

CHESTER TIMES – March 13, 1903

THE KENTS BUY A PROPERTY AT BURMONT – Lewis Estate Purchased by the Clifton Heights Manufacturers – To Preserve Water Power

An Orphans' Court sale of valuable property took place yesterday when the Lewis estate out in Burmont, a short distance from Clifton Heights, passed into other hands. There were a number of bidders on the property, but it was number of bidders on the property, but it was knocked down to Henry T. Kent, of the well-known manufacturing firm in Clifton Heights.

It was rumored that the company, which has acquired the place, one of the oldest in this county, intended to erect a large plant there and probably build some houses, but it has been learned from an authentic source that such is not the case. The firm one of the members says, has no plans in contemplation, further than to hold the estate and keep the dam in good condition so that the water supply can be drawn therefrom for the purpose of operating the present extensive mills.

The estate is located in the bend of Darby Creek, south of Kellyville and the mills were known as the Matthews paper mills, later as the Bee Hive mills. During the Revolution, on March 31, 1777, almost 126 years ago, Morris Truman and Joseph Cruikshank purchased six acres of land from Joseph Bonsall. The team conferred on the purchasers the right to erect such mills as they saw fit; to build on the creek a dam abutting on Bonsall's land, also to raise the water to a sufficient height to supply the power to carry on the mills. It is this dam that the Kents desire to perpetuate.

In 1778 a low, two story stone mill and two houses were erected. The mills were operated until 1785 by this firm, when Trueman purchased Cruikshank's interest in the property, operating the paper mills until 1788, when he associated Evan Trueman in the business. In April 1799 Trueman sold the estate to John Matthews, who conducted the business until his death and was succeeded by his two sons, one of whom was Thomas. IN 1859 Matthews sold the place to J. Howard Lewis, who conveyed it, in the next year to his brother Samuel. The latter changed the mill into a cotton factory.

New buildings were erected in 1868, these being destroyed by fire in 1876. The plant was rebuilt and cotton manufacturing resumed, they being again destroyed by fire, but were rebuilt in 1885. George D. Lewis, for a time, made asbestos there.