two Attleboros.

THE TOWN'S INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

The constant and uninterrupted industrial growth of North Attleboro is best revealed in statistical tables. It is now producing jewelry valued at the wholesale figures in excess of \$10,000,000 a year.

Consolidations, removals, fires and liquidations have not conspired to reduce the total number of local establishments to any great degree, and a gain of \$700,000 in wages paid in the past five years tells the story of progress better than words.

There is a gain of over 200 wage earners in five years. Jewelry alone shows an increase of 300, which makes up for some of the recessions in other directions.

Back in 1916 the jewelry total of the town was \$3,355,255 and the value of the entire industrial output was \$5,769,678, while wages totaled \$1,661,000. Product and wages both show a gain of nearly 100 per cent during the past ten years.

In the decade there has been a net increase of two in the number of new jewelry firms, while "other industries" show a gain of nine.

The figures for the five years from 1922 to 1926, inclusive, follow:

NORTH ATTLEBORO-1922-1926

Years	Number of Establishments	Capital Invested	Value of Stock and Materials Used	Amt. of Wages Paid during the year	Average # of wage-earners employed	Value of Products
1922	74	7,536,614	2,947,677	2,305,918	1,941	7,451,867
1923	71	*	3,273,489	2,592,604	2,043	8,773,026
1924	75	6,910,650	3,155,699	2,670,853	2,168	8,727,433
1925	72	*	3,876,033	2,691,804	2,128	9,405,548
1926	70	7,797,152	3,975,867	3,007,242	2,256	10,721,915

*Not called for on questionnaire.

JEWELRY

Years	Number of Establishments	Value of Stock and Materials used in \$	Amount of Wages Paid in year	Ave. # of wage-earners Employed	Value of Products in \$
1926	36	2,150,537	1,832,455	1,408	6,496,963
1925	39	2,043,643	1,655,314	1,344	5,460,190
1924	39	1,889,428	1,649,564	1,333	5,310,259
1923	38	2,109,527	1,613,713	1,219	5,434,564
1922	36	1,804,089	1,319,479	1,141	4,402,786