

MAYODAN IS HOME OF WORLD FAMOUS MAYO MILLS

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VF
Rockingham Co.
Mayodan

In 1895 Colonel J.H. Fries, of Winston-Salem, and W.C. Ruffin, of Rocky Mount, both of whom were cotton manufacturers, bought as agents of the Piedmont Land Company four hundred acres of land on which Mayodan is now built. The two manufacturers retained ten acres of the 400 for the site of the Mayo Mills, which they were planning to build immediately. Those ten acres, of course, embraced the water falls in the Mayo river

Colonel Fries and Ruffin began immediately the construction of the cotton mill, a dam across the river, and fifty houses for the employees for the operation of the mill.

At the same time the Piedmont Land Company, under the direction of F.B. Kempt, of Reidsville, was busy selling the lots of the town to prospective residents and merchants, some of whom began to build stores and houses.

In the early part of 1895 the town was incorporated, taking its name from two nearby rivers, the Mayo and Dan, hence Mayodan. The first town officers were: mayor, W.C. Ruffin; commissioners, L. W. Blackwell, C. G. Carter, and F. B. Kempt.

Early in 1896 L.W. Blackstone opened up a big, brick general store on the spot which is now occupied by the Coca-Cola Bottling Co., and J.H. Ault opened a similar merchandise outlay on the corner of Main and Adams streets. These were the town's first merchants.

Mills Started in 1895

In May of the previous year, 1895, the first cotton was ran through the Mayo Mills, which at the time was entirely dependent on the water power of the river for its operation. The employees, numbering between 250 to 300, were drafted into the town from Rocky Mount and Valdosta, Ga.,

two towns which were already leaders in cotton manufacturing. Raw labor came from Stokes and Surry counties.

The only product of the early mill was cotton spun yarns, and it was not until 1912, one year after a similar yarn mill, operated by Colonel Fries at Avonlon had burned, that the knitting mill for the manufacture of cotton underwear was added.

However, in 1900 the mill had added a steam plant to serve it with power which has, in its turn, become inadequate, and now the Mills are providing with an hydroelectric plant at the original site of the Avonlon Mills enough electricity to operate and light the town of Mayodan. However, they keep a subcontract with Duke Power Company in case of emergency.

In 1923 the Mayo Mills, after stupendous growth, had called for many new additions to the original mill, consolidated with the Washington Mills, assuming the name Washington Mills which have in addition to the mill at Mayodan a sheeting mill at Fries, Virginia.

A WORLD LEADER

Today the mill at Mayodan rates as the biggest manufacturer of cotton-knit underwear for the men and boys in the world. There are 24,696 spindles used in the spinning room where the mill spins its yarn for the manufacture of its underwear. And the mill is using around 1400 employees in their daily capacity of 200,000 dozen suits of underwear. The plant has its own machine shops, power plant, and eleven storage houses.

W.H. Bollin is general manager and J.C. Johnson, office manager of the Mayo unit of the Washington Mills Company, whose head offices are in Winston-Salem.

The town of Mayodan, keeping pace with the progress of the mills, has grown from its original fifty-house town to a sizable town of some

3,000 inhabitants with all the advantages of a modern city. Just about the time that the town and mills were being constructed the Norfolk and Western Railroad made its advent assuring the city of ingress and egress for its raw materials and manufactured products. Futhermore the town is situated on U.S. 77, reaching, from Richmond to Atlanta and thence to all southern and northern points.

The city, with its modern government, headed by Mayor H. Roy Martin, and councilmon C.P. Baughn, W.H. Price, Sr., and J.C. Johnson, who serves also as city clerk, has an assessed valuation of approximatley 1,500,000.00. The tax rate is unbelievably low at 10¢ what with paved streets, excellent water works, well policed streets ample sewerage disposal, and adequate schools.

Good School System

The schools of Mayodan are of the best. The first school was taught 38 years ago by Mrs. L.W. Weatherlsby in one room of the Moravian church. From that humble beginning the school system has grown into a plant that represents an outlay of 75,000. In 1925 the present school was built on a lot donated the county by the Washington Mills Co.

There are six hundred pupils, 101 of whom are high school students, attending the schools of which E.F. Ducan is principal. There are eighteen teachers employed in the school system. This fall six additional rooms will be constructed through the PWA loan to the county. An exceptional asset of the schools is the 7,000 gymnasium which was given to the town by the Washington Mills in 1933.

Mayodan possesses a modern three story hotel which has grown from a log cabin that was present on the original 400 acre purchase of the town's builders. The original hotel was operated by Mistress Lucy Higgins, but the one story log cabin of her day has been remodeled many times to make The

modern hotel that serves the city and transient guests today.

Mayodan had its first bank in 1916 when the Bank of Mayodan was opened by J.O. Ragsdale who has remained its president to the present time. The Bank has total resources of \$184,826.52.

Mayodan is a comparatively young town, but it's wide awake modernity has placed it among the industrial leaders of Rockingham Co, and the State of North Carolina.

Mayodan Presses Civic Betterment

AYODAN

Factory Town Becomes Busy Shopping Center

Mayodan. — Surrounded by towns which are larger, Mayodan, in Rockingham County, can be looked for some substantial advances in the near future.

That's because there's been a recent upsurge of civic achievement.

Instead of habitually going to nearby towns to do all their shopping, residents in the last few years have begun to patronize more and more their local businesses.

Many New Homes Planned

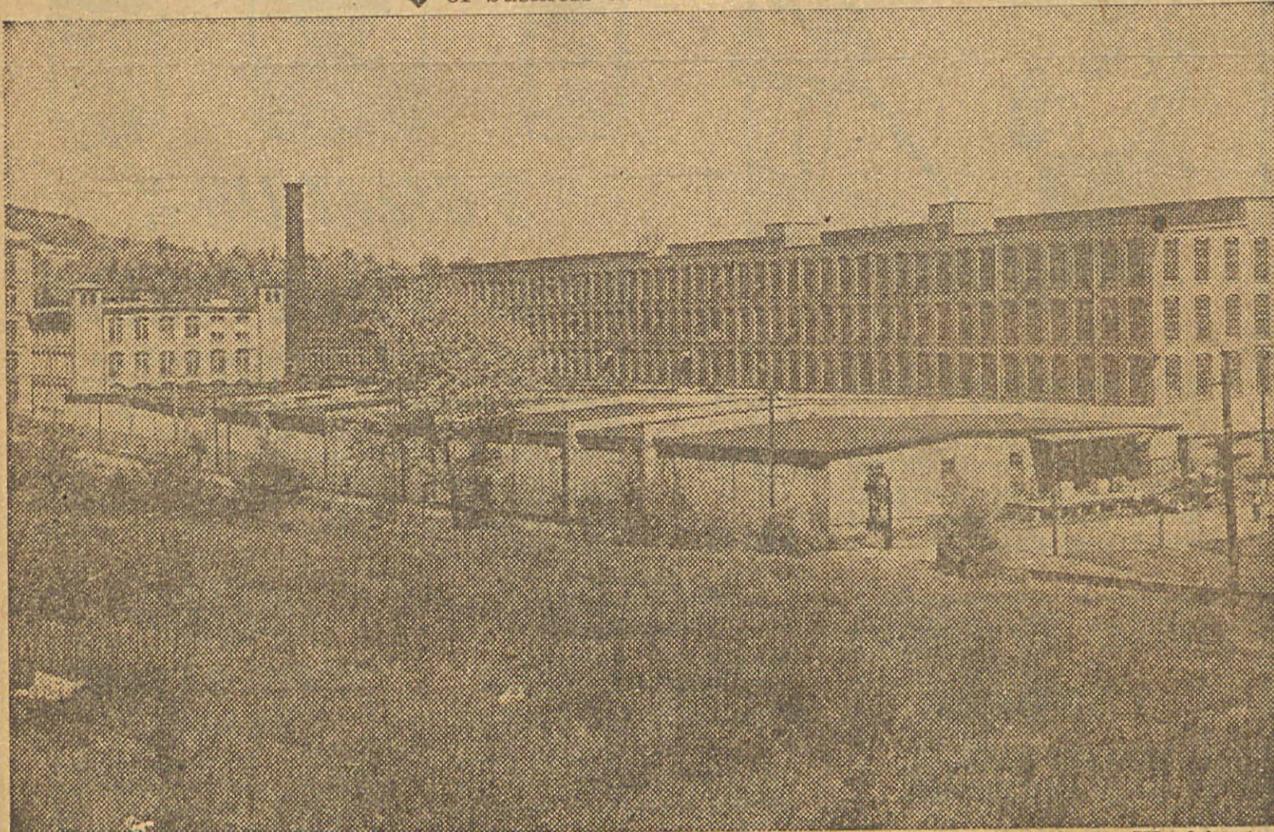
A mill town whose population generally has remained constant, a building boom of minor proportions is expected when materials and labor become more plentiful. One official of Washington Mills, the largest single employing unit in the town, said he knew personally of sale of about 75 lots on which the purchasers planned eventually to erect their own homes.

Mayodan is not the largest nor most beautiful town in



(Staff Photos by Tom Pitts.)

BUSINESS IS GOOD—Mayodan's position as a trading town in the area rapidly is climbing, and a healthy increase in cash receipts and profits is noted each successive year. This view of part of the business district shows many parked cars, an indication of the volume of business the little mill town now is getting.



CHIEF SUPPORT HERE—Principal industry in Mayodan is the tremendous Washington Mills which furnish employment to a large proportion of Mayodan residents. This mill furnishes the water and electricity to the town's houses and business firms.

Rockingham County, but more and more lately there has been an awakening as to the possibilities inherent in the beautiful scenic section in which the town lies.

If everybody carries out the ideas in home building they have announced, then the town will be practically transformed.

Recreational facilities for teen-agers, always a problem in any town regardless of its size or financial backing, have been handled exceptionally well in Mayodan.

Town mothers get the credit for the idea by which an old skating rink was turned into a Teen-Age Club where the smaller fry could romp and exercise.

Schoolteachers, church leaders and clergymen and interested citizens all have taken part in the project.

Currently, there are no definite plans for new recreational facilities, but there's a lot of talk circulating about what should be done. It's a safe bet that sooner or later a definite project will get under way.

Need Fire Department

Greatest need right now is for a trained fire department. The town has none at all now, and the fire insurance rate is high. Nearby Madison can give assistance when necessary, but

this arrangement naturally is not the solution.

This is the project to which city leaders are bending their efforts.

Washington Mills furnishes the town with its electricity and water, a situation similar to other North Carolina mill towns.

Tax rate in Mayodan recently was upped to its present figure of 60 cents per \$100. Town leaders hope this raise will give them additional funds for city projects such as the fire department and possibly some street work, though recently thoroughfares were repaired and checked over.

Although stuck right next to

Madison—which is a vigorously-operated trading center—Mayodan draws a surprisingly large amount of county businesses to its medium-sized business district, plus a large amount of city trade.

One project worthy of note is the Mayodan public library, sponsored jointly by the county and the city with Washington Mills assistance. It is an ample installation and serves an increasing number of persons.

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Aug 15/49

Mayodan Chief of Police Is Scourge of Bootleggers

By **BILL EAST**
(Staff Correspondent)

Mayodan.—Eddie Weston would rather raid a liquor still than eat a dinner of Southern fried chicken topped off with chocolate ice cream and cake.

The 39-year-old athletically-built Mayodan chief of police has been in on the kill more than 500 times in the last 15 years when officers put home-made liquor factories out of business.

Every time he begins to talk about grabbing bootleggers and liquor stills, Chief Weston gets a light in his eyes. He fell in love with raiding back in 1934 and his feeling never has changed.

"It's just plain fun for me," said the onetime left-fielder for the old Winston-Salem Twins baseball club.

"There's nobody in the world that likes to raid a liquor still better than I do. I've been helping to do it for 15 years and I don't want to ever give up the work."

Expert on Bootleggers

There are folks who say that Eddie Weston knows as much about the bootlegging as any local law enforcement officer in Northwest North Carolina.

For instance, he can tell by the direction from which a liquor car is coming and the manner it is being driven just about who is at the controls—if it happens to be one of the old-timers.

The chief swings around in his chair and talks about police cars much in the manner of a racing car driver. It just about takes racing cars to keep up



(Staff Photo by Bill Ray)

EDDIE WESTON

... Bootleggers know all of the tricks ...

with bootleggers.

"Those fellows know all the tricks," the chief laughed. "If they happen to get behind you when you are supposed to be chasing them, you can be sure they are going to bump you from the rear."

"On the other hand, if they get in front of you, you can be sure they are going to try to outrun you and shake you off their trail."

Why Officers Get Gray

The chief pointed across the street from his little white police station in the center of Mayodan.

"I've had 'em come as close as from here to the other side of the street and turn their cars sideways and all the way around," he declared.

"Now if you don't think that's something that'll scare the heck out of you, then you just haven't ever been scared," he chuckled. "It'll give you gray hairs."

Chief Weston said that using two automobiles to block a highway was one of the officers' favorite methods of catching bootleggers.

"But we have to stand back a couple of hundred yards from the block and warn the cars with a flashlight. If we didn't and the automobiles raced through the blockade, they could unload their liquor and sue us for blocking the road."

Crashing a Road Block

The chief said he had been standing in the middle of the highway plenty of times with automobiles coming at him 60 or 70 miles an hour. "All I had was my

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Mayodan Officer Had Rather Chase Bootleggers Than Eat

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flashlight," he declared.

"One time I saw a bootlegger's car drive through a two-car road block at top speed, strip off all four of his fenders and keep going. I don't think he even slowed down a little bit."

Although Eddie Weston is chief of police at Mayodan, he does not confine his liquor raiding just to the town boundaries or to the county of Rockingham.

"That's what they say about me," the chief laughed. "They say I don't even know where the county boundary is."

A native of High Point, the police chief started in baseball in 1931 with the Durham Bulls. He played with various clubs for more than 10 years, seeing action with the Winston-Salem club in 1939.

He was introduced to Mayodan by playing on its club at various times during his career. Ending his ball-playing in 1941 after having attained a lifetime batting average of .385, Mr. Weston bought a half interest in a poolroom and beer parlor in the west end of Mayodan.

On Feb. 2, 1942, he became police chief at Stoneville, holding that job until Jan. 21, 1946, when he was called back to Mayodan, where he once had been a temporary night policeman, to be its police chief.

Aids Federal Officers

Chief Weston figures he can name more than 50 Federal agents that he's helped on liquor raids at one time or another. The Federal men can raid anywhere.

"The biggest day we ever had," he said, "we got six stills. When you cut down six in a day, you've really done a job. Then one time we raided every day for a week. We got 13 in all. It was the biggest week in our history."

The biggest still that Chief Weston ever helped capture was an 850-gallon submarine type which was just over the Rockingham County line in Henry County, Va.

The police chief rubbed his hand through his bushy hair. "There's been a lot of liquor made in Rockingham County," he reminisced.

But he does not believe that Rockingham now is one of the top producers. "There's right much over there in Stokes," he said.

"In fact, it would be hard to go over there and walk down a creek any distance and not come across a still."

Some Scared Off

And what about the market for the home-made product?

"A lot of fellows who used to haul into Winston-Salem, Greensboro and High Point have been scared out of that way," the chief said.

"They are going back the other way into Virginia and West Virginia. They say there's a good market for the liquor back in the coal fields."

Chief Weston, who married a Mayodan girl, Mildred Cleo Williams, and has two sons, says that stills today are better built than they were during the war or before the war.

"Back when they couldn't get good materials," he declared, "the fellows used to solder two tin tubs together or use steel oil drums. In four and one-half year of war, we never saw anything real good in the way of a still."

The chief and his raiders work scientifically.

They figure if they capture the worm or condenser from the still and the operator gets away they have set the still operator back 30 days.

May Replace Man

If they get the entire still then they've set the operator back from four to eight weeks. If the officers get the still operator, then he sometimes has to be replaced on the liquor staff.

"Folks are rather peculiar about having anything dealing with still equipment around their houses," the chief said. "If they do they can be charged with having materials for a distillery. The folks usually put the equipment out in the woods which makes the owners darn hard to track down."

Chief Weston said many of the stills now have their worms or condensers made from an excellent grade of copper. He suspects that some small metal shops back from the usual traveled roads perhaps may cooperate by building the stills.

Once it is captured, the copper equipment stops making liquor and serves a good purpose. Chief Weston turns them over to the Red Cross for whatever use it wants to make of the metal.

MAYODAN

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AUBURN GLENN FARRIS — Messenger Photo

The People We Live With

A. G. Farris, present Mayor of Mayodan, was born on February 21st in the year 1903 in the Deep Springs section of our county, a son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Oliver H. Farris of that section.

Mr. Farris received his early schooling at a country school where seven classes were taught by one teacher in one room. He later attended Mars Hill Junior for one year and the Madison High School from which he was graduated.

Following High School Mr. Farris teamed up with Robert R. Grogan and together they bought and operated the concession at the Pickwick Theatre in Mayodan. Mr. Grogan sold out his interest to Mr. Farris in a few months and Mr. Farris operated the concession successfully for a year and a half when he opened up a cafe of his own in the old Post Office Building in Mayodan.

He operated this business for a short time and then hit his real stride when in 1928 he opened up the beginnings of his present business as a men's clothing store under the name of A. G. Farris in the Baughn building now occupied by Turner's Cafe.

For three successful years Mr. Farris operated his men's store in the Baughn building. In 1931 he moved into his own building, the one now occupied by Farris Department Store. At that time he added a full line of womens' clothing. He has had a very successful operation to the present date. On the side, Mr. Farris farms and flies his own plane.

On April 28, 1925 Mr. Farris married the former Miss Mamie Tesh of Mayodan. They have had two sons, A. G. "Jack" Farris who was tragically killed by a falling power line while a student at Oak Ridge Military Academy on October 16, 1943; and James Farris who is at present in the Navy and now stationed on the big flat-top "Leyte" in southern waters. Mr. Farris is a devout Christian and a member of the Mayodan Moravian Church. He is a charter member of the Mayodan Rotary Club and its present President. He is also active in and a past director of the Mayodan Merchant's Association.

It's a fine group of men and they have built up an organization that any town can be proud of", he says. His term of office has been marked by progress in many fields, the most obvious of which is the recent extension of street paving and sewage disposal. He is a modest man and a hard worker. He has made his way pretty much by himself and has been successful in accumulating, both worldly goods and the esteem of the people of his community.

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Staff Photo by Tom Pitts

MAYODAN DEDICATION—Hostesses for the dedication ceremonies at the new YMCA building at Mayodan greet Agnew H. Bahnson Sr., of Winston-Salem, chairman of the board of Washington Mills Company. Left to right are Mrs. Charles Brown, Mrs. Melvin Powers, Mrs. Peggy Shreve and Mrs. Jo Puckett.

N.C. Mayodan

Mayodan's 'Y' Fills Out Recreation Facilities

Journal + Sentinel - 3-28-54

By Rixie Hunter

Journal Reporter

MAYODAN, March 27 — For a town of approximately 3,000 persons, Mayodan is about as complete in recreation facilities as any community in this part of the country.

The dedication Friday of its new \$500,000 YMCA building rounds out a community-wide program which should, in the words of the YMCA, provide a wholesome and religious activities for men and women, boys and girls.

Already, Secretary J. D. Hicks has outlined a full year's program that will utilize not only the building but the park and, most of all, the people, of whom 1,700 are members.

The program includes the organization of clubs for men and women, girls' clubs, young married women's clubs, teen-age clubs and others.

Prayer services, formerly held in the Mayodan School, may be held at night in the new YMCA building. There will be a spiritual emphasis week, Bible lectures, book reviews, musical programs and programs on special occasions such as Thanksgiving, Halloween, and the community fair.

In physical education, the 'Y' will conduct classes in various types of athletics and will organize teams such as basketball (for which it

has a shiny new gymnasium), badminton, wrestling, archery, volleyball and bowling.

Gym classes will be held for boys after school, there will be a Saturday morning basketball league, and various other teams will be organized for small boys.

Girls, too, will be included in the physical education program, with a bowling team, exercise class, volleyball, badminton, archery and even a croquet class.

During the summer, the program will be moved largely to Mayo Park for swimming classes, boating and fishing, camping, and other outdoor activities.

Mayodan has had a YMCA program since 1946, but the headquarters was one large room in a building downtown. The new building, officials say, will be the beginning of the first real community-wide program.