

Tom Marshall Weekly News, October 10, 2005

Evolution of Marshall Brothers Paper Mill (on Benge Road): It's Yorklyn Industry's turn again this week, and our "News" of August 22 was the first in this series. The original mill site mentioned therein told of the Garrett family and the successful snuff empire that began at the original Auburn Mills (adjoining Auburn Heights). When the Garretts sold the site and enlarged their newer mill ½ mile downstream before 1820, several owners tried their hands at various types of milling using the ever-faithful water power of Red Clay Creek while constantly improving the dam and mill race. It was a grist mill, a cotton mill, a woolen mill, and even an early paper mill.

In the 1840's Jacob Pusey of Wilmington bought the site and established his son in the farmhouse next to the mill to manage the operation. Jacob's granddaughter, Emalea Pusey Warner, grew up in the farmhouse and wrote a little book for *her* grandchildren, telling them of the good times she remembered at Auburn (the name *Yorklyn* did not appear until 1872). The Puseys sold the property in the 1860s, but the future Mrs. Warner became a well-known educator and philanthropist, and Warner Junior High School on 18th Street in Wilmington is named for her.

The next owners were James and William Clark. William outlasted James, and had three wives. When the first died, he hung her best hat on a peg in the attic of the farmhouse. When the second died, he did the same, on a peg right next to the first. When his third wife was introduced to the house, William showed her the hats of his deceased wives with an empty peg alongside. He told her that peg was for her hat. Her reply: "No, William, an old straw hat will hang on that peg!" She did, indeed, outlive William Clark. William's daughter had married S. Franklin Ewart, and about 1889 they inherited the mill property and all that went with it.

The Marshall brothers, Israel and Elwood, of Marshall's Bridge, had become successful paper makers and were operating out of the Homestead Mill, converted from a grist mill by their father in the 1860s. They needed a larger facility and entered into an agreement with Franklin Ewart to take over the old Yorklyn mill. The original name was Marshall Brothers and Ewart, but soon Ewart's interest was bought out, and by 1892 (if not before), the mill became simply Marshall Brothers. Elwood stayed behind at Marshall's Bridge and continued the operation of the Homestead Mill, still known as Thomas S. Marshall and Sons. Israel, his wife, Lizzie, and their three children, Warren, Anna, and Clarence, moved into the old farmhouse at Auburn (Yorklyn) in 1890. Paper was made in this mill continuously from that time until 2005, with the exception of 1980-86, when it was shut down.