



A Thread In Time

**Newsletter of the National Society of Descendants of
Textile Workers of America, Inc.**

www.textileworker.com

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President's Message

The annual meeting of the National Society of the Descendants of Textile Workers of America, Inc. was held March 23, 2014 at 1 pm, at the Willimantic Brewing Company in Willimantic, CT. One of our goals for 2014 was to increase our membership to over 50 members. We have gone from 44 members to 53 members in less than a year. That is a 20 percent increase. Thank you to all who made it possible.

I would like to welcome the new members since the last newsletter. Please contact me if you have suggestions to improve our society. Also, if you have information to share on your ancestors, please submit it to our webmaster for inclusion on our website.

- #47 Ms. Ann J. Sheedy – Lebanon, CT**
- #48 Mr. Alexander N. Bannerman – Charleston, WV**
- #49 Ms. Lorraine Gaston Ennis – Huntsville, AL**
- #50 Mr. Edwin W. Strickland II – New Britain, CT**
- #51 Mrs. Nancy Martin Saunders – Gastonia, NC**
- #52 Ms. Patricia Jean Hume – Edgewood, MD**
- #53 Mrs. Janice Areta Roden – Dallas, TX**

As you can see from our new members, seven since last summer, representing six different states, we are truly a national society.

The NSDTWA has offered to host the 2018 CT Massing of the Colors. The Massing of the Colors is an annual event that has been held for decades each fall. It brings many of the hereditary and patriotic societies in Connecticut together for a wonderful procession of flags, a short service and then a social time for everyone to mingle. This year (2018) is Samuel Slater's 250th birthday so we would be honoring him for the start of the Industrial Revolution in America. We need to start planning, 2018 will be here before we know it.

The plan was to do an article in each newsletter spotlighting a mill where our ancestors had worked. In researching the article for this newsletter I came across a man who was as influential in starting the textile industry in America as was Samuel Slater. His name was Francis Cabot Lowell. I was surprised I hadn't heard of him as I had grown up in Massachusetts and seen the results of his endeavors all around.

What is also interesting about this article is how Lowell pioneered the use of women workers in the mills. How many of us may have had an ancestor who may have been a "Lowell girl"?

Since the last newsletter, we have added a mini insignia medal and a mini charm to be worn on a society bar. All proceeds from the sale of insignia are placed in the scholarship fund and are an excellent way to show your pride in your ancestor. See page 3 for ordering information.

Annual Meeting

The move to a January/February newsletter was to ensure that all members receive notice of our annual meeting in March.

The annual meeting of the National Society of the Descendants of Textile Workers of America, Inc. will be held on Sunday, March 22, 2015 at 1:30 pm, at the Willimantic Brewing Company in Willimantic, CT. The restaurant has excellent food, and is a micro- brewery. Check them out online. I hope to see you there!

Please send a RSVP to our Secretary, Ida Ransom, at iransom@snet.net or at 860-923-9052. We look forward to seeing you there.

Regards, Bill Warner

Textiles in Early America

The **Industrial Revolution** was the transition to new manufacturing processes in the period from about 1760 to sometime between 1820 and 1840. This transition included going from hand production methods to machines, improved efficiency of water power, and the development of machine tools. Textiles were the dominant industry of the Industrial Revolution in terms of employment, value of output and capital invested. The textile industry was also the first to use modern production methods. The Industrial Revolution began in Great Britain and although the British worked diligently to maintain a monopoly on the technology, it eventually spread to Western Europe and the United States within a few decades.

Samuel Slater (June 9, 1768 – April 21, 1835) was an early English-American industrialist known as the "Father of the American Industrial Revolution". In Great Britain he was called "Slater the Traitor" because he brought British textile technology to America, modifying it for United States use. He learned textile machinery as an apprentice to a pioneer in the British industry. Immigrating to the United States at the age of 21, he designed the first textile mills, and later went into business for himself, developing a family business with his sons.

Another person instrumental in bringing the Industrial Revolution to the United States was **Francis Cabot Lowell** (April 7, 1775 – August 10, 1817) an American businessman. In June 1810, he went on a two-year visit with his family to Scotland and England. Lowell developed an interest in the textile industries of Lancashire and Scotland, especially the spinning and weaving machines, which were operated by water power or steam power. He found that he was not able to buy drawings or a model of a power loom and secretly began studying the machines by posing as a farmer. As the War of 1812 begun, Lowell and his family left Europe and on their way home, the boat and all their personal belongings were searched at the Halifax port to ensure that no manufacturing plans were being smuggled out of Great Britain. This proved ineffective as Lowell had memorized all the workings of the power looms without writing anything down.

In 1814, he enlisted the support of his brothers-in-law, Charles, James and Patrick Tracy Jackson, and obtained the financial backing of the merchant Nathan Appleton to establish the Boston Manufacturing Company at Waltham, Massachusetts, using the power of the Charles River. The BMC was the first "integrated" textile mill in America in which all operations for converting raw cotton into finished cloth could be performed in one mill building. Lowell hired the gifted machinist Paul Moody to assist him in designing efficient cotton spinning and weaving machines, based on the British models, but with many technological improvements suited to the conditions of New England.

In 1814, the Boston Manufacturing Company built its first mill beside the Charles River in Waltham, housing an integrated set of technologies that converted raw cotton all the way to finished cloth. Patrick Tracy Jackson was the first manager of the BMC with Paul Moody in charge of the machinery. The Waltham mill, where raw cotton was processed into finished cloth, was the forerunner of the 19th century American factory. Lowell also pioneered the employment of women, from the age of 15-35 from New England farming families, as textile workers, in what became known as the Lowell system. He paid these "mill girls" (also known as Lowell girls) lower wages than men, but offered attractive benefits including well-run company boardinghouses with chaperones, cash wages, and benevolent religious and educational activities. The Waltham Machine Shop attached to the BMC made power looms for sale to other American cotton mills. Nathan Appleton established a region-wide system to sell the cloth manufactured by the BMC.

Although he died early at age 42, only three years after building his first mill, Lowell left the Boston Manufacturing Company in superb financial health. In 1821, dividends were paid out at an astounding 27.5% to shareholders. The success of the BMC at Waltham exhausted the water power of the Charles River. To expand the enterprise, in 1822, Lowell's partners moved north to the more powerful Merrimack River and named their new mill town at the Pawtucket Falls on the Merrimack River "Lowell," after their visionary leader. Many textiles mills were built in Lowell, using the power of the fast-flowing Merrimack River. The Lowell Machine Shop built power looms for sale, and later expanded to build locomotives. With the introduction of steam power, the importance of a river site for the mills began to decline. The Lowell System, first introduced at Waltham, was expanded to the new industrial city of Lowell and soon spread to



Boston Manufacturing Company – Waltham, MA

the Midwest and the South. The mechanized textile system, introduced by Francis Cabot Lowell, remained dominant in New England for a century until the industry shifted to the Midwest and the South. By the close of the nineteenth-century the United States had a thriving textile industry for home consumption and for export.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org>

Website

Once again, I invite you to visit our outstanding website at www.textileworker.com. This website was designed and is maintained by Tracy Crocker. Our newsletters are available on the website in full color. You will also notice that some of the honor roll members have special attachments with anecdotes about their life. You are welcome to submit material about your ancestor. Please contact Tracy Crocker at Tracy@tracycrocker.com or Mary Brown at mbrown@ct.metrocast.net for submission of this material.

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Scholarship

A goal of our Society is to provide scholarships to Vocational School students. The scholarship does not have to be used for college. It can be for licensing fees, tools, etc. The student must meet the following criteria:

1. Exemplary work ethic
2. Respect for self, family, peers, and persons in authority
3. Strong background and interest in American History
4. Good academic performance
5. Attendance record indicates no suspensions or unexcused absences



Insignia

You may order our insignia pin for \$40, our mini insignia for \$30, our charm for \$30 or the life membership pin for \$10 (available to Life Members only). Send a check, including \$5 for shipping and handling, made out to NSDTWA to Ms. Nancy Merwin, 284 Chesterfield Road, Oakdale, CT 06370. All proceeds from the sale of insignia are placed in the scholarship fund.

Treasurers Report

Checking Account	\$1,731.93
Scholarship Fund	\$1,479.03
Life Member Endowment Fund	\$1,056.45
Total as of December 31, 2014	\$4,267.41