

CHENEY SILK INDUS- TRY MANCHESTER'S BACKBONE.

Started Seventy-five Years Ago With
Six Employees.

NOW GIVES STEADY WORK TO
4,200.

Rapid Growth of Recent Years Still
Unchecked—Huge New Mills
Now Building and More
in Prospect.

To the founding and growth of the firm of Cheney Brothers, silk manufacturers, Manchester owes its prosperity more than to any other one cause. The establishment of this great industry in Manchester was not due to the natural advantages of the place, to its shipping facilities, nor to its superior opportunities for securing employees, conditions which

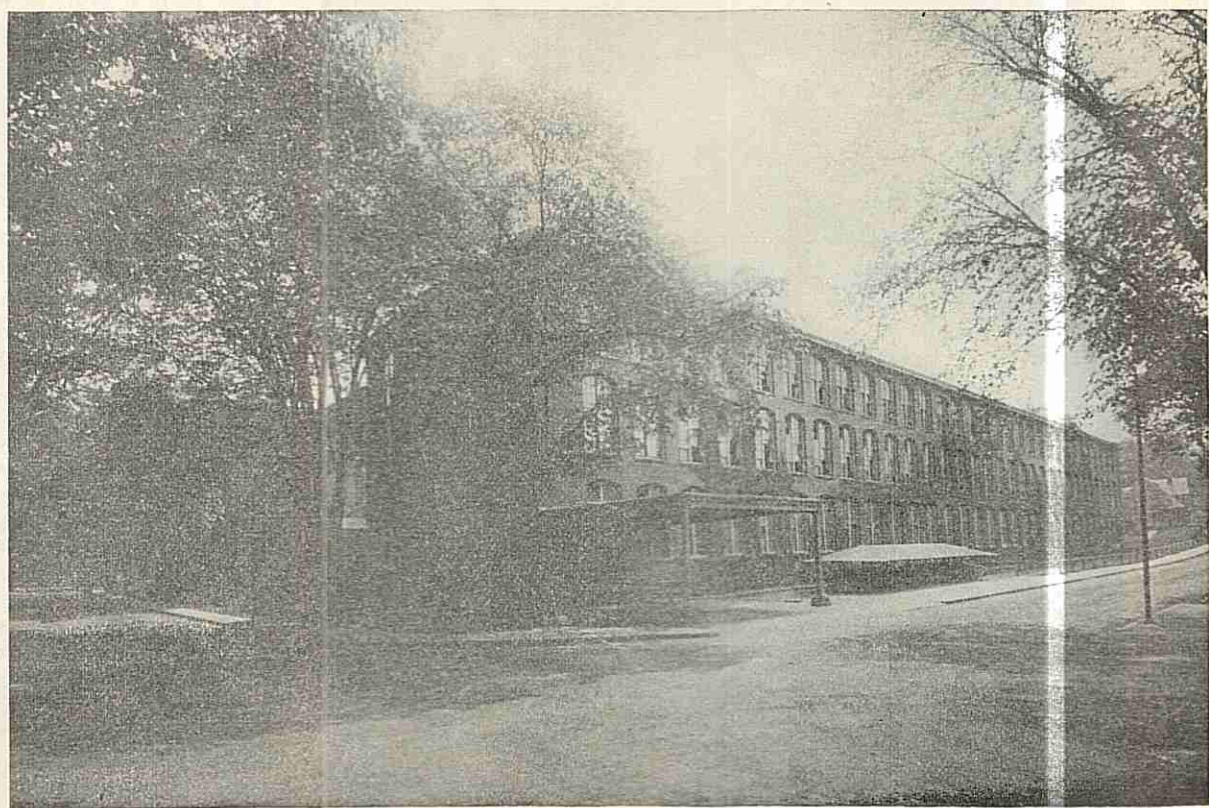


The Cheney Lawns—Showing Family Residences

The Line of March.
The committee on the line of march for the Homeland day parade have definitely fixed the route of the procession. It will form on East Center street and Porter street and will then proceed west on East Center to Linden street, to Chestnut, to Forest, to Elm, to Hartford Road and then up Main street to East Center, where it will disband. This route makes it unnecessary to counter-march and provides for fine, smooth roads all the way with broad lawns from which spectators can view the procession to advantage. Some disappointment is expressed that the parade will not go to Manchester, but this is precluded by the present condition of Main street.

The Odd Fellows have kindly consented to allow the public the use of their lodge room and parlor for a rest room on Homeland Day. Everybody will be welcome.

Copies of this Homeland day issue can be had from your newsdealer. The supply is limited. Order at once.



Cheney Bros.' Velvet Mill Group, Corner Forest and Elm Streets

in modern life govern the location of large manufacturing plants.

It was because Timothy Cheney in the early days of the republic built a dam and a grist mill on Hop Brook that his grandsons, the original Cheney Brothers, thought it advisable to utilize this small water privilege for their first silk mill. The water power was soon outgrown and was succeeded by a steam power plant. As the enterprise expanded and its necessities became larger and more varied, the firm was forced to levy upon the resources the town afforded. To the fullest development of these resources it has brought large capital and skill and ingenuity second only to that employed in its manufacturing operations. It has built large reservoirs and has bought and closed many smaller manufacturing plants in order that it might obtain the water needed for manufacturing and domestic purposes. It has built and equipped and for many years has operated a steam railroad two miles long, connecting with the main line between New York and Boston. It has bought hundreds of acres of land, some of which it has used for the private residences of members of the firm, some of which it has sold to employees at a low price that they might build their own homes, and

much of which it still holds to protect the watersheds of its reservoirs.

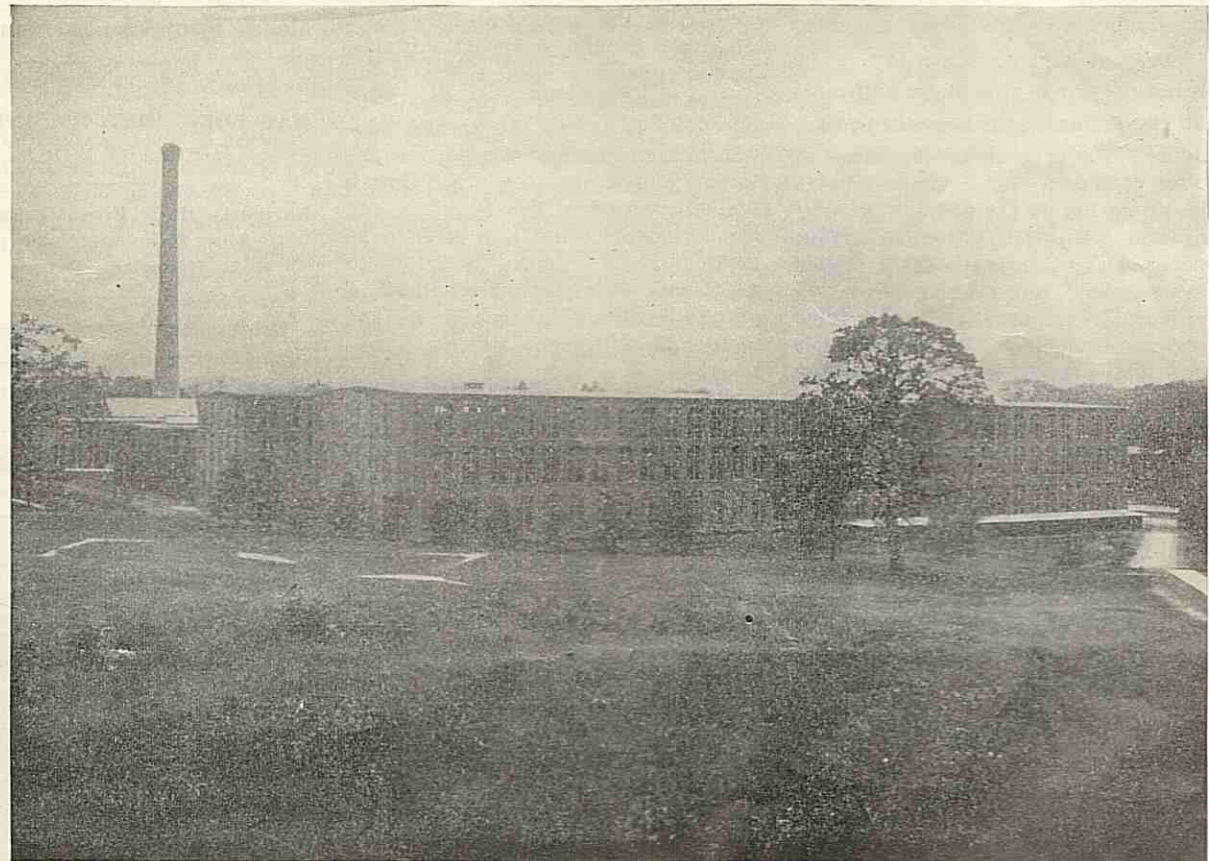
Although the firm has encouraged its operatives to build homes of their own, it has, nevertheless, been obliged to erect hundreds of dwellings to be occupied by its employees. It has built and macadamized the roads in the vicinity of its plant and has bordered them with fine sidewalks. It has erected fine school buildings and a boarding house for a hundred teachers. It has established gas and electric light plants for the use of the community and has supplemented its water supply with a complete sewer system.

Its development of the physical features of the place has been on the most generous scale. The land surrounding the mills and the Cheney residences for a radius of half a mile is laid out and maintained as a park in which the best ideas in landscape gardening and forestry are exemplified. Its large reservoirs are models of substantial construction. The effect of Cheney Brothers' example is seen in the private dwellings of the place. Most of them are of a much better grade than those usually found in manufacturing communities and, as a rule, they are surrounded by well kept, prettily decorated lawns.

The silk industry was founded in Manchester about 75 years ago by five brothers, Charles, Ralph, Ward, Rush and Frank Cheney. In the beginning, with half a dozen employees, they made sewing silk only. The business prospered in spite of numerous setbacks and as long ago as 1854 the firm was incorporated with a capital of a million dollars. Soon after this the firm began to manufacture woven fabrics, mainly dress goods. In 1871 the group of mills known as the velvet mills was erected and the firm began to manufacture on a large scale spun silks for their own use and for sale to other manufacturers. In the eighties the group of weaving mills was erected and the assortment of woven fabrics was greatly enlarged. Then followed the great block of velvet mills for the manufacture of the line of goods which in 1880 the firm had not even begun to produce. In 1907 and 1908 another fine block of mills was built, known as the ribbon mills. In these mills within the last few years the manufacture of the now famous Cheney silk neckties was started and has developed into a large industry. At the same time extensive additions were made to the dyeing department including a large two-story concrete dyehouse. Next

in order came the erection of the new dressing mill on Pine street built in 1910. This in itself is an extensive plant covering an area 100x400 feet with buildings partly two and partly three stories high. Following closely on this came the erection of the new office building which was completed in 1912. At the present time another block of mills is in process of construction on Pine street to be used in connection with the velvet mills. These will include a modern weave shed and a large dyehouse for yarn dyeing. Plans for these buildings have been drawn with the idea of duplicating their capacity in the near future should the expansion of business warrant it. During the past 25 years the old buildings of the plant have also been almost entirely rebuilt, modernized and enlarged. It would be hard to find anywhere in America today a more comfortable or sanitary set of factory buildings than those of Cheney Brothers.

From a small beginning with a half a dozen hands 75 years ago the industry has developed steadily and now it gives employment to about 4,200. For the rank and file of the employees the firm has done everything in its power to make them good citizens and good workmen. In the first place it has given them good wages and steady employment and has so encouraged them to remain here and develop their skill. It has provided a large public library for the free use of all and has paid close attention to the education of their children. It has maintained a fine amusement hall for the free use of its employees and the public. It has



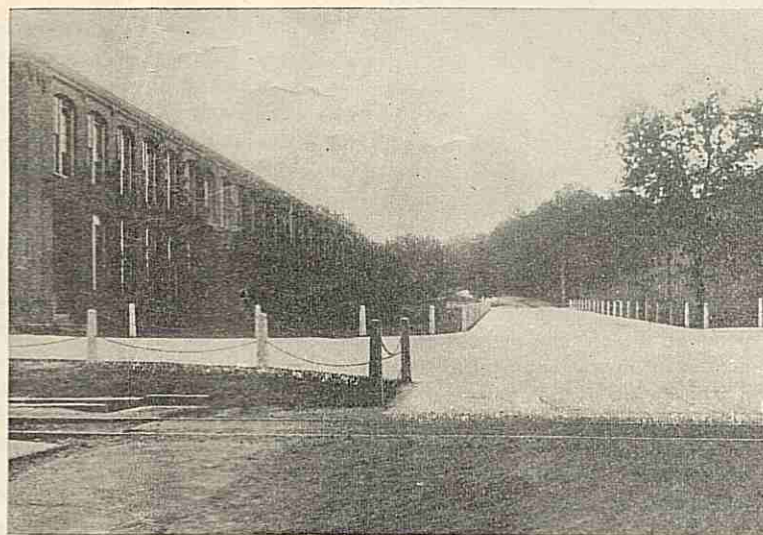
Cheney Bros.' Weaving Mill Group from Corner of Park and Chestnut Streets

actual work of the mills.

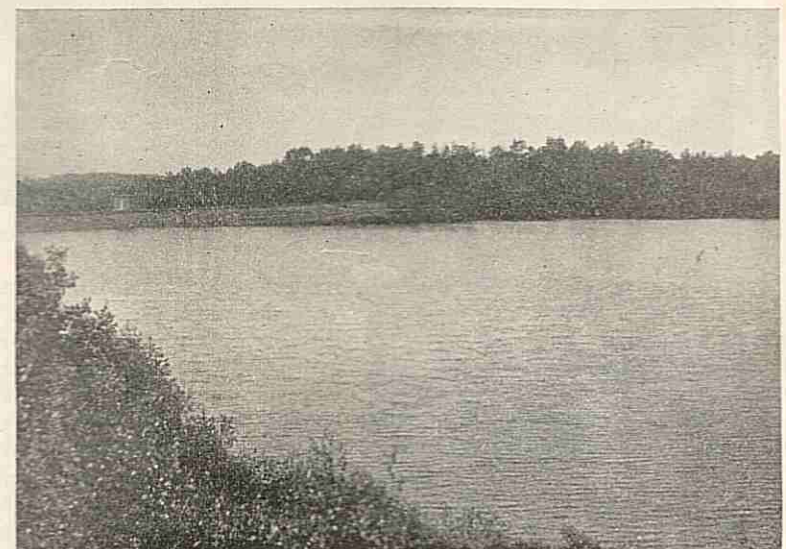
The plant of Cheney Brothers is unique in the fact that nowhere else in the world is there a manufacturing concern which carries on every detail of the silk industry in one set of mills. Here the process of manufacture is completed from the raw silk to the marketable fabric. Those who later entered the business con-

finned themselves to one branch of it such as spinning, weaving or dyeing, or to one class of silk products as threads, ribbons, dress goods or velvets. Cheney Brothers literally began at the beginning, for their first efforts were in the direction of raising silk worms and in planting mulberry trees to produce leaves for feeding the worms. This experiment was a failure, as countless other experiments have been since;

but they have always persisted, in spite of failure, until, profiting by experiments, they were able to work out their problems successfully. Today they produce every variety of silk thread and fabric demanded by the market and conduct every process of manufacture from the raw silk to the finished product on their own premises. This is done by no other firm in the entire world.



Forest Street, Showing Ivy Clad Weaving Mill



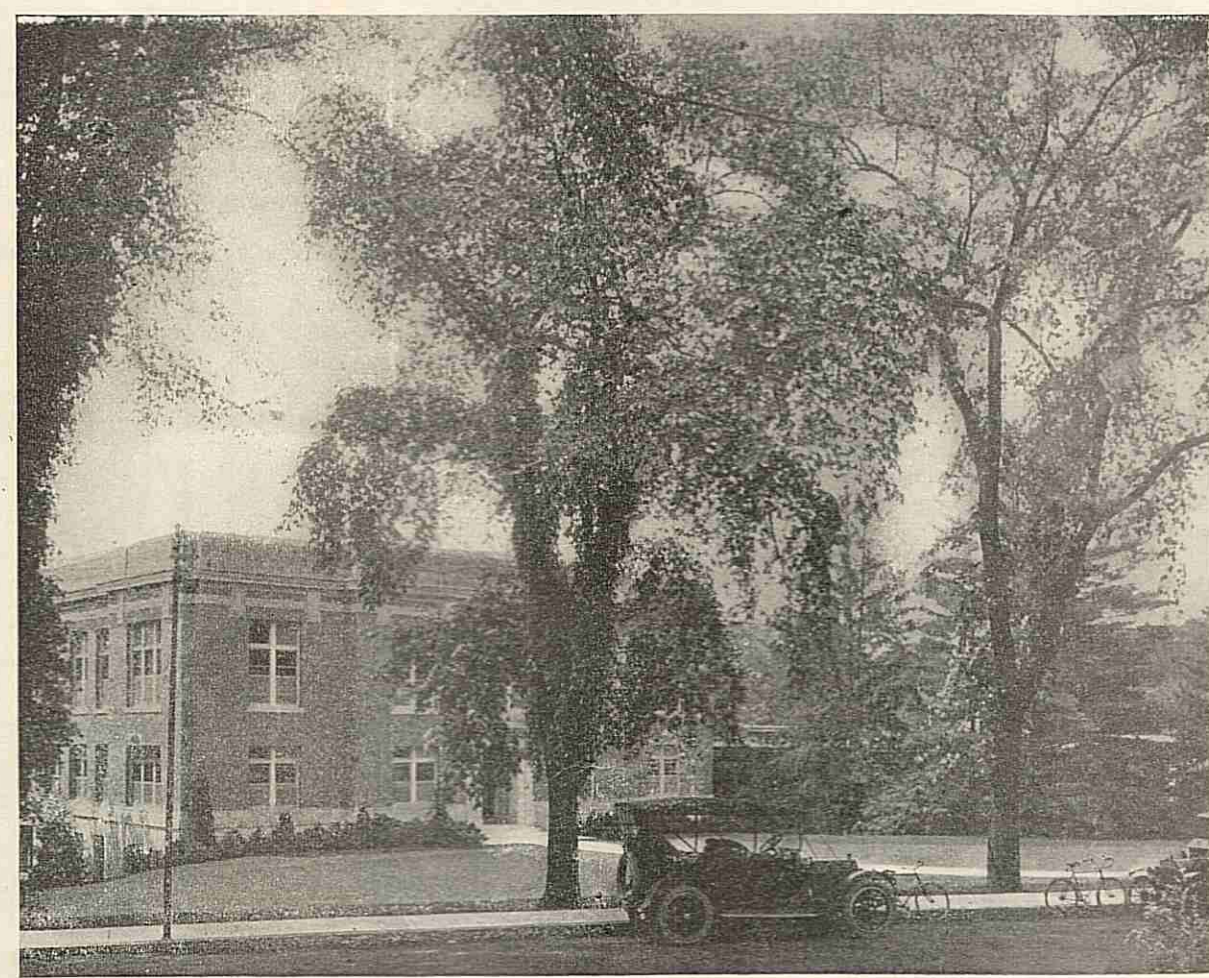
Howard Reservoir, Cheney Bros.' System



Cheney Bros.' New Velvet Mills and Dye House Under Construction. Dressing Mill in Background

paid careful attention to the sanitary conditions of the entire community and has contributed generously to every public improvement.

Much of the success of Cheney Brothers and the prosperity of the community as well has been due to the fact that all these years the proprietors of the firm have lived among their employees and commingled freely with them. It is somewhat remarkable that one family has been able for so long a period to continue the ownership of such a rapidly growing business without the introduction of new blood into the firm. While Cheney Brothers have from time to time availed themselves of the best talent in this and foreign countries in the development of new lines in their industry they have retained the corporate ownership and administration in the hands of their own family. This has been possible through the number and character of the offspring of the original brothers. Large families have been the rule and the young men of these several families have generally remained at home to carry their share of the increasing burdens of the management. As a result no less than 20 male members of the Cheney family are now daily employed as the heads of the different departments. The majority are graduates of colleges or technical schools and have served an apprenticeship in the



Main Office of Cheney Brothers