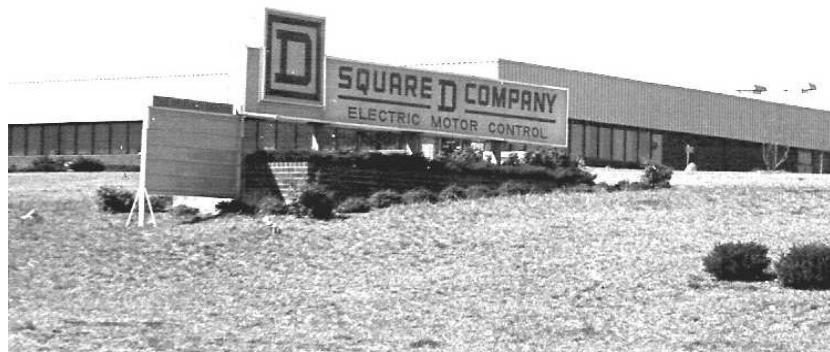


**Square D Company
Knightdale, NC Plant**



Original Sign

Square D comes to Knightdale

Project Ginger started in mid 1971. The codename for Square D Company to plan for the construction of a new plant in the North Carolina area. The company looked at as many as 60 communities and eventually settled on about 5, including 2 in Wake County. Square D is a major international manufacturer of electrical distribution and control products used in industrial, construction and electrical utility markets. Their headquarters were in Park Ridge, Illinois. According to J. S. Vaughan, Vice President and Control Group Manager, the new factory and office building is to be about 286,000 square feet and employ about 600-800 employees. Approximately 30,000 Sq ft of office.

As previously announced, D. J. Beck had been named plant Manager of the new plant. Don is the former Works Manager since 1968 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The piece of land eventually chosen was to be about 58.2 acres and to front on Highway 64 just East of the Town of Knightdale. After some minor adjustments and discussion on the Eastern boundry, a creek, this boundry was modified so that the center of the creek became the property line. A slight shift at the junction with the Northern property line left the property at exactly 60 acres for a cost of \$ 210,000.00. The land contained a large very weathered wood house and out back were 2 Tobacco barns, 1 horse and mule stable, a pork house and a wash house. The house was 2 story with 7 rooms, no electricity, no indoor plumbing and a fireplace for heating, along with a wood stove in the kitchen for cooking. In the Rear was a large trellis on which they raised a good quantity of Scuppernong grapes, and an old cast iron bell on a pole which called the family out of the fields for meals. The acreage around the house was used to grow Tobacco, Cotton and Corn. Mr Herbert V. Pair was born in the house in 1927 and stated that his parents had been buried in the family plot on the homestead. Later in 1938 they moved to a new residence and Mr Henry Walker rented the home from the family. He lived there with son Howard and 2 sisters until the Square D purchase. This subject land was a portion of a larger tract of some 105 acres which at the time belonged to the Idell V. Hodge estate holdings of the three children. As previously described this land contained the Pair family Cemetary of about 10 graves. (20 X 25 ft). Photo of house on next page ².

The first option payment on the property made payable to the Hodge estate was processed on 10-19-1971 by the First Wisconsin National Bank of Milwaukee, Wi. and delivered through Square D Co. via a Cashiers Check.

On 11-3-1971 Square D Co. Board of Directors announced the following plans, which include: The Knightdale plant site described herein.

The approval to purchase 80 acres in Columbia S.C. for another plant.

The approval of construction of a 63,000 Ft² addition to the plant in Asheville, N.C.

Old Pair Homeplace Holds Pleasant Memories for Many



On 12-7-1971 the county Board of Adjustments cleared the last legal obstacle for the plant's construction by approving the company's building plans. This plant will provide the county with \$70,000.00 annually in additional property tax.

On 12-23-1971 the Knightdale board of Alderman replied via a letter that they had met and accepted the engineering report on wastewater discharge from the plant and have as such decided that Knightdale will accept the waste from the plant. (O. W. Hedrick Town Clerk) [average daily flow 90,000 Gal]

On 1-3-1972 10 authorizations for disinterment and reinterment forms were processed through the State Dept of Natural and Economic Resources by W. M. Teague and J.S. Vaughan

Closing on the property was scheduled for 1-11-1972 in the office of Judge W. T. Hatch, the lawyer for the Hodge heirs. (Hatch, Little, Bunn, Jones & Ligget of Hillsborough Street, Raleigh) Also on Jan 11, 1972 the news hit "The Raleigh Times". See complete article on page 4.

Before the plans were finalized to begin construction, the biggest item of discussion and debate were the arrangements for handling the water requirements for the plant. It was a fact that Knightdale and the Wake County board had previously spent \$45,000.00 on a study by 2 Engineering firms to determine the long range water & sewer requirements for this part of the county. The proposed Square D water supply was to be taken from wells located between Knightdale and the plant site. The wells could not provide sufficient capacity to supply the plant and it was now being suggested by 2 of the commissioners that a separate line be laid to handle the plant. This line was to cost \$360,000.00 in taxpayer money and was being backed by a member of one of the Engineering firms that drafted the long range plan and a commissioner J.T.Knott, owner of Acres of Space trailer park, adjoining property. Then, as pointed out by Dr. Bethel, Wake Health Director, the decision to lay water and sewer lines to the plant site run contrary to the comprehensive water-sewer plan adopted by the board. *" The first stumble on Square D's trail was over the chosen site which was located beside a piece of land owned by Wake Commissioner J. T. Knott, a developer who assisted Square D in locating the property. Knott played down his site selection role, and dismissed the idea that he could profit from the Square D proximity. But the value of his adjoining land is sure to increase and a conflict of interest question was posed."*¹.

The plant construction went on without too many hitches. The plant and office are fully air-conditioned and all electrical areas of the plant are fed with Square D bus-duct for the convenience of relocating power taps for the machines. There is a separate warehouse building (March, 1980) of 25,000 ft² for storage of packaging material and styrofoam, also a separate building for paint storage with explosion proof electrical wiring because of the fumes and chemicals.

THE RALEIGH TIMES

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JANUARY 11, 1972

Square D Will Construct Plant at Knightdale Site

By TOM GOODING
Times Staff Writer

Square D Company announced today its 200-employee electrical manufacturing plant will be built one mile east of Knightdale on U. S. 44 — the site originally announced several months ago.

Company president M. P. Kartalia made the official announcement today, ending speculation the company had decided to locate outside Wake County.

Besides Kartalia, James S. Vassilao, vice president, and Donald Beck, who will manage the new plant, were in Raleigh today for the announcement. The plant will be the coun-

ty's second largest industrial employer. Warehouse, with about 1,400 workers, is the largest.

The company had announced Nov. 2 that it would locate the 228,000-square-foot plant in Wake County.

At that time, Ed Garland, executive director of the Chamber of Commerce, described the plant as "ideal in that it represents no problem in pollution of either air or water. The plant represents the sophisticated type of industry we are interested in attracting to Wake County."

Garland said the chamber had been working with officials of Square D for more

than six months. "The competitor was real keen. The company started out looking at 60 communities."

On Dec. 28, Beck added an element of doubt about the plant's location when he said the company was still considering several sites and wouldn't make a final decision for at least another week.

Beck also left open the possibility the plant would be located outside Wake County. One local official said recently Forsyth County had offered the company a blank check for all necessary arrangements if the company would locate there.

By the time Beck made the statement, the county had

already cleared all legal obstacles for the plant under the assumption it would be located here.

The Wake Board of Commissioners approved \$500,000 for water and sewer line extensions to the plant on Dec. 6. The money was approved after County Manager Garland Jones said the plant would provide the county with \$70,000 annually in additional property tax.

The sewer and water extensions are part of the comprehensive water and sewer development plan adopted by the commissioners at their November meeting. However,

See SQUARE D, Page 2-A

Square D Decides On Wake Location

Continued From Page One

under that plan, the lines were not to be laid until 1973 or 1974. But the commissioners had indicated in the past that such schedules would be flexible.

The Wake Board of Adjustment cleared the last legal obstacle for the plant's construction Dec. 7, when it approved the company's building plans.

The building plans had to come before the Board of Adjustment because the plant will be located in an area where only residences can be built without board approval.

The company took an option on about 60 acres of the site chosen, a 155-acre tract owned by the heirs of B. C. Hodges.

The original option ran out Dec. 14, but the company extended it until Jan. 14.

The company also has a 238,000-square-foot plant in Asheville that manufactures electrical switches and terminals.

Company officials have said the plant here may be expanded within five to eight years to 1,500 employees and a 500,000-square-foot building. That would make it the largest non-governmental employer in the county.

Square D, headquartered in Park Ridge, Ill., is a major international manufacturer of electric controls, safety switches, motor starters and circuit breakers. It employs 14,000 people in 40 plants and warehouse facilities in eight countries.

Before the plant went into full operation, all new hires were trained in a facility that Square D rented on US 1 just north of the Flea-Market. This facility had complete assembly lines and testing stations to aid in the training of all type of plant personnel. At the peak of training several hundred personnel worked out of this building for a period of up to a year. This included training people from the Milwaukee plant.

The plant has one high bay (22 ft) for taller equipment and initially had a complete plating line for parts manufactured in house. Other separate internal areas covered the following:

- Tool Room and Machining
- Compression Molding
- Injection Molding
- Paint Line
- Punch press
- Heat Treat
- Raw Material Storage
- Fabrication Stores

The Milwaukee product operations moved to this new site in mid-1973.

At the time of opening, the Plant Engineering / Maintenance group was managed by Ray Waynert and after him Al Schneider, who lived in Green Pines took over this responsibility. Al was very active in town activities as well as those at the plant. Many town officials got their first tours of the plant through the cooperation of Al. Previous to these tours only Fire and Rescue had a chance for a good look at the operations inside the plant.

During the early 1980's the Knightdale plant began to manufacture a line of International control products, including starters, contactors and overloads. In 1985 the type P international line became the first product designed using the CAD/CAM system at the Milwaukee Tech Center.

On Wednesday, the last day of August, 1983 during the late evening it was discovered that a 120 pound tank of Chlorine was leaking in a storage room at the rear of the plant. The fire department was called in and with masks adorned managed to haul out the cylinder to allow it to pressure balance outside. The plant was evacuated of some 120 employees of which 6 were treated at Wake Medical Center and released. Also, 8 firefighters were treated at Rex and Wake and released.

The plant also had a concrete pond at the rear of the property which was used for the chillers on the Air-conditioning system. This pond contained 1.2 million gallons of water which also could be used for fire fighting purposes if required.

The plant being for electrical manufacture required a large amount of power for a range of electrical testing, both life testing and withstand/short circuit testing. When the plant was first built the special power installation carried a rating of 230,000 Volts over a dedicated line to the sub-station. From this point the power was split for general plant use and then also auto-transformed to yield laboratory testing of up to 22,000 Amps at 600 Volts in the lab area.

On the other end of the spectrum the office area contained a very well equipt materials testing laboratory for investigating incoming materials as far as composition and material properties. This laboratory also was the location for the Scanning Electron Microscope in later years after its move from the Technical Center in Milw, Wi..

In 1988, the company added a three story 80,000 square foot addition onto the plant, located to the west of the main plant. This addition became the home of all the folks from the Tech center in Milwaukee and also housed folks from the plant in Asheville. These people were Marketing, Advertising, Engineering and Control Business Unit staff members.

In 1990, Square D Co. was sold to Schneider Electric, a French company. Over the next several years product manufacturing was transferred to Mexico leading to the eventual decision to sell the plant in 2004. Also in that year, all employees in the manufacturing plant lost their jobs, leaving only those in the Marketing, Engineering and support positions in the current facility.

About mid year of 2006 the plant finally sold with the option that a portion of the plant would be leased back by those Square D folks currently in the facility.

Reference names for Idell V.Hodge mother of heirs:

Mayme Glynn Hodge Fowler	Executrix	Mrs. J. M. Fowler	daughter
Antionette Hodge Poole		Mrs. J. H. Poole	daughter
Billy Craven Hodge Jr.			son

Reference names for those located in the Pair Family Cemetary

Mary Horton Pair	6-19-1934	~61
Joseph William Pair	11-18-1918	~73
Earnest V. Pair	9-28-1887	Infant
Hilda V. Pair	8-31-1906	3 Yrs
Hedrick Infant		
Reid P. Hodge	2-20-1902	2 Days
Mary F. Hodge	8-26-1904	1 Mth
Henderson M. Hodge	8-20-1906	2 Wks
Edna Earl Hodge	7-7-1909	2 Wks
Croom Infant		

¹ The News and Observer Dec 28, 1971

² The Gold Leaf Farmer Feb 10, 1972

Document By Wayne SCHULZ
44 years service to Square D Co.,
Engineering Department

10-17-2005

32 The News and Observer, Wednesday, Jan. 12, 1972

Square D Co. Announces Move to Near Knightdale

By JIM WHITEFIELD

Home News

Square D Company purchased 60 acres of land near Knightdale Tuesday and announced manufacturing operations in a 200,000-square-foot plant are planned to start in the fall.

Hiring personnel and manufacture industrial control apparatus will start in March.

James S. Vaughan of Milwaukee, Wis., vice president and control group manager of Square D, said approximately 700 persons will be employed at the plant, which will represent a total investment of \$1 million.

He noted that it was Square D policy to acquire land and build its plants to permit expansion on the basis of production growth.

"Our company recognizes the importance of protecting the environment," Vaughan declared, "and all toxic wastes will be neutralized before they leave our Wake plant. Our engineers tell me that \$20,000 will be spent on equipment for this purpose."

John Daniel of Asheville, general purpose control manager for Square D, of Park Ridge, Ill., was asked privately if Square D expects any water and sewer problems beyond its plans already approved by the Wake County Board of Commissioners.

"Definitely not," he replied. "If this were so, we wouldn't have located in Wake."

Daniel, who has been in North Carolina 11 years, will have charge of the Knightdale plant.

"A substantial number of families will move into Raleigh to work at the plant," Daniel said, "but most of them will be hired from personnel available in the Raleigh area."

He also said it would be impossible to make any kind of estimate now as to what the average weekly pay would be.

The plant will be managed by D. J. Beck of Milwaukee, who was in the city Tuesday



James S. Vaughan

for the land purchase announcement.

M. P. Kartalis of Park Ridge, Square D president, and other officials of the company were hosts at a private dinner at the Hilton Inn Monday night.

Vaughan said Tuesday the dinner was sponsored for those who had been instrumental in helping the plant locate in Wake.

He also said the Knightdale site was chosen after a nationwide search.

Vaughan singled out such considerations as educational facilities, related industries, climate and tax structures among reasons for the selection.

He added that the same criteria were applied to a similar plant just announced for Columbia, S. C.

"Our company wants to be good citizens and good neighbors, and help bring growth to the Raleigh area and North Carolina," Vaughan declared.

"We expect to maintain excellent community relations in Raleigh, as we have in other cities, and will encourage our employees to participate actively in community affairs."

Vaughan said the 40-year-old company, employing more than 14,000 persons worldwide, operates 40 production and warehousing facilities in eight countries.

Square D's facilities include a 200,000-square-foot manufacturing plant in Asheville.

The firm manufactures electrical distribution and control products used in industrial construction and electric utility markets.