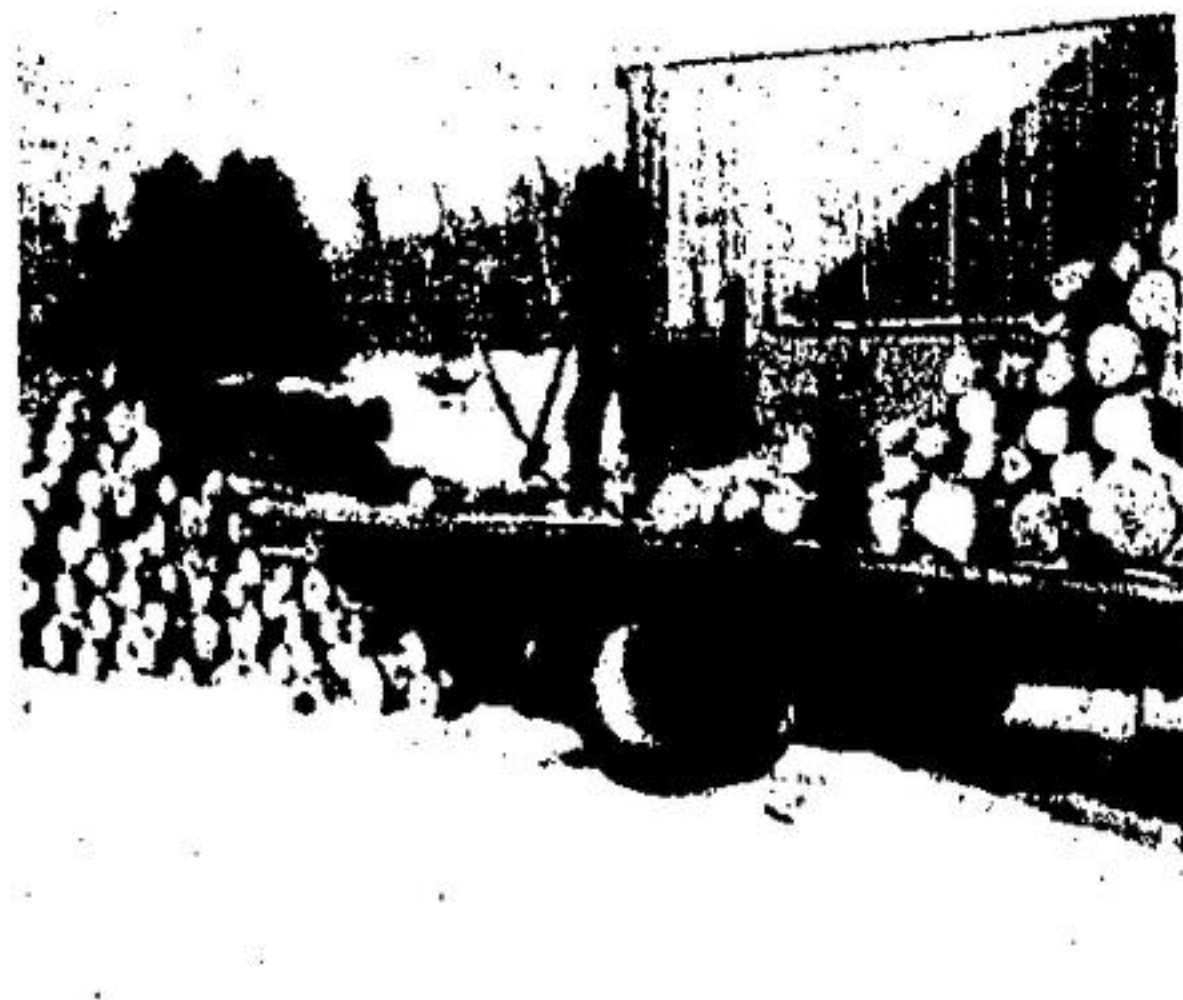


# The Acton Free Press

One Hundredth Year - No. 38

ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 1975

SECOND SECTION



OPERATION OF A SAWMILL is conducted in stages by Ted Barden of Eden Mills. First it's a matter of procuring and cutting down logs. They are then trucked back to the mill. He is seen removing logs from his truck.

OWNER AND OPERATOR of one of the few remaining water-powered sawmills in Ontario Ted Barden cuts the lumber into 2 x 4's and then into slats, which can be used for skids.



ONCE COMPLETELY water-powered the vintage sawmill has been owned by the Barden family for over 50 years. A fire in the mill a few years ago resulted in installation of a diesel motor.



NAILING THE crates is one of the final operations in the manufacturing business conducted at the Barden Mill at Eden Mills. Ted Barden is seen using a special machine which nails the boxes intact for delivery.

Industries which were once part of the hub of most rural communities are gradually disappearing from the home-town scene and, although progress is forever inevitable and important for continual growth, it is refreshing to know that grass root residents still exist who continue to enjoy the simple occupations of their forefathers rather than bowing to the faster-moving productively demands of today.

Ted Barden of Eden Mills operates the one and only sawmill in the district. He is carrying on a family business as did his father before him. Every day he puts in a full day's work with his time divided between chopping down and drawing-in logs, cutting them into slat and finally converting them into skids for industry or crates for market gardening.

The big congenial mill man knows he could probably make bigger wages working elsewhere at an industrial job but he likes what he does and does not feel that monetary gains are necessarily representative of the good life.

Since 1947

The vintage mill has been in the Barden family for almost 60 years. It was purchased by Ted's grandfather, James Barden in 1917 from the historical mill-operating family, the Hortops of Everton. According to Mr. Barden, at that time it was a

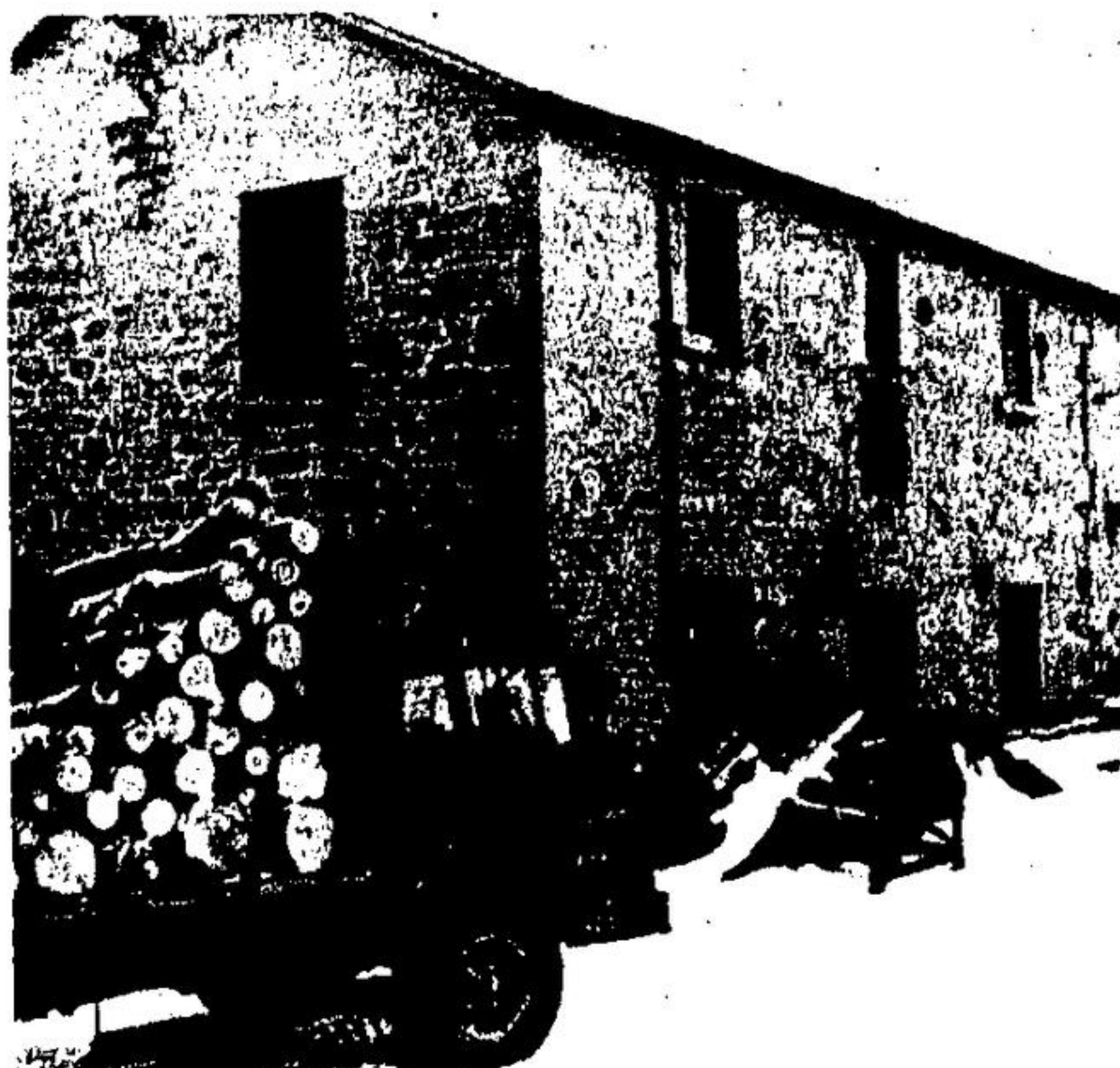
flour mill but the new owners converted it to a grist operation. Later it doubled as both a grist and sawmill.

James Barden worked the mill assisted by his son Henry and three grandsons. Later the younger Barden, Ted's dad carried on the sawmill operation with his three boys. Two sons became less and less interested in the family mill and moved into other occupations. Ted Barden stayed on with the business to run it alone with his father.

In 1947, the senior Barden, James died. In '68 Ted's dad, Henry died. Since that time, the mill has continued under the ownership of the younger Barden, Ted and his wife Ev have three sons of their own. The boys show no interest in picking up the family trade. The eldest son Jim is married and working successfully in the construction business.

Two younger boys are well-known local athletes. Gerald and his twin brother Gary, 17, are at school in Cornwall. They are with the Cornwall Royals, playing hockey in the Quebec Jr. "A" league. With the team in second place since last September their proud father can see very well where his sons' interests lie.

Ted Barden tells the story of his miller background. His grandfather was originally a farmer who sold his farm and purchased a mill in Hillsburgh. Reportedly the Barden Grist & Sawmill in



ONE OF THE FEW remaining water-powered mills in Ontario is one owned and operated by Ted Barden of Eden Mills. Once completely water-powered the sawmill was razed by fire a few years ago. Since that time it is both water and diesel-powered.

## Back a fighter.



### Help crippled children with Easter Seals.

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that area, still stands but is not in operation.

According to Mr. Barden, when his family first came to Eden Mills, a resident population of 150 people. "Since that time we have grown to approximately 300," he said. He reiterated that the mill, at one time, was a flour-making operation until the Bardens bought it to use it as a grist mill. From 1934 they operated the mill as a combined grist and sawmill until 1950 when it became completely a sawmill.

Mr. Barden says there are only about ten such mills operating in Ontario today. He feels that government regulations do not encourage or back-up small businessmen and that, more and more such enterprises are disappearing. "The only other place around I know of where a small sawmill is operating is in Hockley Valley," Ted explains. He said the owner drives a bus and does not keep the business running as a full-

time job. According to Mr. Barden, two of the few remaining sawmills, located at Bradford and Pennington, have recently closed down.

Ted Barden says one of the biggest problems today is that nobody wants to work except for extremely high wages. He feels the government has spoiled work initiative by insisting on wage scales difficult for the independent small businessman to meet. Lumber is not hard to come by, with lots of it available near Lake Simcoe. "He says beaver-ruined timber is inescapable providing it is cut while still sound. "If we can get people to cut it."

Mr. Barden says the flat and crate business is highly competitive with other mediums such as plastic, composition and cardboard easy replacements for these made of wood. He says that, at one time he would employ local boys to assist in his business but that now-a-days they can get easier money elsewhere.

At one time the sawmill proprietor used to put in 15

and 16 hours a day of working time. "Now I'm down to working from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., six days a week," he said. He says he used to require two men working with him steadily but that now it's difficult to keep enough business going to bring in sufficient monies for salaries so that he's not working for the help.

Way of life

Why does the miller keep on with his particular vocation if he's not showing lucrative returns? Mr. Barden feels he is making a living satisfactory to his way of life. He knows he will never get rich but says that what he does is satisfying and that he's kept continually busy. He is an avid skater who enjoys membership in an organized skating club, and he and his wife spend leisure hours at the favorite pastime, travelling to many areas of southern Ontario to participate in club skating programs. He feels that, in a less demanding occupation he could take time out more easily for such recreational enjoyment.

In 1929 the stone building was razed by an unexplained fire. "Only four walls were left of the original structure," said its owner. It was rebuilt on the same principle as before. Mill historians who like to investigate such buildings establish the local mill as having been built sometime in the late 1800's. They relate the era by the window sashes.

In Eden Mills, the Bardens are considered one of the older and more established families in the community. Through the years they have been known not only as the only sawmill operators in the district but also as mainstay and spearhead residents in many village projects.

## Interdenominational Holy Week Services

at  
**TRINITY UNITED CHURCH**

**PALM SUNDAY - MARCH 23rd**  
"The Three Tests of Life"

**TUESDAY - MARCH 25th**  
"Bringing Men to Christ"

**WEDNESDAY - MARCH 26th**  
"Gleams of Gethsemane"



Rev. James Montgomery

SPECIAL GUEST PREACHER The Reverend JAMES MONTGOMERY, Internationally known Pastor of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada

All Services begin at 7:50 with 10-minute Hymn Sing and an Organ Recital 7:30 to 7:50 p.m.

Everyone is Most Cordially Invited

Sponsors - The Acton Clergy Association

### To move meetings

The bad condition of the blockhouse in the centre of the park was remarked on at recreation advisory committee meeting last Thursday. "The vandalism is out of this world," commented Gil Malcolm. All agreed it's been a bone of contention for years.

Members learned with pleasure that council has approved hair dryers for Acton pool, three for women and two for men.

Council's decision to have no playground fee was reported. Ballinasad and Speyside will have half-day playgrounds. Mr. Cooper wasn't sure yet about Limehouse.

Future recreation advisory committee meetings will be held at Hornby, Stewarttown, the arena and the pool.