

a sizeable extension was added to the works at Easley and the Sandford Works was closed; the Jonesboro works had already been closed before the Stone-Platt acquisition. The Spanish company was renamed Platt Saco Lowell S.A. and allied with Platt Saco Lowell Limited.

The continuous filament branch of the textile industry was in the early nineteen-seventies one in which radical and rapid changes in technology were taking place. Texturising (a crinkling process to cause the continuous filament yarns to be in nature similar to spun yarns) figured chief amongst those in vogue and the throwsters were calling for a machine to combine the texturising process and the preceding drawing process in that one machine. This call had spelled danger to the Platt Drawtwisters and, in consequence, a crash development programme had been put in hand to produce a Draw-texturising Machine. A prototype model had been built and following a series of tests, at Helmsore, was on the verge of installation in a mill for evaluation under practical working conditions. However, at that juncture the opportunity arose for Stone-Platt to buy the firm of Ernest Scragg & Sons (Holdings) Limited of Macclesfield.

The principal manufacturing subsidiary company of Scragg (Holdings) – Ernest Scragg & Sons Limited – was one of the world's leading and most experienced makers of continuous filament processing machinery. It had been founded in 1889 and had incorporated the older firm of Swindells, founded in 1878, to make machinery for throwing (twisting) silk. Its main works were in Macclesfield itself and at Langley, near Macclesfield, with secondary works at Altrincham and in Oldham (formerly the works of William Bodden & Son Limited – spindle makers) where also it operated a foundry. Scragg already had on the market proven Draw-texturising Machines and was well advanced with the development of these. Moreover, Scragg (Holdings) had, through its subsidiary companies in the USA and Hong Kong – Scragg North America Inc. and Scragg Far East Limited – a known and trusted reputation for its machinery in the markets of North America and the Far East. It also offered through a subsidiary company – Abbey Electronics Limited – based at Macclesfield, a line of electronic equipment which could be a useful adjunct to Stone-Platt's range of products. In 1975, Stone-Platt bought Scragg and, following the pattern which had occurred on the purchase of Saco-Lowell, the Chairman of Scragg (Holdings) was invited to join the Board of Directors of Stone-Platt. The complement of Scragg companies was accorded the status of a separate division of Stone-Platt, with its headquarters remaining at Macclesfield. Upon the acquisition of Scragg, Platt Saco Lowell ceased work on continuous filament machinery. However, Platt Saco Lowell did derive a benefit from the Scragg acquisition because Scragg had made a surprising

departure, from its traditional line of machinery, when it had ventured into the development of an Open-end Spinning Machine. Some prototype machines had been made, one of which, at the time of the acquisition, was undergoing a programme of tests in a Lancashire cotton mill. Another of the machines was taken to the Helmsore research establishment, along with design details and test data, for examination from which an insight into some alternative and novel approaches to open-end spinning were gleaned.