

Estlin L. Coombe,
Nov. 10, 1955.

Dear Jalane,

I thought that I
would just assemble all
the information I could find
on the Woolen Mills while I
was putting it up for you.

I've a lot of
typographical errors, but
I had to hurry to get it
down at all.

My great grandfather,
David Patten, lost considerable
money from his investment in
it. My mother does not
remember hearing that the firm
failed, but the business
divinced away.

At least I can tell
you that the Woolen Mills
operated from 1866 to about
1890.

Sincerely,

Estlin Coombe.

History of Bowling Green Woolen Mills.

By

Elizabeth Coombs.

November 10, 1955.

Act of Incorporation of the Bowling Green Manufacturing Company was Feb. 7, 1866. Its business to be the manufacturing of wool, cotton, flax, hemp and tow, into rolls, batting, thread, yarn, cloth, or other things into which said articles can be manufactured; and the manufacture of grain into meal, flour... the manufacturing of lumber; also the sale of same. The corporation may purchase and hold real estate to the value of not exceeding thirty thousand dollars... The capital stock shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars, in shares of one hundred each...

Richard T. Young, Samuel A. Barclay, William V. Loving, Joseph R. Underwood, George H. Hall and Thomas C. Calvert may open a book for subscription...

Act to amend an act (the one above) Feb. 18, 1876.

Stock increased to five hundred thousand dollars; and real estate to one hundred thousand dollars.

Bonds may be issued with interest to be under 8%.

From clipping dated 3-4-1876.

Annual stockholders meeting of the Bowling Green Woolen Mills was held at which P. J. Potter, J. A. Graham, David Potter, H. E. Jenkins and Stephen Claypool were named managers, and S. S. Potter appointed superintendant.

Capital stock was \$47,116; assets over liabilities, including stock, \$70,024; surplus \$17,805. Dividend of 10% was declared.

Wages paid out last year nearly \$21,000. These mills made in 1875, 337,000 yards of goods, besides many blankets, Balmoral skirts and a large quantity of stocking yarns.

Kentucky State Directory, Travelers and Shippers' Guide, 1870-1871.

p. 74. Bowling Green Manufacturing Company, mfrs. of all kinds of woolen goods, carpets, blankets, coverlets, tweeds, flannels, balmorals, jeans, cassimeres, etc. Office in Odeon Hall, Main St. T. C. Calvert, president; S. S. Potter, Superintendant.

Battle, Perrin & Kniffin. History of Kentucky. 3d. ed. p. 900.

Henry James, sup. Bowling Green Woolen Mills, and one of the firm known as Potter, James & Co., was born in Butler County. In 1881 he became superintendant; formerly he had been bookkeeper for mills since 1875. These mills employ seventy-five persons. The principal articles manufactured is jeans, and is of two qualities: "Pride of Kentucky" and "Little Nellie."

Clipping, 2-11-1885.

We learn from Mr. Lucien Potter that upon starting of the Woolen

Mills on Monday, they had all the hands they wanted. It was reported that some employees seem dissatisfied with the proposed reduction in wages and time, and that they would refuse to accept their old positions.

Clipping 2-24-41. Bowling Galley by Chester Johnson. Most of his information for this article came from William Temple. Much is incorrect, which is omitted for that reason.

"For several years they made woolen blankets, but their principal product was jeans. Jeans were first made in America in 1880. The cloth had been made for many years in Europe, having originated in the city of Jean, one of the Moorish capitals of Spain, from which it derived its name.

Lucien D. Potter was secretary & treasurer at one time.

The mills flourished for a while, and were destroyed by fire about 1890, and were never rebuilt.

Mr. Temple states that the foundation was still there when he was a boy. He states that the mills stood down-stream about 300 or 400 yards from the pump house. Quote: In one of your articles you mention that the woolen mills stood on the site of the L. & N. pumping station at First Street. If the pumping station is where it used to be, namely right along the tracks at the Barren River bridge, you are slightly off in your calculations. (300 or 400 yds. downstream from there was actual site)

Clipping. 2-27-41. Bowling Galley by Chester Johnson.

Mrs. Mattie Daughtry, Route 1, Bowling Green, says the woolen mills made woven woolen carpets, along with blankets and jeans. She recalls that her father, the late Judge James H. Rose, purchased in 1871, woven woolen carpets from the mill.

The library has some bills, Aug. to Oct. 1867, which have the letter-head, Bowling Green Woolen Mills, at top, and Bowling Green Manufacturing Company, at left side, so the two evidently were one and the same. Manufacturers of Jeans, Flannels, Blankets, Fancy coverlets, Filled Goods, Stocking Yarns, etc.

These list weight of wood received, and goods made, (on the bills.)

Items; Jeans, Flannel, Yarn, Carpet, Gray Casimer, Plaid Flannel, Coverlet, Blanket

An 1870 bill follows same heading, with S. S. Potter, Supt., added. List Jeans, Blankets, yarn, flannel, coverlet.

An 1876 advertisement.

Bowling Green Woolen Mills. Water Street near Railroad bridge. P. J. Potter, pres.; S. Claypool, Manager; S. S. Potter, Supt.