

CHESTER TIMES – July 31, 1915 – MARCUS HOOK'S BIG DYE PLANT –
Benzol Products Company Will Help Relieve Stringency Caused by European War

The immense plant of the Benzol Products Company for the manufacture of aniline oils and salts used in dyeing textile fabrics has been completed at Marcus Hook and will be in operation within a short time. It is one of three or four big plants for the manufacture of dye bases which have been erected in different parts of the country, most of them enterprises of Thomas A. Edison.

The Benzol Products Company has a small plant in Frankford now, where for years the Benzol products for the production of dyes were manufactured on a somewhat small scale and with not very profitable results. The new plant is to be operated on a very large scale and the company is said to have a capitalization of \$1,000,000 now and to be backed by the tremendous wealth of the Barrett Manufacturing Company, the largest manufacturers of coal tar products in America, with immense plants in all parts of the country; the General Chemical Company, which also has large plants all over the country, including one at Marcus Hook which adjoins the Benzol Company plant and the Semet-Solvay company of Buffalo, which operates a number of large plants.

THREE LARGE BUILDINGS – The new plant consists of three large factory buildings, one of them three stories high, 360 by 75 feet, another two stories, 60 by 300 feet, and the third, two stories high, 547 by 80 feet. All are of brick and concrete construction and there are numerous auxiliary buildings of smaller size.

The company has seventy-five acres of ground, lying somewhat back from the river and part of it is in Pennsylvania and part in Delaware. The working force at the plant will be from 1200 to 1500 men. The plant is brought here from England, where he was manager of a large dye manufacturing plant of this kind.

The manufacturers of the country consume about \$15,000,000 worth of dyestuffs a year and in the past all but \$3,000,000 worth of this was supplied by Germany, the rest being made up here largely from base products sent here from Germany which really were half made or nearly completed dyes. By their low prices the Germans simply wiped out competition on most entirely controlled the business. The war, of course, cut off their exports and the supply of dyes to the textile manufacturers of the country became a serious problem and was taken up by the Government.

MUCH FORMERLY WASTED – Investigation showed that Benzol, the base from which aniline oils are obtained was being wasted in large quantities at coke ovens and in steel plants all over the country. It was being manufactured, of course, but not in such great quantities as might be. However, when the war boosted the price of Benzol from twenty-five cents a gallon to from seventy-five to a dollar, the coke people and the steel plants began the installation of apparatus for the production of Benzol and other valuable products, some of which are used in the manufacture of explosives, from the coke smoke. Nearly every large steel mill in this State as well as over the country now is engaged in producing Benzol and if the extension of the business continues long enough will be produced to supply the world with the base product of aniline dyes. New and improved methods of production were worked out, and taking advantage of all of these conditions the backers of the Benzol Products Company believe they will be in a condition to compete with the German dye producers even after the war brings prices down again.