

Paine, Sidney Small ^[1]

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by William S. Powell, 1994

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Sidney Small Paine, [cotton manufacturer](#) ^[2], was born in Boston, Mass., the son of Sidney Borden and Mary Adams Small Paine. A 1908 graduate of Brown University, he became an engine oiler at the textile firm of Amoskeag Manufacturing Company in Manchester, N.H. After recovering from poliomyelitis, he determined to enter the ministry and attended [Newton Theological Seminary](#) ^[3] in Newton, Mass. (1909–10) and the [University of Chicago](#) ^[4] (1910–11). Convinced that this choice was not suitable for him, he became a machine operator with the Nonquit Spinning Company in New Bedford, Mass. (1911–13) and then a cotton classer at the Wamsutta Mills in the same place (1913–15). Following a year as night superintendent of a spinning company in Rhode Island, he was superintendent of the Lawton Mills in Connecticut from 1917 to 1921. Between 1921 and 1924 he was a consultant with the Cotton Research Company in Boston. In 1924 he organized and was president of the Textile Development Company with offices in Boston and Greensboro, N.C. Surveying all aspects of textile mill operations, his firm not only made recommendations for management but also supervised their implementation.

Before selling his company in 1934, Paine had been responsible for surveying over a thousand mills in the United States and abroad and in 1928 had also become president and director of the Tabardrey Manufacturing Company, in Haw River, where he remained until 1945. He more than doubled the capacity of Tabardrey and made it into one of the country's leading producers of corduroy. This company in 1945, together with others, merged to form the [Cone Mills Corporation](#) ^[5] with some eighteen plants in the Carolinas and Alabama. Paine was vice-president (1946–51) and director (1946–52). In 1933 he became president and director of the Asheville Cotton Mills, serving until 1947 and also as chairman of the board until 1949. From 1933 to 1946 he was president of the Eno Cotton Mills, Hillsborough, and afterwards, until 1949, also chairman of the board. To the mills in Asheville and Hillsborough he brought greater management efficiency and improved procedures.

As a longtime resident of [Greensboro](#) ^[6], Paine was active in such local organizations as the [Salvation Army](#) ^[7], the Juvenile Court Commission, and the City Government Reorganization Survey Commission. Late in life he became a self-taught wood-carver and a teacher of wood carving, especially at the Orthopedic Hospital in Greensboro. To his church, Holy Trinity [Episcopal Church](#) ^[8], he contributed a carved pulpit, lectern, bishop's chair, litany desk, credence table, communion rail, large organ screen, and wall carving of the Last Supper. For his wood carving he received the O. Henry Award for Artistic Achievement.

Paine's wife, whom he married in 1909, was the former Audrey Lydia Lake. They were the parents of Sidney Lake, Audrey (Mrs. John J. Slattery), and Barbara (Mrs. Wilbur J. Harrell). He died in Greensboro.

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