

proposed to exact. Their attempt in the first instance to set up an unfair monopoly brought them presently into a sea of troubles, which they never passed out of, even when they afterwards changed their tack and offered to sell the machines with a license, or a license alone, at a reasonable price.

Misfortune pursued the partners from the beginning. Whitney writes to his father from New Haven in May, 1794, that his machines in Georgia are working well, but that he apprehends great difficulty in manufacturing them as fast as they are needed. In March of the following year he writes again, saying that his factory in New Haven has been destroyed by fire: "When I returned home from N. York I found my property all in ashes! My shop, all my tools, material and work equal to twenty finished cotton machines all gone. The manner in which it took fire is altogether unaccountable." Besides, the partners found themselves in distress for lack of capital. Then word came from England that the Manchester spinners had found the ginned cotton to contain knots, and this was sufficient to start the rumor throughout the South that Whitney's gin injured the cotton fiber and that cotton cleaned by them was worthless. It was two years before this ghost was laid.