

Joshua Aubin

Amesbury's Woolen Mills Factory Owner

Researched by Laura Rudd - 2002

Joshua Aubin was born in Newburyport on June 7, 1794. His father was Captian Philip Aubin (whose residence still stands on Orange Street). Philip Aubin was one of the incorporators in 1794 of the first-ever woolen mills in the United States. The mill location was in Byfield, Massachusetts. When Philip Aubin died in 1801, he left young Joshua the burden of caring for his widowed mother, since his three older brothers had gone off to sea. Joshua was twelve at the time and he found work at a clothing store in Newburyport. Then he began a business for himself at Cornhill, Boston. At this very same place he met his future wife, Mary Bussey Newell, whom he married in 1817. Three years later his business went into bankruptcy. He then became associated with Amos and Abbot Lawrence and their agents who bought a small brick mill on the Powow River in Amesbury. They paid \$7000 for it. They then made extensive repairs and set up the machines for the flannel. In spring of 1822 the mill was in full operation.

This flannel - making company was the first in this country, if not in the world to successfully use the power loom to weave woolen warps. As the power loom proved its worth it replaced handlooms. Operating sixty looms by waterpower instead of by hand meant saving about forty dollars daily. The number of weavers was cut from sixty men to thirty girls, who the company owners claimed did more careful work than the men. In 1835, the mill began mixing and carding cotton with wool. This material was attractive and sold as readily as 100% woolen cloth.

In December 1852, after having served for thirty years as the agent of the Amesbury Flannel Manufacturing Company, Joshua Aubin resigned his position. In some measure this was because of the "Derby" strike of 1852. (See: [George McNeill](#))

Click here for more about [Woolen Manufacturing](#) in Amesbury

Source:???

Redford , Sara Locke. [History of Amesbury](#) , Whittier Press, Amesbury, Massachussetts,1968.