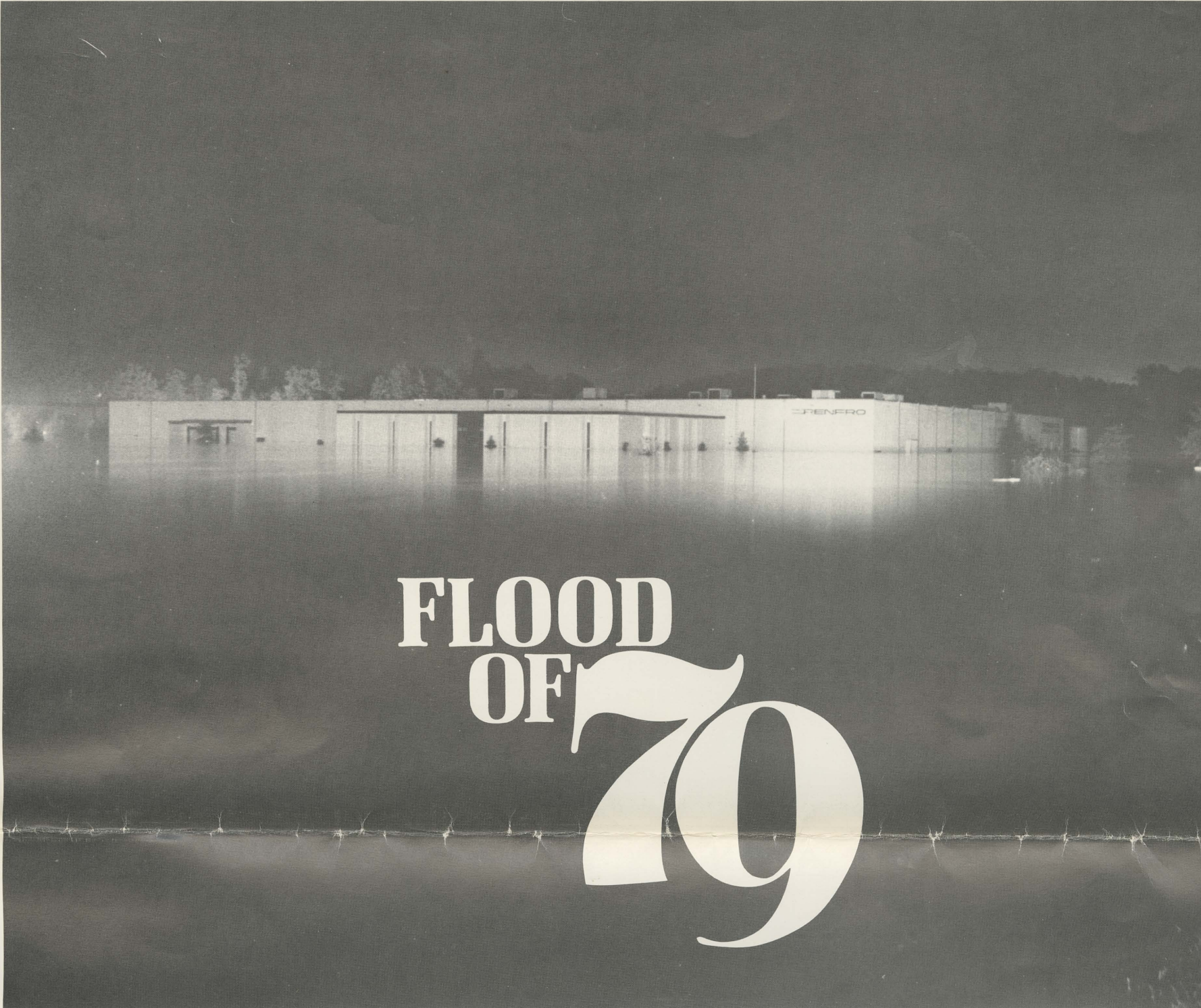




FLOOD OF 79

TO: Our Employees

THE FLOOD OF '79

Friday, September 21, we had an unusually heavy and persistent rainstorm in Mount Airy. On the slopes of the mountains north of here it totaled 7½ inches. With the ground already saturated by earlier showers, Friday's downpour overflowed the streams that lead in to Mount Airy — the Ararat River on the east and Lovill's Creek on the west.

By midnight the Ararat River was level with the floor of our Riverside Plant and main office, which is 3 feet above the highest previously recorded flood. The water kept rising like a gentle tide, and by 2:00 a.m. it was 5 feet deep in our plant and office. After three more hours the tide had receded below the level of the parking lot.

Miraculously no one drowned, but property damage in Surry County exceeded \$40 million. Renfro's loss came to \$1,700,000.

I had my camera with me for the next two weeks as we cleaned up and got back into production. This sequence of photographs was printed to give you a record of these two weeks.

The photograph above, looking like a white island surrounded by a beautiful lake, was made at 3 o'clock Saturday morning. At this time the rain had stopped, and the flood had subsided a foot or more from its crest.

At first we did not realize the full extent of the damage. When the final count was in, we had hauled 250,000 dozen socks to the landfill. Our computer was a total loss, as was most of our office furniture, and there was damage to our building and equipment.

The flood and the damage broke all records, but I will remember most concern and the efforts of hundreds of people who pulled together to get back into business. Here were some of the events:

Monday morning, September 24. Our office was open for business in temporary quarters across town. Every paycheck would be delivered on time, if slightly damp and prepared by hand rather than by machine.

Friday, September 28. The partitions in the office had been ripped out, and enough new ones installed to enclose a room for a computer which was on its way.

Sunday, September 30. One boiler and three dye tubs were running. Shortly afterwards, several boarding machines were going, and by the end of this second week production was flowing through the plant.

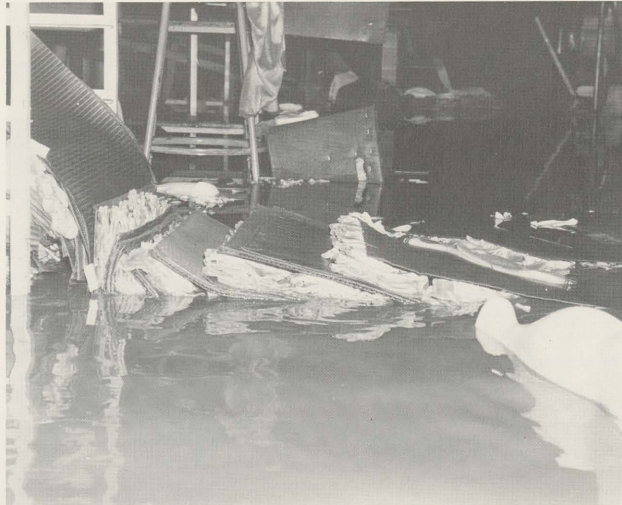
Friday, October 5. We shipped 7,000 dozen.

Our recovery didn't end with those first shipments. By then we were eight weeks behind, and orders were coming in faster than we could ship. Now, eight weeks after the flood, we are shipping over 100,000 dozen a week and reducing the backlog of unshipped orders.

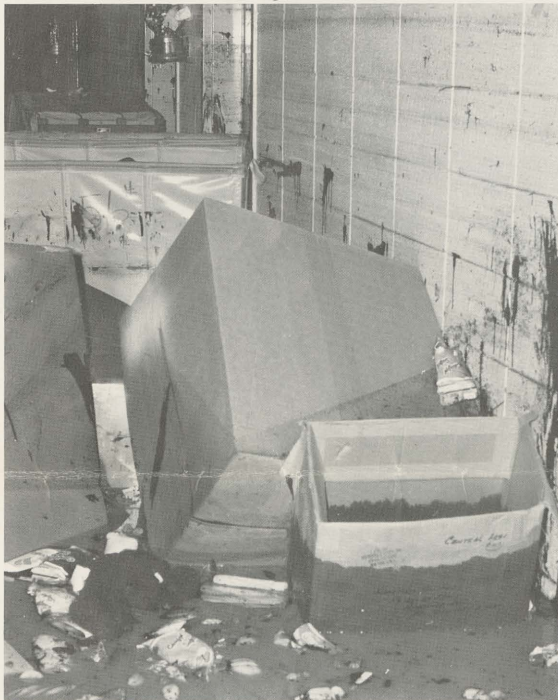
Robert E. Merritt
President
Renfro Corporation
Mount Airy, N. C. 27023
November 15, 1979



5:00 a.m., the water couldn't get out ...



Muddy socks everywhere you look



Boxes everywhere



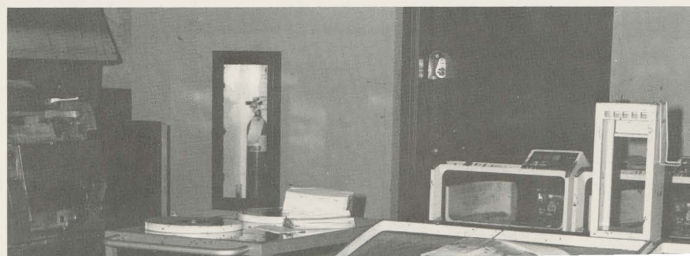
... until the door was opened



Front hall of the office. Furniture everywhere you look.



Our red G M C truck in the still-swollen Ararat River, 5:30 a.m.





Boxes everywhere



Jerry and Clyde with nothing to smile about



It took two days to clean out the office



... until the door was opened



A wet computer—ruined



Trees decorated early for Christmas



Front hall of the office. Furniture everywhere you look.



Our red G M C truck in the still-swollen Ararat River, 5:30 a.m.



Top priority - clean the computer tapes



Unshipped order files in Customer Service Department



Surprisingly, most typewriters and calculators survived



Trying to get the lights back on



Half of Patrick County must have ended up here



John, Jerry and George discuss what to do next



Ankle deep in mud



By the time we got it out





Half of Patrick County must have ended up here



John, Jerry and George discuss what to do next

Ankle deep in mud



By the time we got it out



Stuck in the mud



.... our truck was totalled



Our temporary office on South Street

FLOOD OF 79



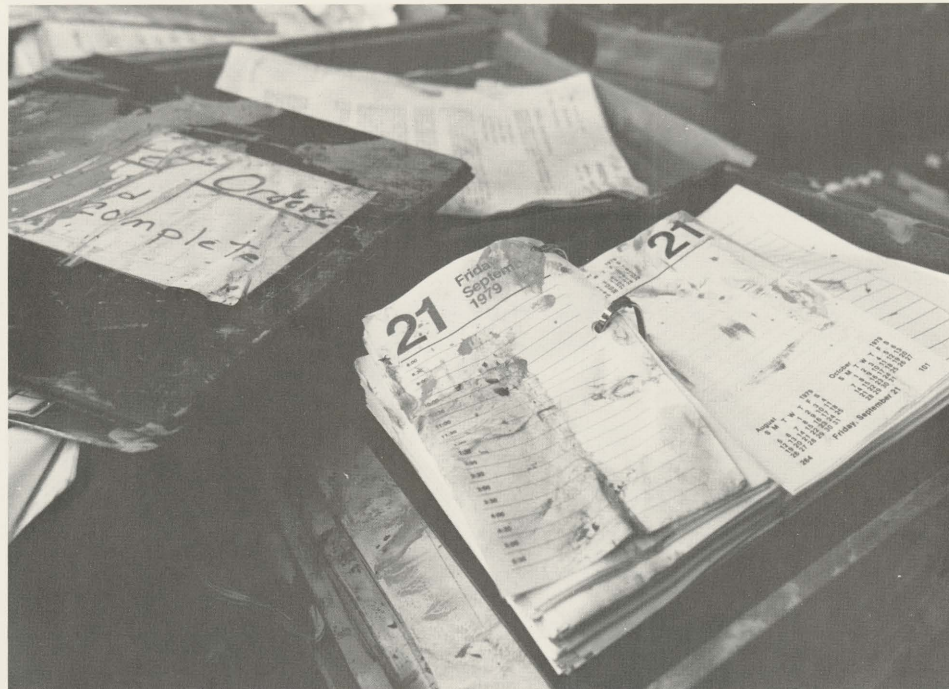
Mac, Tom, Grady, Ed, Don and Herbert



Washing the mud off



Sunday dinner



The last dry day



After two days, still no light



Good appetites

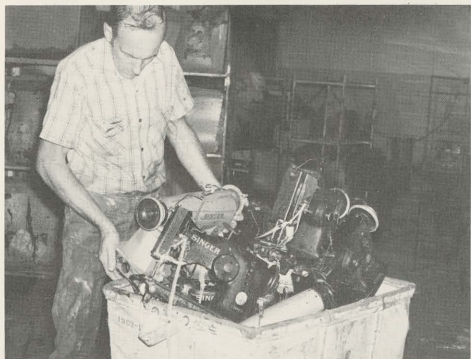


Good conversation

FLOOD OF 79



Slippery and messy

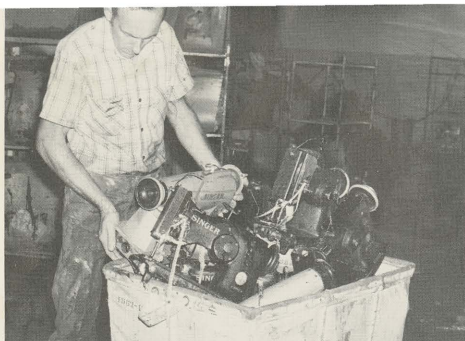


They will sew again



Shipping Department





They will sew again



Good conversation



Data Processing Department—drying records



Records of Friday's shipments



Shipping Department



The lights are on at last



A tractor makes it easier



Production Planning Department—ironing records



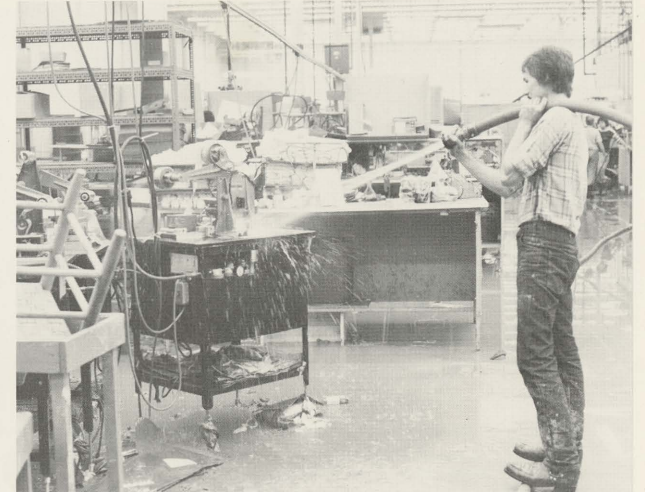
John, hosing down the computer



Wet and muddy socks



Moving a mountain



A new use for a fire hose



... dumped in the aisle



And then the aisles were cleared



Those cartons were to be shipped on Monday



Hosing down the Boarding room





... dumped in the aisle



And then the aisles were cleared



Those cartons were to be shipped on Monday



Hosing down the Boarding room



A pause for pictures



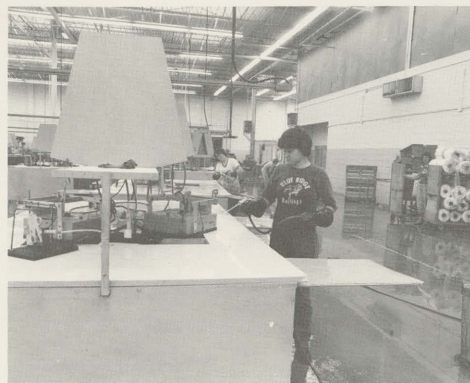
John S. and John E. confer in the main office



No. 6 fuel oil makes the job messier



Cleaning work stations



A clean place to box socks



The squeegees kept going



.... and going



Rust is a problem



...oil will fix it



"I'm taking inventory, honest"

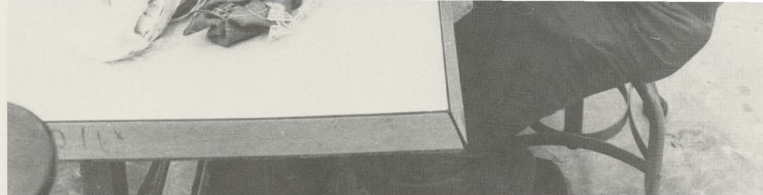


A cabbage down from Virginia

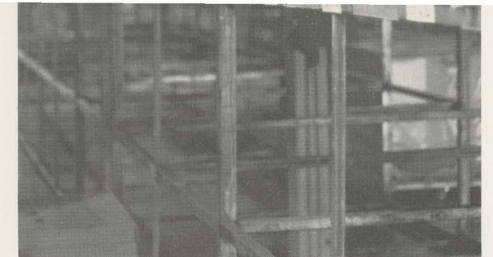




A cabbage down from Virginia



Rust is a problem



"I'm taking inventory, honest"



Another use for a vacuum cleaner



Water brought it in; water will take it away



There's a clean floor under there someplace

FLOOD OF 79



Time for a break



A week after the flood, the first washouts



The Shipping Department floor floated



A little hug to celebrate



Dry floor and time for a party



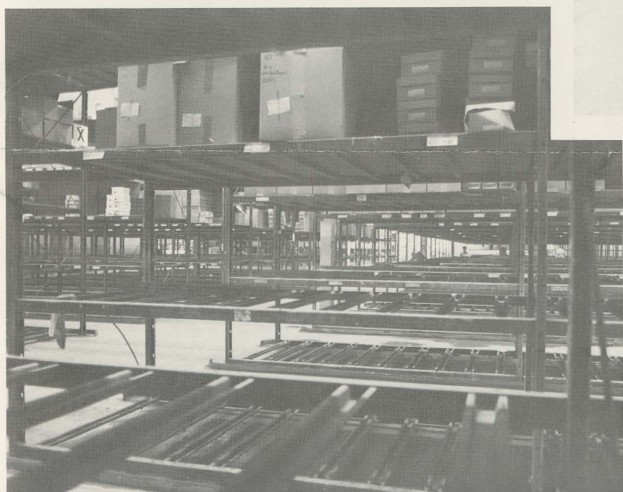
A back-breaking job



Saving the good ones



Ned pushes a floor scrubber



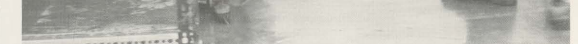
**FLOOD
OF
79**



A back-breaking job

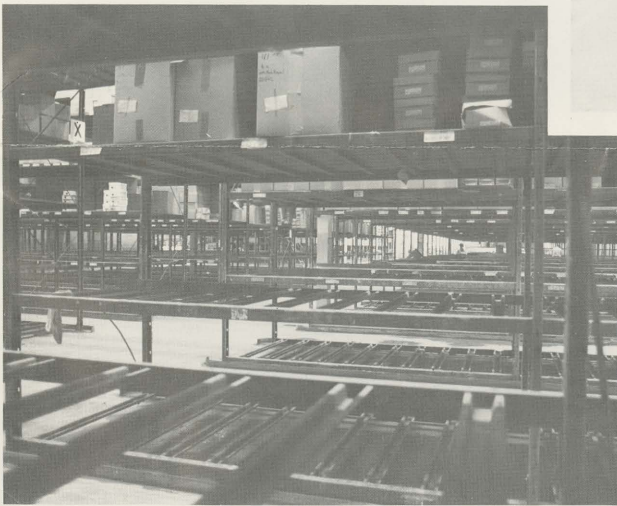


Saving the good ones

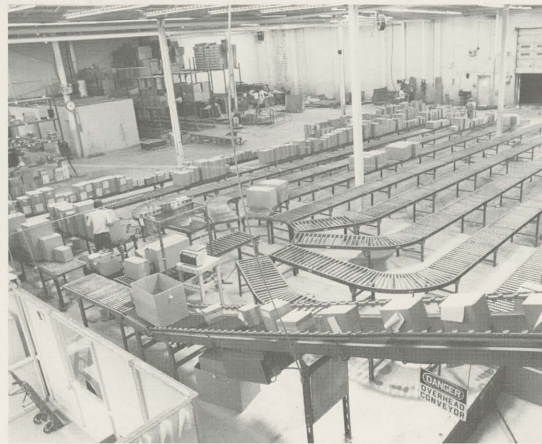


Ned pushes a floor scrubber

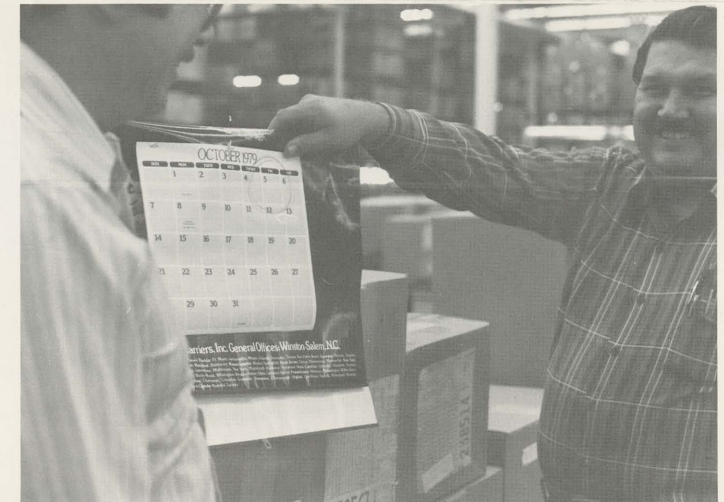
FLOOD OF 79



These shelves were full of socks when the water came in



The first shipment



Two weeks after the flood



We're back in production



.... the computer is running ...



.... and the sun is shining!

RENFRO

HOSIERY MILLS

MOUNT AIRY, NORTH CAROLINA
POST OFFICE BOX 908 27030