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The Planters Manufacturing Company.

The Planters Manufacturing Company, of Butts County, a cotton mill situated near Seven Islands on the Ocmulgee River, four miles east of Flovilla at what is now Lamar's Mill, was organized Jan. 23, 1845, with a capital stock of \$25,000 in shares of \$1,000 each, with the privilege of increasing it to \$50,000, the charter to remain in force fourteen years, subject to renewal.

It was built by a stock company of well-to-do planters and slave owners of Butts County. The original stockholders were:

C.A. Nutting, President,
Robert Lays,
Stephan W. Price,
Robert Lawson,
Francis Douglas,
Robert F. Douglas,
Robert G. Duke,

Jordan Pye,
William J. Head,
Charles Bailey,
O.H.P. McLendon,
E.W. Lane, and
J.R. McCord.

This factory was operated successfully for nearly twenty years until it was burned by Sherman's army in 1864, on its march through Butts County.

That the buildings and other property adjacent to the cotton mill were spared by the plunderers is said to have been due to the fact that Colonel Nutting, a native of Vermont, had sold his interest in the Planters' Manufacturing Company, but retained ownership of other property surrounding it.

This cotton mill was among the earliest established in the State and there was great demand for its product. The supply of thread often went to distant points and the factory was unable at times to furnish home consumers their needs. The story is told of how a wagon load of this material, on its way to Forsyth to be loaded for shipment, was confiscated by a band of women who felt that their needs had been overlooked.

Besides the product that was much in demand, the factory furnished employment for numbers of local workers. Seven Islands became a thriving village and carried on an extensive trade with adjoining counties.

Colonel Nutting was, perhaps, the most progressive and efficient business man in the county, and he had become thoroughly southern in sentiment. He owned numerous slaves and had twice married into two substantial middle Georgia families.

The following was contributed by Colonel John T. Boufeuillet of Atlanta:

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Following the destruction of Colonel Nutting's factory at Seven Islands, he removed with his family to Macon in the latter part of the last year of the war. There his daughter, Mattie North Nutting, was born June 21, 1866.

Col. Nutting entered upon a financial career at Macon, engaging principally in banking, having been president of the City Bank of Macon and a director of the Macon Savings Bank. He also participated in railroad affairs, being one of the lessees of the Western and Atlantic Railroad, under the original lease, Joseph E. Brown, President.

Col. Nutting was frequently a delegate to business and political conventions. He was a member of the celebrated convention which met at Macon in December, 1867, to consider the political situation. This was the first convention of the kind held following the close of the War between the States. The great orator and statesman, Benjamin H. Hill, was president of the convention.

Col. Nutting represented Bibb County several terms in the legislature. He was chairman of the finance committee of the house, when the late United States Senator A.O. Bacon, was speaker. Chairman Nutting was author of the bill providing for the issuance of twelve hundred thousand dollars of eight per cent bonds, a notable financial project at that time. The issue was known as the 'Nutting Baby Bonds!'

Col. Nutting and Col. John T. Grant, of Atlanta, were bondsmen of 'Honest Jack' Jones, state treasurer. A judgment of ninety-six thousand dollars was obtained against the bondsmen, and this judgment was settled by the payment of thirty-five thousand dollars. Quite an array of counsel was employed on each side. Benjamin H. Hill was one of the attorneys for the bondsmen.

An interesting political sight was witnessed when Bibb County had three candidates for congress, namely; James H. Blount, A.O. Bacon, and Charles A. Nutting. Col. Nutting concluded to withdraw his candidacy, and left the contest between Blount and Bacon, so far as Bibb County was concerned.

Colonel Nutting was a trustee for many years of Wesleyan College and until his death; also a trustee of the Georgia Academy for the blind.

Col. Nutting and his family resided in a handsome home on College Street, Macon, and there both Col. and Mrs. Nutting died. Col. Nutting passed away Oct. 18, 1881; and Mrs. Nutting followed a few months later, May 9, 1882. They were survived by the following four children:

Charles Merritt, who died recently in Macon, leaving his wife and several children; Cora Ida, who married

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J.O. Wynn, of Atlanta. Both Mr. and Mrs. Wynn are dead, survived by three children Clara Augusta, who married John T. Boifeuillet, of Macon. There were born of this union two daughters, Elizabeth and Clare. Mrs. Boifeuillet died Feb. 27, 1901.

Mattie North Nutting, of Macon. Ann Eliza, a daughter by Col. Nutting's first marriage, married B.F. Walker, of Macon. She is a widow and residing in Macon at the golden age of eighty-four years. A daughter, Cora Walker, lives with her mother in Macon, and Charles, now dead.

The late Samuel F. Smith, a leading citizen of Butts County, father of S.K. Smith, of Flovilla, and John R.L. Smith, attorney of Macon, and the late Col. Nutting were warm friends. As showing the intimacy existing between Mr. Smith and Col. Nutting, here is appended a copy of a letter written to Mr. Smith by Col. Nutting at Macon, Aug. 30, 1872:

"I hear you are a delegate to the Milledgeville convention to be held on September 19th. You must come down to Macon on the 18th, stop with me and go on by early train next morning. If you come on the night train, tell the conductor to let you off at St. Paul's Church near my house."

St. Paul's Church was an Episcopal Church, situated near the Central railroad, between Macon and Atlanta, within the residential section of Macon, between College Hill and Tatnall Square. In those days, trains would stop at St. Paul's Church to take on and let off passengers. The old St. Paul's Church building has been torn down, and on the site, and adjacent thereto, the progress of modern times exhibits itself by the many residences which have been erected thereon. A handsome and most spacious St. Paul's Church stands not far from the original Church building."

Colonel Nutting was born at Windsor, Vermont, May 28, 1818. He removed to Georgia when a young man and, in 1844, married Miss Emily Compton, of a prominent Middle Georgia family. Here is a little historical note: 'Colonel Nutting was a joint owner with another of a large mill near the Compton homestead which was destroyed by the Federal Army in 1864.'

Two daughters were born to Colonel and Mrs. Nutting, to wit:

Ellen Annette, born in Jasper County, Georgia, Sept. 23, 1845, and died at Seven Islands, Aug. 7, 1855.

Ann Eliza, born in Jasper County, July 11, 1848.

Mrs. Nutting died on Aug. 6, 1852, at Barnesville. Subsequently Colonel Nutting, on Feb. 20, 1855, married Miss Elizabeth Jane Merritt, who was born in Monroe County, Dec. 3, 1833. Her father, Mickelberry Merritt, was a leading citizen of Monroe, and an influential factor of affairs.

The following children of this union were born at Seven Islands, Butts County:

Charles Merritt, Nov. 7, 1855;

Cora Ida, Apr. 1, 1859;

Isaac, Sept. 23, 1861;

Clara Augusta, Jan. 5, 1863;

Isaac, the son, died on July 18, 1862, at Seven Islands.

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PRODUCTS.

The land in Butts County is a clay sub-soil, and the face of the country is generally level. The gray lands prevail.

Butts County produces apples, peaches, corn, cotton, eggs, grain, hay hogs, melons, pepper, potatoes, poultry, and pure bred cattle. Some cane is grown and syrup is made therefrom.

Several years ago commercial orchards were set out in various parts of the county. Some have been discontinued for various reasons, and others kept up. Pepper is largely grown and the product is marketed at the canning factory in Jackson, which employs large numbers of workers. Potatoes, both Irish and sweet, are raised. The land is especially adapted to the cultivation of the sweet potato which develops best in a gray soil.

The poultry business has grown and now numbers of citizens have poultry farms the products of which were marketed in Jackson. ^{By cars} By an arrangement with the county agent cars ^{were} are placed on stated dates for the convenience of the raisers and the buyers received what they had for the market.

For years there has been a general interest in pure bred cattle, and the dairy business shows development in this industry. Dairy products are disposed of in the cities by means of trucks regularly operated, or locally.

The largest production on an acre of corn in the United States was made in 1919, by Benjamin F. Watkins, the father of Col. W.E. Watkins, local attorney at law, when 166 bushels were grown on his farm about one mile east of the town of Jackson. This achievement became nationally known and published.

Wheat grown in Butts County won first award at the World's Fair in Vienna, Austria, in 1854. A crop of wheat harvested on the farm of Jesse Jolly in that year, in the eastern part of the county, was remarkable both for its quality and yield per acre. The matter was brought to the attention of Honorable David J. Bailey, a member of Congress from this district, who advised Mr. Jolly to send a specimen of it to the Agricultural Department in Washington, D.C., with a statement of the yield per acre, and that Department was so pleased that it forwarded the specimen to the World's Fair at Vienna where it was shown in competition with the finest specimens of wheat from every wheat growing country on the globe, and Butts County's wheat was awarded first prize.

Cotton grown in Butts County is said to be the finest short staple cotton in the country, as it "pulls", ~~taxuse~~ ~~thaxternxofxentioxhuyaxxy~~ the finest fibres, to use the term of cotton graders. Just what there is in the soil of this section to produce this condition is not

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known.

About the year, 1848, Misses Giles, not far from Giles' Ferry, on the Ocmulgee River in east Butts, grew a bale of cotton on their farm which took first premium at ~~the~~ World's Fair in ~~Europe~~ England.

Several years ago Lem Kelly, a farmer in the eastern part of the county, grew a bale of short staple cotton which was sent to the World's Fair in Paris, and won first prize for its excellent grade.

About the year 1928, W.G. Greer grew a bale of cotton on his farm in east Butts, about three miles from Jackson, which was bought by Etheridge, Smith & Company, cotton merchants. The quality of this cotton was so excellent it was shipped to the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C., to be used as a standard of tip-top grade by cotton buyers and graders throughout the cotton belt.

(Information furnished by E.L. Smith)

The price of cotton has varied throughout the years. In the 1820's, 1830's and 1840's cotton sold for four and five cents a pound, and to market it in Milledgeville, Macon, or Griffin necessitated a long haul; and, yet, the people were prosperous. This was due, no doubt, to the fact that everything consumed on the plantation was produced at home, even the wearing apparel, except that of extra fine quality. The land yielded a living for ~~the~~ its owners, their families, and their slaves.