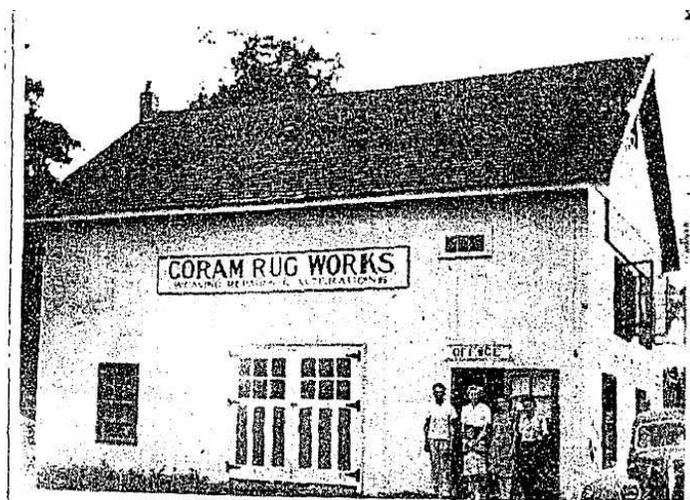
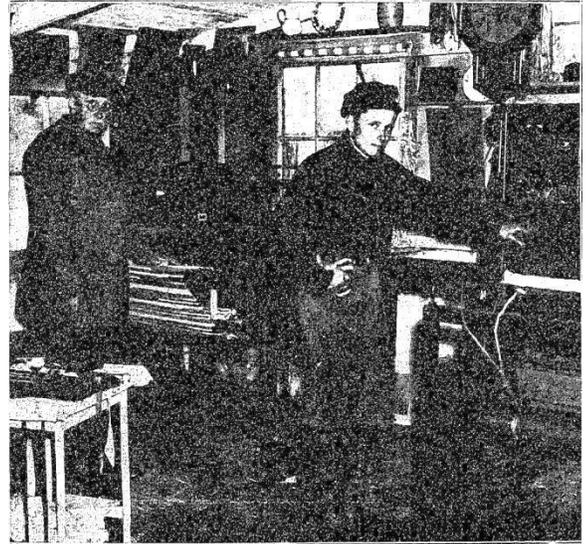


The History of the **Coram Rug Works**



Edwin Hawkins, son of Christina Overton with his half-brother, Elihu Hawkins at their rug shop. Edwin began working in the shop in 1933 at the age of 8. Local residents saved cloth and went to the factory where it was made into rag carpets. The factory was located across from the house but was later moved a short distance west from the original standing place.

Edwin was fond of saying how Elihu returned to Coram after traveling around with the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. He needed to regain his health as he had a bit too much fun with Wild Bill and the other show mates.



As business improved Edwin moved the Coram Rug Works to Where Rte. 112 meets Mill Road.

In 1920 Elihu Hawkins started making rag carpets as a hobby. It eventually grew into a thriving business. His first shop in Coram was a small one with one hand loom. But as demand grew, he purchased a second machine. Word soon spread of the durability and fine appearance. Women came from far and near with bags of rags that had been cut into strips

and sewn together. Edwin Hawkins assisted his brother and at the age of eight he made his first rag carpet. In failing health Elihu gave up the business, and the newly married Edwin took over the business with his wife Clara. In 1939 they bought a building and moved it to the property at the intersection of Route 112 and Mill road. During WWII Edwin closed the shop as finding materials became scarce. Returning from Merchant Marine service he reopened the shop in 1946. The business was now equipped with five looms with automatic shuttles and could make rugs from 3-5 feet wide. It eventually became more economical to sell pre made carpets and racks were installed to hold the new carpets. At the time of the interview he still

had his original loom in his Florida home. As a hobby he taught his grandchildren to make rag carpets.

Coram Rug Works (Judging by the cars, I'm guessing the early '60's)



Front view facing Mill Road and Route 112



5Elden 2-3544

CORAM RUG WORKS
Ed Hawkins, Prop.

**Suffolk County's Largest
and Most Complete Carpet Service**

**SANFORD
Carpets**

**BROADLOOM
and CARPET SALES**

**ON LOCATION
CLEANING**

ROUTE 112 and YAPHANK RD. CORAM, N. Y.

NOTE: ALL LOT LINES ARE NOT LOCATED.

The complex block contains several logos and text elements. On the left is the Sanford Carpets logo, which features a stylized figure holding a carpet. In the center is a circular logo for "CERTIFIED GULISTAN CARPET DEALER". On the right is a logo for "ON LOCATION CLEANING" which includes an illustration of a person cleaning a carpet. The text "Suffolk County's Largest and Most Complete Carpet Service" is prominently displayed in the upper middle section.

Now the primary occupant of this triangle location formed by Rte. 112, Mill Road and Skips Road near the Coram Home Depot/Stop & Shop center is Star's Beverage Depot.

Edwin Hawkins

1918-1999

Proprietor, Coram Rug Works

Edwin Hawkins, the son of Edwin and Christina Overton Hawkins, was born April 11 1918 in Coram, member of the Coram F.D. serving as Chief from 1948-1949 and Commissioner for four years. Mr. Hawkins died on November 22, 1999 at the age of 81. "Ed" started working as a boy at a rug factory which he would later become the owner and operated of what would be called the Coram Rug Works located on the corner of Mill Road and Route 112, a business he ran with his step-brother Elihu who started making rag carpets as a hobby with Morse Overton as a salesman. When Edwin returned home from serving as a Merchant Marine in World War II he sold carpets purchased from mills in New York City. The **Coram Rug Works** quickly became one of the largest distributors in New York State until they closed in the 1970's. Edwin also loved racing and raced midget cars, once topping 150 miles per hour and would later become the owner and operator of the Riverhead Raceway.



Edwin Hawkins in his midget racer

"I went to interview Mr. Hawkins at his Florida home. As you walked in you couldn't help but notice his midget race car in the middle of his living room. His wife seeing the surprise on my face replied that the car was the only vice he had so it's allowed a place in the home. Mr. Hawkins smiling proudly responded that it was the midget racer that he had set the speed record at Daytona Raceway with at 150 mph." *(Paul Infranco)*

Christina Overton Hawkins

(Mother of Edwin Hawkins)



Coram, circa 1905. **Christina Overton**, daughter of Elisha Webster Overton. Christina is sitting to the right. Miss Emma Norton, former Postmaster of Coram, is sitting in the middle. Christina married a much older Edwin Hawkins and had one son Edwin, who was named after her husband.

Elisha Webster Overton

(Grandfather of Edwin Hawkins)



Elisha Overton, son of Lewis Roe Overton. Elisha was the father of Christina and maternal grandfather of Edwin Hawkins. Elisha was a member of the 11th New York Cavalry. He fought during the Civil War and helped to end the slave system that his father detested.



Lewis Roe Overton, father of Elisha Overton, grandfather of Christina Overton Hawkins, and maternal great-grandfather of Edwin Hawkins. Lewis R. Overton was a schoolteacher in the Coram school (*a restored version of which is now residing on the grounds of the Coram Fire Department*). He would eventually rise to the position of school superintendent. He also served as Coram's Postmaster and from 1857-1859, he served as Town Clerk of Brookhaven. His family still has the resolution with the red, green, and blue seals of Brookhaven Town along with some of the family's valuable original furniture. Helen Overton once ran a millinery shop inside the house after the death of Lewis R. Overton.

As a young man he traveled throughout the country as a tutor. He kept a diary detailing his travels from a packet boat on the Erie Canal to witnessing a slave auction in the south. The following is an excerpt from his diary:

Monday, 2 January, 1821

"This day opened a day and evening school in Middle-Street. Afternoon attended the annual slave market held at the courthouse. The scene is revolting to every better feeling of humanity and patriotic freedom. The unfortunate beings are conducted like herds of cattle to a fare and the mingled passions of hope and fear are depicted on each countenance. Some hoping in a near-compassionate and human master to find a deliverance from unfeeling tyranny and others dreading the chance of falling into the hands of rigid severity. "Oh, Liberty how is thy alter profanated by those who call themselves thy sons?"...Latin quote. A day, an hour of virtuous liberty is worth a whole eternity of bondage- how pitiable must be the condition of those unhappy slaves who can never hope to enjoy one of nature's noblest gifts. The week between Christmas and the New Year is here generally allotted them as a relief from their toll. Some are even denied this short holiday."

The Overton House on Mill Road



(Davis Erhardt Collection)

The Overton homestead in Coram was located on the east side of Mill Road near the junction of the Patchogue-Port Jefferson State Highway and Middle Country Road. It was purchased on

August 4, 1843 by Lewis R. Overton from Sarah Williams. The Overton's first came to Coram in 1740 when David Overton purchased a number of the Long Lots that went from Middle Country Road to Granny Road. Lewis' grandfather Palmer Overton was a Patriot who fought against the British during the American Revolution.

"The house went through many changes and renovations through the years. After it was purchased in 1843 the house was used as a place to live. As Mr. Louis R. Overton gained new job positions the house changed as well. For a period of time it served as the Post Office and the Town Council House. The wing on the right side of the house was built in 1880. In 1901 the original shingles were removed and siding was put on by the late Mr. Higbe of Coram. In later years the house was renovated and dormer windows were added to the front of the house. There was some damage and destruction. A large Sycamore tree stood in front of the house. On July 6, 1933 a large wind and hailstorm blew the tree down. Some of the limbs went through the roof and one went threw (sic) a trunk containing very old pictures and papers. That limb continued through the house to the bottom floor. The house no longer stands."

From Longwood's Journey; Written by Kaitlin Sweetman

The Overton family consisted of **Louis R. Overton**, his wife **Elizabeth (Davis)**, and his children: **Elisha Webster**, Lewis Irving, Pheobe, Charlotte Helen, Sarah Ophelia, and Hopkins Roe.

Elisha Webster Overton had four children. Only three survived because Louis Sheldon Overton died as a child. The other remaining Overton children are: **Christina Ophelia Overton (later to be married to Edwin Webster Hawkins)**, Grace Elizabeth, and Morse Roe Overton.

CORAM RUG WORKS Home Service Unit Volkswagen van discovered in 2010 by a happy collector. Originally was bought as scrap by a guy in 1963 and sat on his property for the next 47 years...until this guy found it!



The Coram Civic Association gives Special thanks to Mr. Paul Infranco, the Patchogue Advance, and Longwood's Journey for much of this historical information.