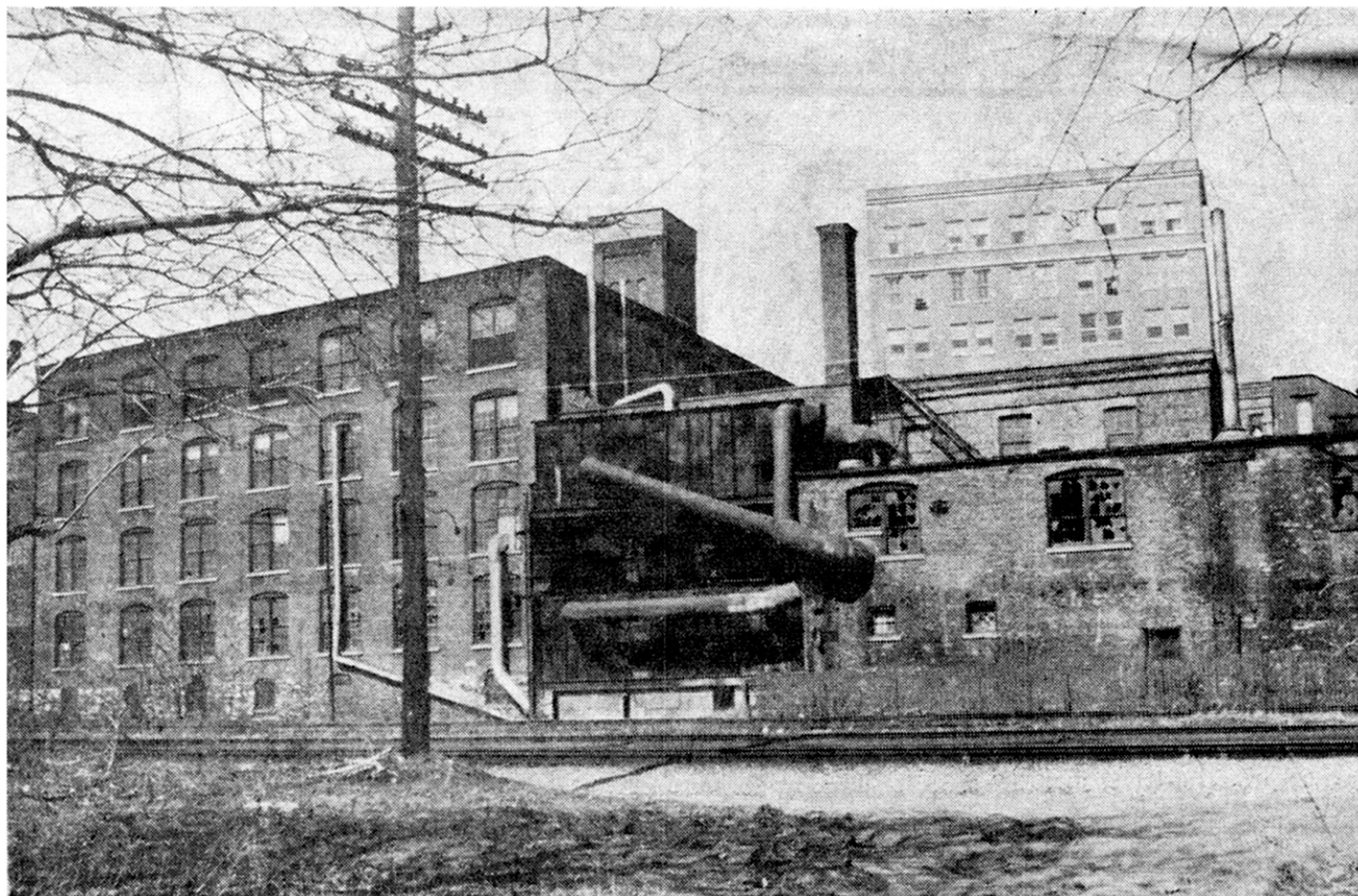


Arterial Scrapbook No. 11



WHERE THE CHUCTANUNDA FLOWS - the huge pipes between these two buildings of Harvey Chalmers & Sons are directly over the Chuctanunda Creek that flows under the New York Central and under the ramp leading to the railroad station (officially known as "Railroad Place") where it joins the

Mohawk. The building on the right was the Pioneer Hosiery Company 100 years ago. The larger structure on the left in the photo was built in 1903 in a Chalmers expansion. An 1807 map of Veddersburg shows an oil mill near the mouth of the creek. (Donlon)

Biggest Button Factory Bows to Time, Arterial

When Amsterdam was at the height of its industrial renown, these two plants of Harvey Chalmers & Son were basis for the trade billing: "Largest manufacturers of pearl buttons in the world." In the years after the turn of the century, 25,000 gross of finished pearl buttons were produced here every day.

To them in carload lots from 12 factories of the mid-West came the "blanks," stamped out from fresh water shells gathered along the Mississippi, and from the local shops went the polished buttons to be sewn on cards at Amsterdam households. Countless families were "sewing buttons." It was a big industry for the town. At peak, more than 500 employes were at work in these two buildings.

The factory at the right in the photo. was one of the oldest buildings in downtown

Amsterdam, dated from the middle 1850's. It was built by Adam Kline and was later known as the Pioneer Hosiery mill.

An East Main St. fire destroyed the hardware store of Harvey Chalmers & Son on Jan. 10, 1898, and the legal firm of Hansen and Nisbet, having custody of the old mill, then unoccupied offered use of part of it to Chalmers Sr. and Jr.

Additional space gave opportunity for the hardware firm to expand and additional mill supplies were added. Among the new lines were the pearl buttons, that were destined to become a principal industrial product of Amsterdam.

1903 Button Shop

It was a fast-growing business—so fast that on June 13, 1902, announcement was made that Builder Henry C. Grieme was to construct a new Chalmers factory on

the site of the "Old Carmichael Malt House." The land had been purchased by the Chalmers a short time previous on the west side of the Chuctanunda Creek, opposite to the factory then in use. (To the left in the photo.)

As viewed from the New York Central side, the Chuctanunda Creek was not in sight because the two factories, one on each side of the creek, were joined over the community's principal waterway.

It was big business while it lasted, but along came plastic buttons, as revolutionary as the fresh water buttons at the beginning of the century. Demand for the Amsterdam product disappeared. Then the workers. Finally, the buildings. A new generation, traveling the arterial along the Mohawk River, will never know this once-familiar scene.