

NATIONAL FILTER MEDIA CORPORATION . . . Filter Fabric Specialists



Ancient Romans used perforated plates of silver and bronze to strain wine for their wealthy merchants; and filtered it for the poor through linen or other fabric. The Chinese, too, apparently knew something about filtration for they sipped the heady nectar of grape as far back as 2000 B.C.; and it is pretty certain that long before that time the prehistoric Cro-Magnon, the tall erect men who lived in the caves of Dordogne in France and in other parts of Europe, enjoyed purified water. Thus, the straining of liquids to hold back solids is a very old story.

It is a familiar story to The National Filter Media Corporation. For more than three quarters of a century we have pioneered in the manufacture and supply of cotton and other fabrics for filtration purposes. We are today leading pioneers in the development and application of modern synthetics, such as Acrylic, Polyester, Polypropylene, Nomex, Nylon, Glass, Teflon and Polyethylene. As soon as a synthetic fiber is born we test it for weavability and strength, and for corrosion and temperature resistance when these are unknown factors. New fibers which pass our specifications join the line of specialty fabrics rolling off the looms into chemical, food, mining, ceramics, plating and other industries, wherever filtration is employed.

We offer our customers total filter media capability. That means, whatever a customer needs we fabricate and possibly develop for them. Our business is a highly specialized one, requiring over 1,500 different rolls of cloth in stock. Some

we develop as a proprietary part of our business; giving our customers a specially designed weave for their special filtering needs on a repeat basis.

THE HISTORY OF NFM

The early 1900's were years of active experimentation and technological progress in the field of filtration. The slow and limited methods of the Middle Ages, allowing liquids to ooze over felt or woven cloth and drip by gravity from one vessel to another for purification, were not sufficient for the needs of the day. Mechanical filtration was introduced and progressed under a growing demand for new types of filter cloth. National Filter Cloth and Weaving Company was founded by Albert Prior in 1906 to supply filter bags for industry. The Brooklyn based plant produced filter bags which separated solids from liquids and was a forerunner to National Filter Media Corporation.

In 1915, Spencer P. Felt formed a separate company called Filter Fabrics Company in Salt Lake City that supplied filter bags to the western part of the United States. Felt, a mining engineer, lived as a boy in the old gold mining camp of Mercur, Utah, where his father, the "cashier" of a one man bank, kept two guns openly exposed at all times. Young Felt grew up in the days of the old vigilantes. As a college student he worked on surveying gangs as rod man and on a surveying crew for the railroad. After college he went to work for the old Kelly Filter Press Company at Salt Lake City, where he helped develop a suitable porous medium for flotation cells used in the mining industry. He worked there until 1915 when he founded the Filter Fabrics Company.

In 1922, the country-loving Albert Prior found Brooklyn was fast becoming too densely populated. Needing expansion, he moved his factory to its present site in Hamden, Connecticut. Shortly after his death in 1930 his only son, Russell D. Prior, formed a separate filter cloth converting company in New York. In 1932 Prior and Felt, together with Oliver United Filters, joined to form Filter Media Corporation.

The Connecticut plant had been under separate management since Albert Prior's

death in 1930. In 1943, Oliver, Prior and Felt had an opportunity to purchase the Hamden, Connecticut, plant. They did so and consolidated their eastern operations at Hamden. Thus, the National Filter Media Corporation ("NFM") was formed.

Russell Prior was killed in a tragic fireworks explosion on July 4, 1951, and his widow maintained her ownership until 1954, at which time she sold it to Oliver United Filters, who, in turn, one year later merged with the Dorr Company to form Dorr-Oliver, Incorporated. Ownership has remained the same, with Dorr-Oliver owning two-thirds and the Spencer P. Felt family of Salt Lake City, Utah, owning one-third until 1984.

By 1964 NFM had outgrown its rented facilities in Salt Lake City and built a 13,000 square foot plant. At that same time the Eastern Division at Hamden was approaching capacity and a new operation was started in Moorestown, New Jersey. There NFM consolidated its dry filtration products, leaving the Hamden plant exclusively for wet filtration products. Plant additions were made to both the physical facilities at Salt Lake City, Utah and Moorestown, New Jersey.

Continued growth made it necessary to expand again in 1970 in both the Eastern and Western locations. That same year NFM formed a wholly owned subsidiary in Canada, called Universal Filter Media, LTD., to supply its Canadian customers.

In 1978, in order to penetrate a greatly expanding Southern market, NFM built its fourth U.S. facility in Olive Branch, Mississippi, a suburb of Memphis, Tennessee. This new plant produces both the wet and dry filtration products for the Southern and Mid-east portions of the United States.

In July of 1984, the Spencer P. Felt family, together with the Steiner Corporation of Salt Lake City, Utah, purchased the two-thirds of NFM owned by Dorr-Oliver. At this time the corporate headquarters were moved from Hamden, Connecticut to Salt Lake City, Utah.

In January 1991, the Steiner Corporation acquired total control of NFM by effectively purchasing the Felt family's interest. Effective June 30, 1991, Spencer P. Felt, Jr., President, retired. Boyd V. Rydalch was appointed President of National Filter Media Corporation as of July 1, 1991.

In 1996, additions were made to the Mississippi and Utah plants, almost doubling their size. The New Jersey plant was closed and New Jersey production was moved to the Mississippi plant. A new 33,000 square foot state of the art facility was constructed in 1998 to replace the Hamden, Connecticut facility which was constructed in 1922. The new facility is located in Wallingford, CT and offers laser cutting capabilities and the full range of liquid and dust filtration requirements as well as a complete line of filtration hardware.

National Filter Media Corporation's growth is a credit to the quality and hard work of its loyal employees

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