THE BECKETT PAPER COMPANY

"Makers of Good Paper in Hamilton, Ohio, Since 1848.

An advertising man with a chronic interest in paper making and an acute interest in automobiling, recently stumbled on a fact that throws an interesting side-light on the growth and importance of one of Hamilton's principal industries.

Being in the market for a car, and wanting plenty of general as well as specific information, he instructed his stenographer to "write all the automobile manufacturers for their catalogues."

He did not know how many manufacturers there were, nor did the stenographer, but she got a list of them and obeyed orders.

And in the next few weeks the advertising man received *over two hundred catalogues.*

When he had absorbed all the automobile information he could hold, he became curious to know in what proportion the various paper mills had supplied the papers for these catalogues. So he wrote to the printers of the catalogues, asking particulars as to the papers used, and especially the cover papers.

The results were startling. For there are in the United States more paper mills than automobile manufacturers. Every automobile maker could, if he so desired, buy paper from a different paper mill; and while this was not likely to happen the investigator did expect that a great variety of paper sources would be represented, and that no one of the better known makes of paper would show a marked preponderance over any of the others.

What he found, however, was that *one out of every five* of the covers on all these two hundred and more catalogues, was *made in Hamilton, by The Beckett Paper Company.*

More than one-fifth of all the cover paper used for Automobile Catalogues in the year 1913, in other words, was produced by this single paper mill.

This incident is of interest to residents of Hamilton and Butler County for the reason that while many of them know of The Beckett Paper Company as an old-established and successful concern, few of them realize the eminence which it has attained in the paper trade, both as regards its prestige and the sale of its product.

As the average reader of these lines will probably be surprised to learn of the Beckett Paper Company's predominance among "purveyors" to the printers of automobile catalogues, so he will probably be equally surprised to learn that The Beckett Mill is known throughout the length and breadth of the country as a model of its kind, and is frequently visited by paper makers from other cities, even from the famed Eastern paper-making centers, who are looking for new ideas in methods and equipment.

Hundreds of these men know the mill of The Beckett Paper Company as well as Hamiltonians know the court house; thousands of others, in every big city in the country, know this mill as a dependable source of good cover paper, and use its product almost daily in their work.

This position is due in some measure to The Beckett Paper Company's priority in the cover paper field, the first fancy covers ever exploited in America having been produced in this mill; but mostly it has been due to the courageous enterprise and business ability of the present management of the business.

For while The Beckett Paper Company and its predecessors under other firm styles have been "makers of good paper in Hamilton, Ohio, since 1848," it is only within the last decade that the business has become nationally known and recognized as one of the leaders in its line.

When the present management of the business assumed control, the mill was a comparatively small one, though doing a good business. Today, after having been entirely rebuilt twice, and extensively enlarged twice, the last time as recently as 1912, it is making and selling *the largest output in the world* of a single brand of cover paper.

The steps by which this enormous business has been developed are interesting, and may be recounted briefly:

In 1848, one Reilly secured a site at the corner of Buckeye and Lowell streets, and began work on a paper mill. He brought to the town two millrights, John L. Martin and Frank Martin, and Adam Laurie, a Scotch paper maker. The two Martins had charge of the erection, and Laurie was to run the mill. At that time the only paper mill in Hamilton, was the wrapping paper mill of Erwin, Kline & Company.

When Reilly had built the foundation of the mill, he failed, and left the Martins and Laurie stranded.

They consulted William Beckett, at that time a lawyer in Hamilton, with the result that Mr. Beckett interested F. D. Rigdon, another Hamilton lawyer, and they with the Martins formed what proved to be the beginning of the present Beckett Paper Company, under the firm style of Beckett, Martin & Rigdon. Adam Laurie was retained as foreman.

In 1850 Mr. Beckett purchased the interest of the two Martins and the firm style was changed to Beckett & Rigdon. In 1852 a second machine was added. In 1854 Adam Laurie took a one-eighth interest. In 1862 or '63 Mr. Rigdon retired, and the name was changed to Beckett & Laurie, being changed again to Beckett, Laurie & Company, when Mr. Adam Laurie, Jr., in 1870, was taken into partnership.

Under these auspices Thomas Beckett had his training, and in 1885, just twenty-eight years ago, was taken into the firm. The Becketts then bought out both the Lauries, and The Beckett Paper Company was incorporated with one hundred thousand dollars capital. After the incorporation the mill was rebuilt. New machines and engines were constructed by Hamilton concerns.

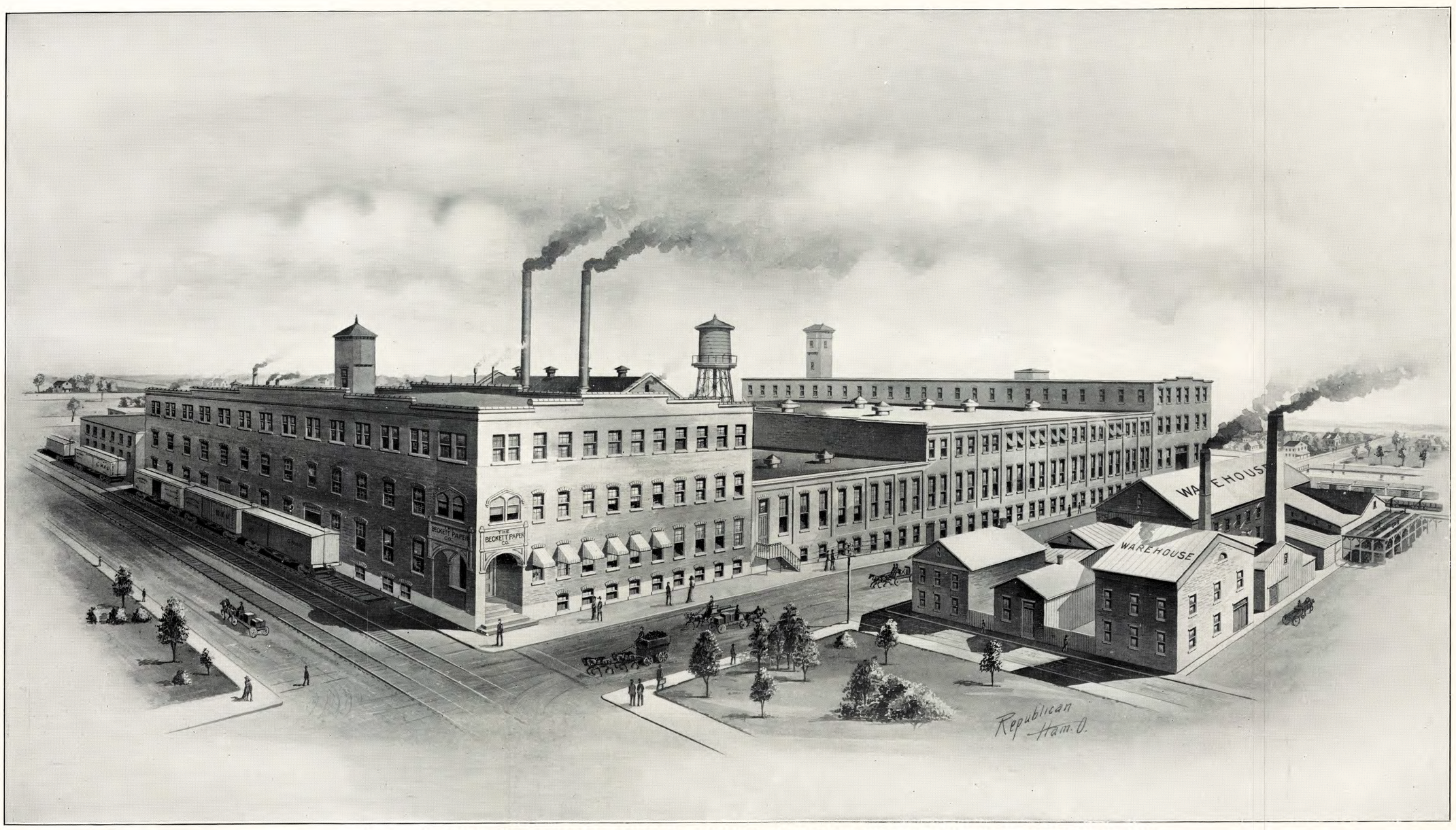
From that time on the business grew steadily, but improvements continued to be made in paper making machinery, and a few years ago Mr. Beckett again decided to reconstruct the entire mill. This was done in 1906, the old machines being entirely scrapped and the building razed to make room for the present structure which houses, as stated above, the finest paper making equipment to be found anywhere in the country.

And the purchase of this large amount of machinery from Hamilton companies attested to the worth of their product installed 20 years earlier.

Last year a third story was added to the mill to enable the company to take care of the rapidly growing business, and the end is not yet. The company lost heavily in the flood of last March, as so many other Hamilton concerns did, but was able to resume operations early in April, and at that time a "Flood Bulletin" was sent out to the company's dealers, in which occurred these words:

"We got pretty wet when the Miami rose last Month. It was eight feet deep on the main floor. But it did not get high enough to dampen our enthusiasm."

A pretty good Butler County sentiment.



MILLS OF THE BECKETT PAPER COMPANY—"MAKERS OF GOOD PAPER IN HAMILTON, OHIO, SINCE 1848."