



A history of the Barber family is a history of early Georgetown

The following story about the Barber's Paper Mill in Georgetown—the third mill built in Upper Canada—first appeared in the Pulp and Paper Magazine in 1913. It was written by W.A. Craick—

"There had arrived in Crooks Hollow shortly after the paper mill was built, a family consisting of a father, four sons and a daughter, which was destined to play an important part in the history of the Canadian paper industry. These were the Barbers. The father was a stonemason by trade; the sons were hardy Irish boys. They had emigrated to Canada from Ireland in 1822 and after Niagara, had come to Crooks Hollow to obtain employment in the mills.

"William and Robert, the oldest and the youngest of the sons worked in the woolen mill; James, the second son, became interested in the paper mill while Joseph, the third son, took up the mill right's trade. They remained at Crooks Hollow for thirteen years, when the brothers decided that it would be just as well for them to set up in business for themselves.

"In casting about for a suitable place to start operation, they hit upon Georgetown, then a tiny village containing about three houses. There was good waterpower available however, and that decided them. In the year of the rebellion they moved all their families and belongings in ox-carts to their new location.

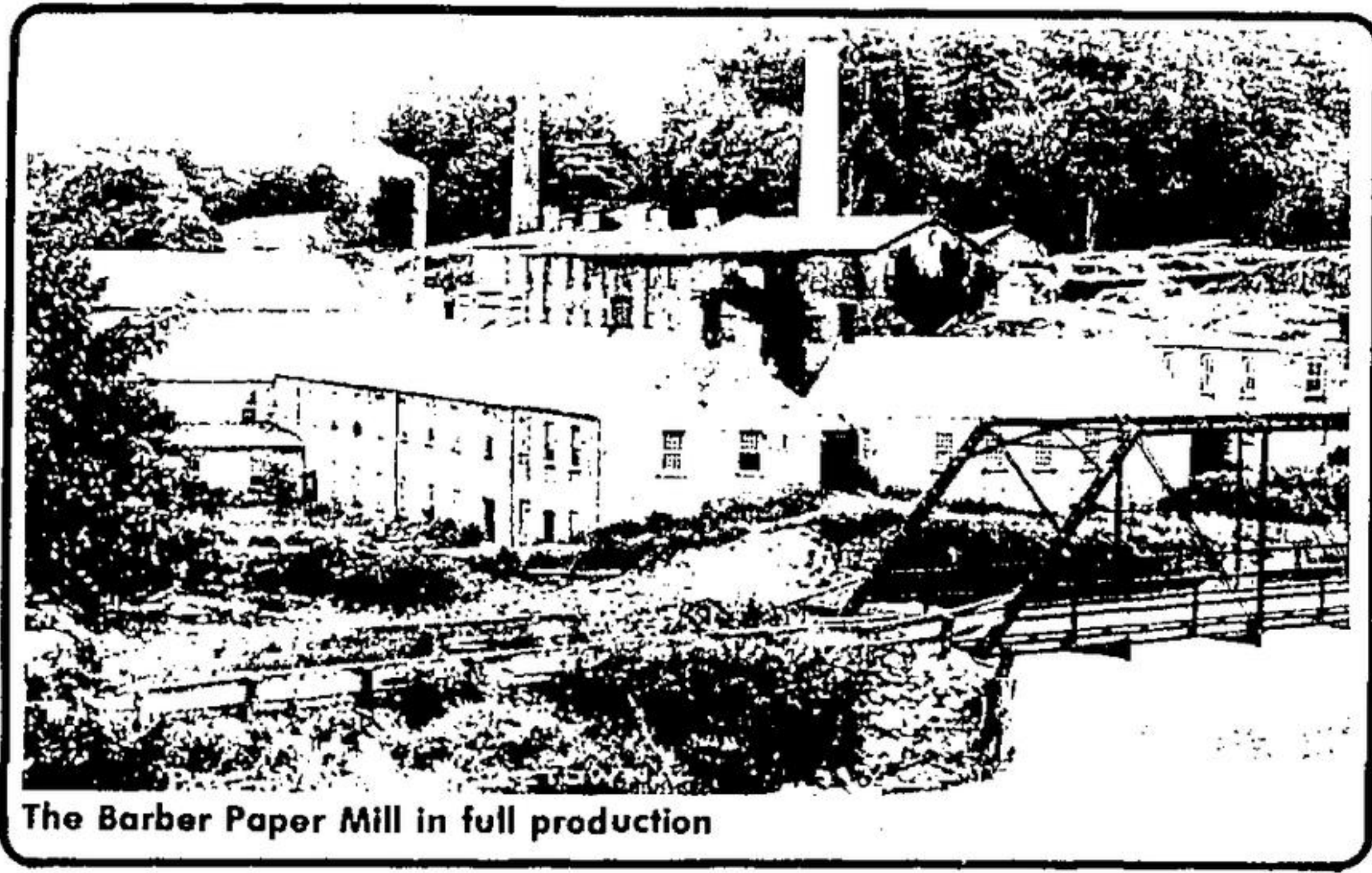
"A custom and one set carding mill was erected on the west branch of the Credit, near what is now the centre of the town of Georgetown, and for six years the brothers ran this primitive industry before the next development took place.

"This was the removal of Robert Barber and his brother-in-law, Benjamin Franklin, to Streetsville, where the pair put up a second woolen mill. Both mills were owned jointly by the family and both prospered. Ultimately in 1852 a new and much larger factory was built in Streetsville, into which the machinery of both plants was put and the Georgetown mill was closed down.

"Then followed the beginning of the paper industry in Georgetown. A Scotchman by the name of David Forbes had gone West as far as Galt and had there attempted to start a mill but had become discouraged owing to the long distance it was necessary to haul his product to market.

"At the time the Grand Trunk Railway was building westward and construction was approaching Georgetown. Here on the Credit River, right beside the route of the railway, seemed a better place to locate

and Forbes negotiated with the Barber brothers for a site and power. The Barbers eventually put up a building for him and



The Barber Paper Mill in full production

rented him both the power and premises.

"Soon after the mill was started the brothers began to manufacture newsprint, making an all rag product, which they sold extensively to weekly newspaper publishers and to the Toronto Daily Leader. They also made use of straw, especially pea straw, for wrapping papers and until the time that wood began to be employed instead, were large consumers of straw.

"In this connection an exciting incident occurred in 1861. Some new boilers were installed to boil the straw and early one morning soon after they were put in, they all blew up, killing one man and injuring others.

"Forbes, however, did not stick at his venture and almost before he had got started the brothers found themselves saddled with a paper mill.

"The first Barber mill, built in 1853, is still standing and is now known as No. 1 Machine Room. It is a solid stone structure 40 by 70 feet, and is the building in the right hand foreground in the picture. It contained originally a 36-inch cylinder paper machine on which the first paper mill made in the mill was manufactured.

"Meanwhile, a second building had been erected in 1858, into which a 48-cylinder machine was put. It is probably of this machine that the story is told of James

Barber, the brother who was in charge of the papermaking end of the business, that he came to the mill one morning and was told that the new machine was running 100 feet a minute. This was so astonishing that it was almost incredible and he would not believe the performance until he had personally timed it with his watch.

"In 1869 the partnership

which had existed without the slightest friction among the brothers and their brother-in-law was dissolved. It is said of this partnership that for 39 years they carried on all their activities together without a settlement among the partners, owing almost everything in common.

"William and Robert retained the Streetsville property; James the paper

mill, and Joseph and Benjamin Franklin retired.

"Following this, the paper manufacturing business continued to expand. By 1887, the plant comprised a 76, a 62 and a 54-inch fourdrinier paper machine, employed 60 hands and consumed two and one-half tons of rags per day and 2,500 cords of wood annually.



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PIONEER DAYS

DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN

Participants

FIRE DEPT. — POLICE DEPT. — GEORGETOWN VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE — GEORGETOWN MAJORETTE AND DRUM CORP. — GEORGETOWN GIRLS PIPE BAND — THE BARBERSHOPPERS — SQUARE DANCING, THE CANADIANA, SQUARE DANCER — OBEDIENCE PLUS CLOWNS — LITTLE THEATRE — PALLETTE & PENCIL CLUB — HANDYCAPS & MACRAME GROUP — BELL TELEPHONE DISPLAY — FOOD BOOTHS — BLUE TRIANGLE AND CRAFT BOOTH — RUG HOOK GUILD DEMONSTRATION — ESQUESING HISTORICAL SOCIETY (W BEATY) (JOHN MCDONALD) — PONY AND BUGGY RIDE — ECLIPSE (GREG, PETER AND GROUP) — BILL CLINT (FOLK SINGER) — CREDIT VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (ARTIFACT DISPLAY) — CANDY FLOSS — WORLDS BIGGEST CORN BROOM — ROTHMAN CARAVAN — GEORGETOWN YM-YWCA

FREE DRAW for COLOUR TV

Balloons

Suckers

BEST DRESSED PET . . .

1st - \$15.00 2nd - \$10.00
3rd - \$5.00

Pie Baking Contest

Ice Cream Eating Contest

(DAVE KENTNER)

LIST OF EVENTS FOR THE THREE DAYS

Thursday, June 24th —

OBEDIENCE PLUS - TRAINED DOG 4:00 pm.
MAJORETTE AND DRUM CORP 7 pm.
GEORGETOWN GIRLS PIPE BAND 7:45 pm.

Friday, June 25th —

OBEDIENCE PLUS 4:00 pm
MAJORETTES DRUM CORP 7:00 pm.
BARBER SHOPPERS 7:45 pm.

Saturday, June 26th —

BEST DRESSED PET (MISS NAZER—JUDGE) 11:00 am.
NOTE: Entries to be given to Ralph Fletcher of Fletcher Shoes by 10:30 am.

PIE BAKING CONTEST 11:00 am.
Note: Entries to be given to C. Crimes of Towne Sewing by 10:30 am.

MAJORETTES DRUM CORP 1:00 pm
GIRLS PIPE BAND 1:45 pm.
CANADIANA SQUARE DANCERS 2:30 pm.
OBEDIENCE PLUS 3:30 pm.
DRAW FOR COLOUR TV 4:30 pm.

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