

EXPLORING OUR ROOTS:

Georgetown's history connected to the water-wheel

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 plan 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 jointly owned 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 rented him both the power and premises.

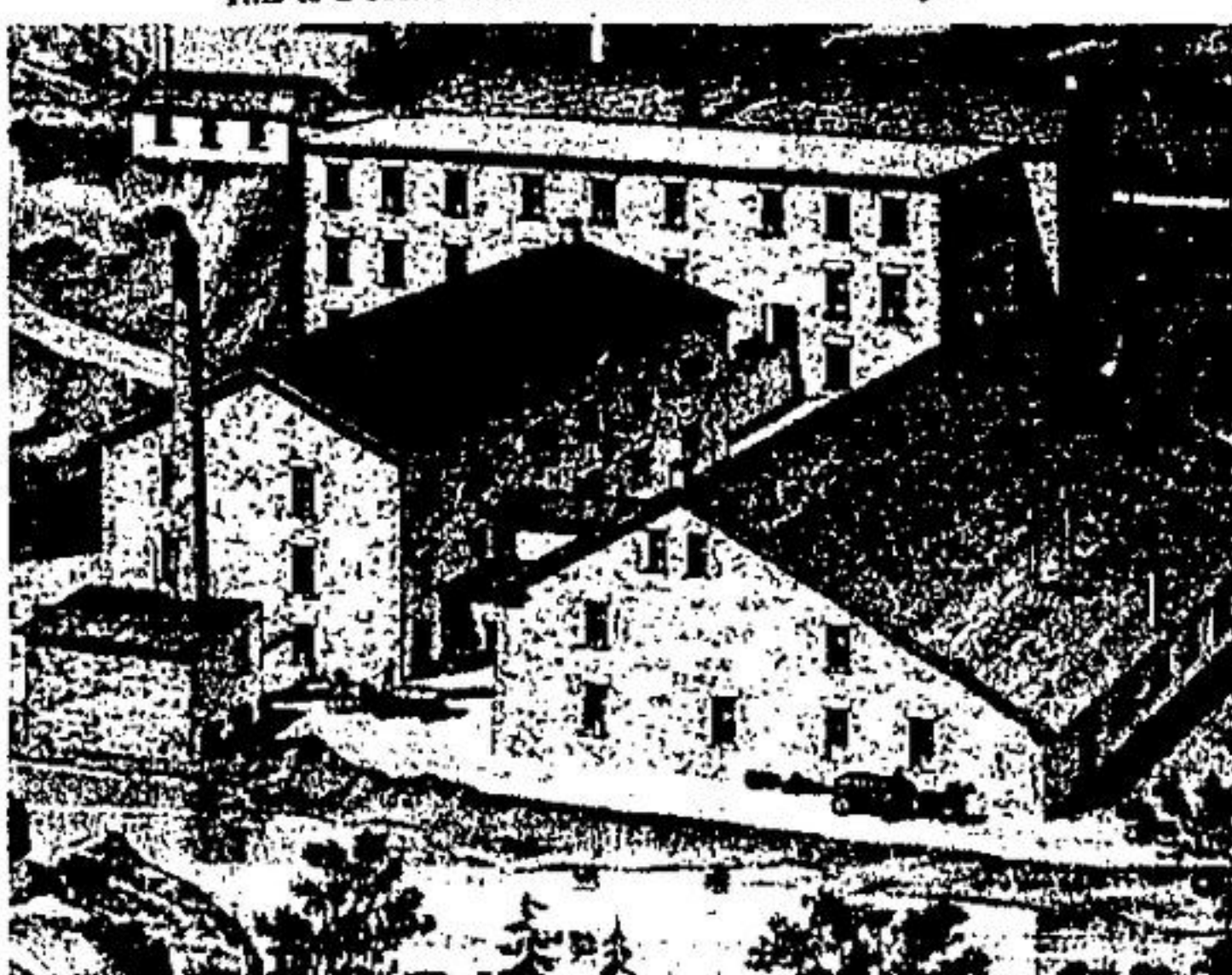
"Soon after the mill was started the brothers began to manufacture newsprint, making an all rag product, which they sold extensively to weekly newspaper publishers and to the Toronto Daily Leader. They also made use of straw, especially pea straw, for wrapping papers and until the time that wood began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



This is a scene from Limehouse in earlier days.



The town's beginnings owe a lot to the establishment of the Barber Mills (seen above) and the industry which grew on the banks of the Credit River.



One of the prosperous businesses was the Georgetown Creamery picture was taken in 1920.



A pretty section of Mill St. in downtown Georgetown.

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 owning almost everything in common.

"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

Herald founded by Isaac Hunter

The Herald was founded in 1866 by Isaac Hunter.

In the early days, it was known as the Halton Herald, and local agents sold advertising as far away as Oakville and Burlington.

The second owner of The Herald was Joseph Craig, who ran the newspaper side of the business, while his brother, Richard, ran the printing side. Printing often helped cover the losses on the newspaper side until the paper was financially stable.

MINISTER
The Craigs sold The Herald to Nelson Burns, a Methodist Minister who ran a private school while he was in Georgetown to help make ends meet.

Mr. Burns sold the paper to Thomas J. Starret, who stayed in Georgetown for about four years before moving to Milton and taking over publishing a paper there.

By 1885 the paper was edited by David Edgar Bastedo, who began his newspaper career at the age of 12 with the Northern Advocate in Bracebridge.

Robert Douglas Warren became the editor of The Herald and proprietor of the "Herald Steam Printing House" in 1888.

An Acton native, Mr. Warren ran for the Liberal seat in Halton in 1908 and

lost, but unlike many publishers of that era he didn't allow his political leanings to influence the contents of the paper.

Mr. Warren was active in politics and served as Reeve of Georgetown and Warden of Halton County.

Mr. Warren employed Joseph Matheson Moore to run The Herald until Mr. Moore was able to buy the paper.

Mr. Moore was a native of Acton and later served as a reeve of Georgetown.

Mr. Moore left school at the age of 12 and became a printer's devil at the Acton Free Press before coming to The Herald as a foreman in the print shop in 1891.

FIRE
The Herald office was upstairs in the Herald's Main St. building, with a big press at the back. When fire gutted the building around the time of the First World War, the press plunged right through to the basement. Most of the back issues to that date were destroyed.

Mr. Moore operated The Herald until his death in 1939. He advised his family in his will to sell the business because he felt the day of the independently owned small town newspaper was over.

Garfield "Mac" McGilvray ran the newspaper



This press is called a 1180-DEU and would have been used at the time The Herald was first printed in Georgetown in 1866.

between Mr. Moore's death and the purchase of the paper by Walter Biehn.

The printing trade was always changing, as in 1923, when The Herald bought a linotype machine, which eliminated the need to set type by hand.

It took three hours in those days to print the 600 to 800 copies of The Herald on the hand-fed flat-bed press. Back then the population of the town was about 2,500.

Walter Biehn ran the paper as an independent for almost 20 years. While in the army during the Second World War, his wife, Mary, ran the business.

OWN OFFICE
The Herald purchased its own office on Main St. in 1952 where it remained until 1980, when a new building was purchased at the corner of Mill and Guelph Streets. The larger structure facilitated the operation of printing

presses in the basement.

In the late 1950s the paper was purchased by the Thomson newspaper chain. The Herald and the Orangeville Banner were among the first weeklies in Ontario to be purchased by the chain.

Walter remained with The Herald until 1973, when he retired.

Since then Mr. Biehn has been active as a town councillor and executive member of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce.

The paper is now being published by Paul Taylor, who is active in the community with the Kiwanis Club while participating in golf, tennis and curling.

Mr. Taylor was born in Paris, Ontario, and he has worked for a variety of newspapers including Woodstock, Oshawa, Kamloops and Niagara Falls.

—Condensed from a history of The Herald by Richard Ruggie, 1979.

Statistical review of Georgetown 1981 by Stats Canada

By DAVE ROWNEY
Herald Editor

Researchers interested in Halton Hills will be hard at work now that the Statistics Canada have released their findings of the 1981 "long form" census.

The form gathers information from a 20 per cent sample, or rather, one out of every five Canadians answer questions on family income, schooling, monthly housing payments and other topics.

The long form, which is a favorite with market researchers, has been available in booklet form for about three weeks, although the microfiche tabulations have been out since the early summer.

Statistics prove that Halton Hills hasn't experienced any substantial growth since 1976. The town has increased by only 713 residents in the period 1976-1981.

In the same period nearby Milton increased their size by 7,311 while Halton Region bulged by 25,398. Halton Hills' population as of 1981 is 35,190.

Halton Hills is still very much different from the cultural mosaic of Toronto. British origins represent 68.6 per cent of the population while French origin accounts for 3.7 per cent of the population.

English is the mother tongue to all but 3,720 residents while French mother tongue residents total 775.

There are 2,215 residents, or 6.3 per cent of the population who are bilingual while 105 people in town can speak neither of Canada's official languages. French is the home language for 395 people, according to the census.

Eighty-two per cent of the town's residents were born in Canada, with 9.6 per cent coming from the United Kingdom and 7 per cent originating from a European country

Residents from Central and South America or from Asia represent 1 per cent of our total population.

According to the census, Halton Hills gained more citizens born outside Canada in the period after the second World War lasting until 1965.

During that 1945-64 period there were 3,580 immigrants who moved to Halton Hills while in the period from 1965 - 1981 there were 2,245 people immigrating to the town.

The area has 7,605 people who are

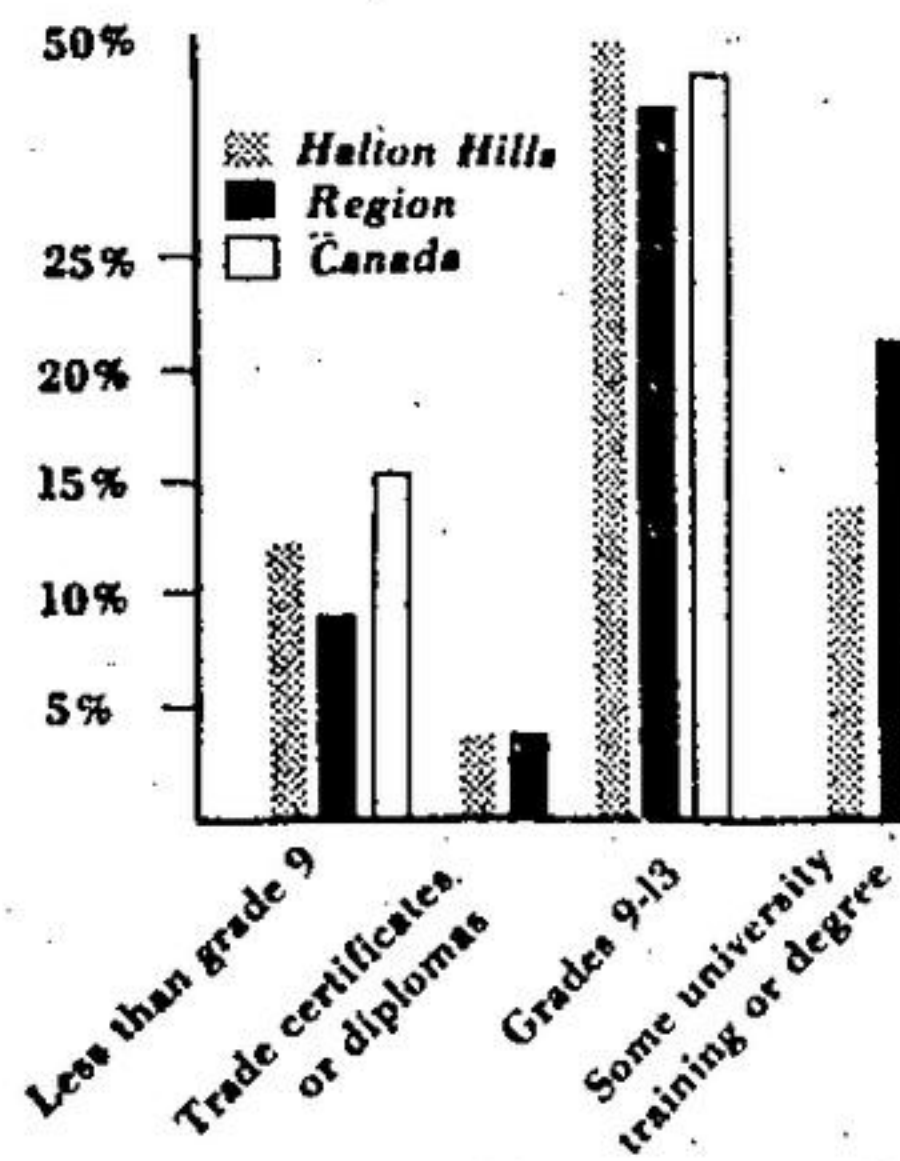
members of the Catholic faith. The Protestant faith is represented by 24,155 members.

The United Church has 8,205 followers while the Anglican Church is affiliated with 7,375 people according to 1981 statistics.

An 8.4 per cent of the population is atheist (listed as no religious preference), which compares to Halton Region's 5.5 figure.

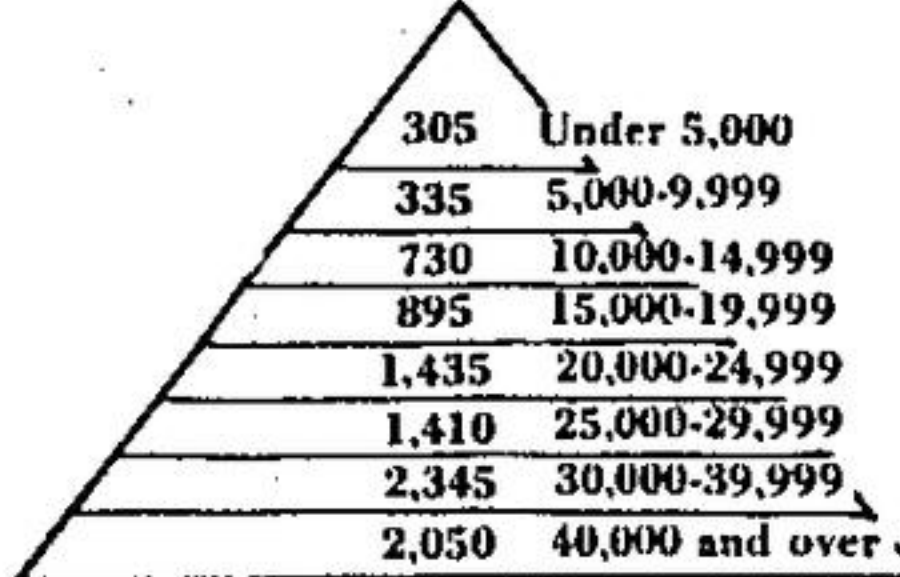
Eastern Orthodox has 245 followers while 35 members of the Jewish faith live in Halton Hills. Eastern non-Christian beliefs have 100 followers.

EDUCATION



The following chart compares levels of education using percentages of the population.

FAMILY INCOME



The above pyramid chart shows the breakdown of total family income in 1981 in Halton Hills. There are 8,366 families in Halton Hills whose average income is \$28,000. Total family income is the amount of income earned by one family. The first number on the chart is the number of families in the income range shown to the right.

How we rate compared to other regions

The Herald contacted the Statistics Canada branch in Toronto to find out how Halton Hills compares to the rest of Ontario and Canada in some areas concerning rent and income.

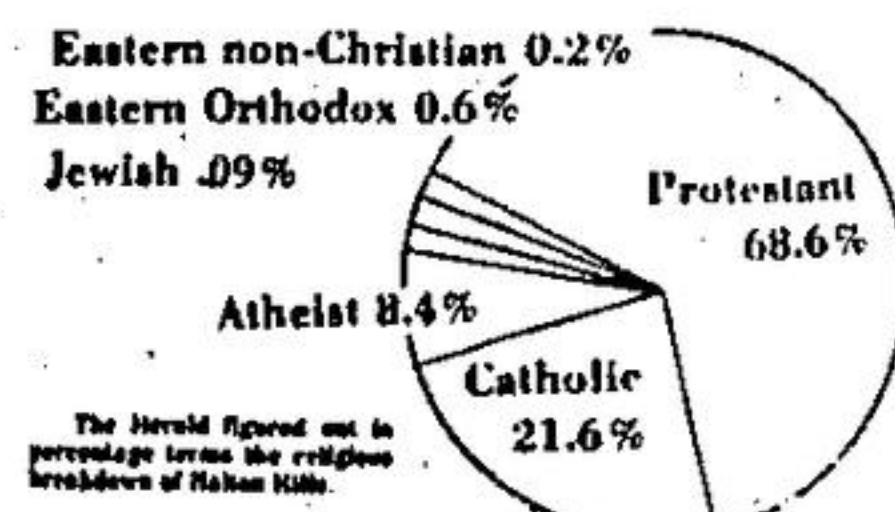
In Ontario there were 11.4 per cent of all families spending more than 62 per cent of their income on food, shelter and clothing, putting them in a category of low income.

In Halton Hills 5 per cent of all families spend more than 62 per cent of their income on

food, shelter and clothing, putting them in a category of low income.

In Ontario 35.5 per cent of all unattached individuals spent more than 62 per cent of their

RELIGION



The Herald figured out in percentages from the religious breakdown of Halton Hills.

income on food, shelter and clothing, compared to 31.1 per cent in Halton Hills.

The average total income for males in 1980 in Canada was \$16,918, while in Halton Hills the average male income was \$18,944. The average for Halton Region is \$22,014.

The average total income for females in 1980 was \$8,414, while in Halton Hills the average female income was \$8,272. Females in Halton Region average a total income of \$8,681.

The average gross monthly rent in Canada is \$296, while the average major monthly payment in Canada is \$367.

In Canada 15.8 per cent of the population have less than grade 9 schooling, while the figure is 12 per cent for Halton Hills. Those who have between grade 10 and grade 13 education in Canada represent 46 per cent of the population, compared to 49 per cent for Halton Hills.