

## **The Champion Coated Paper Company: World's Greatest Coated Paper Mill,**

*The Republican-News, 1911*

The Champion Coated Paper Co., which is the largest manufacturer of coated paper in the entire world, is a great monument to the industrial life of Hamilton. From the hill just to the west of the main plant, an idea of the immensity of the plant may be obtained. It stretches over a vast area of ground on the West side of North B street and in recent years an addition, more than one square in length and running from the street to the river on the East, was completed. As a plant, The Champion Coated Paper Co. is a marvel of the modern industrial world. Its equal will not be found in the two hemispheres.



Through the devoted service of Peter G. Thomson, its founder and president of the company has gained a reputation that extends to the farthest part of the civilized world. Associated with Mr. Thomson are his sons, Peter Thomson, Jr., Alexander Thomson and Logan Thomson, S. M. Goodman, and Walter D.G. Randall.

During the activity of the well known concern, although it is the youngest of the coated mills of the United States, it has out-stripped all the others and stands today at the very forefront of the industry in the entire world.

**Champion Offices: new office built in 1924, original office built in 1893**

Additional interest centers in the Champion Coated Paper Co. by virtue of the fact that on Thursday, January 28, the United States government awarded the contract for its paper supply to the local concern. The approximate value of this contract has been placed at \$750,000, or three quarters of a million dollars, and this contract is the largest for paper that the U. S. government ever awarded. That the Hamilton concern was able to land such an enormous order from such a source is a matter of pride, both to the company itself and to the city of whose industrial life The Champion Coated Paper Co. has become such an important a factor.

The story of the beginnings of The Champion Coated Paper Co. is one of the rare stories of the industrial world. Like many other of the great manufacturing establishments with a wide-world fame, the Hamilton concern began in a humble way, Peter G. Thomson originated the idea of constructing the plant in this city. He worked faithfully to make the proposition a successful one and today he lives to see the idea taking shape in one of the world's greatest industries. The Champion Coated Paper Co. is a tribute to the genius and fine business judgment of President Peter G. Thomson.

On Sunday night, December 22, 1901, a disastrous fire swept the great plant, almost entirely destroying it. Here was a chance to prove the spirit which was directing the affairs of the concern. The great industry was a wreck; the smoldering ruins of the one-time busy concern told the story of the disaster. In that moment, however, the great Champion Coated Paper Co. was born. With a resolution such as one would expect from

brave men, and within twenty-four hours after the great disaster had leveled the mammoth plant, plans were under way for the reconstruction of The Champion Coated Paper Co.

The entire business interests of Hamilton had been affected by this staggering blow; hundreds had been thrown out of employment and many were asking whether or not the giant industry would ever rear its head again in the Hamilton business community.

It did rise, Phoenix-like from the ashes; Rome it was said, was found by Augustus to be a city of brick; when he died he left a City of Marble. So was the Greater Champion Coated Paper Co. built, more elaborately than its predecessor. And business increased and the business world had confidence in the abilities of the men who direct the affairs of the great concern; and orders were rolling in within three or four months after the disastrous fire, and once more the proud concern was carrying on its immense business thus conquering the spirit of destruction which had sought to lay it low.

The manufacture of the coated paper is a story which cannot be told here. Visitors by the thousands visit the great plant every year and watch the skilled workmen as they turn out the thousands of tons of coated paper yearly.

How the concern has risen to the very front of the business world, is another story which is being written, a chapter every day. And there is still another story which tells of the up-hill struggle of Peter G. Thomson, once an apprenticed printer, then a publisher of children's story books; a young man eager to "make good" in an honest and honorable way, who came to be the president of the largest Coated Paper mill in the world with hundreds of men in his employ. It is an interesting story filled with little incidents which show the indomitable spirit of the man.

And this same spirit Mr. Thomson has infused into his business and those who are associated with him have caught this spirit and it has made the Champion Coated Paper Co. the power in the industrial life of this community that it now is.

The new addition to the concern, on the East side of North B street, is in itself as complete and modern a place as anyone would care to see. It indicates the rapid growth of the Champion Coated Paper Co., which not so many years ago occupied much humbler quarters than it now occupies.



**Original Champion Mill built in 1894, addition on left built in 1896**

If constant progress is any criterion by which the worth of a concern may be accurately judged, then Hamilton may well feel proud of what she has in The Champion Coated Paper Co. As the years go by an ever increasing business calls for more space in which to carry on the work of the big plant.

The belt line of the C., H. & D. railroad has the Champion Coated Paper Co., as its north terminal and it was largely to care for the heavy shipments of this concern that the line was constructed many years ago. Mr. Thomson, president of the Company, lives at College Hill. A considerable portion of his time is spent

at the big plant in Hamilton and the keen interest which Mr. Thomson takes in the affairs of his company has greatly added to its strength in the business community.

Mr. S.M. Goodman, secretary and treasurer of the concern is a man of fine business judgment, alert in his business activity and prominent in all municipal affairs of Hamilton. In the conduct of the business Mr. Thomson has gathered about him his three sons, Alexander, Peter Jr., and Logan and these three men under the splendid direction of their father, have aided in placing the great business upon the very plane which it now occupies in the industrial community of Southern Ohio, and in fact, throughout the entire world.



**Aerial view of the Champion Mill**

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Besides the great buildings which constitute the Hamilton Plant Of The Champion Coated Paper Co., the company owns and operates The Champion Fibre at Canton, North Carolina, which is as complete an industry as can be found anywhere in the world.

Some idea of the size and ability of the Champion Fibre Co. to handle the products of that region may be had when a few of the features of the North Carolina plant are enumerated. The Champion Fibre Co. owns fifty thousand acres of North Carolina forest which furnishes the raw material for Champion paper. The length of the buildings comprising the Southern plant is 1,280 feet, nearly one-quarter of a mile. The breadth of the buildings, is from 250 to 700 feet. The daily capacity of the Champion Fibre Co.'s plant is 250,000 pounds of soda fibre; 200,000 pounds of sulphite fiber; 100,000 pounds of tannic acid. There are twenty-eight boilers in the plant giving 11,000 horse power. The smokestack is 254 feet high the inside diameter being 15.5 feet at the top. Nine hundred men are employed at the Canton plant in order that the wants of The Champion Coated Paper Co. may be met fully. At this plant the wood pulp is made for the largest paper manufacturing plant in the world.

Certain features of the Champion Coated Paper Co.'s Hamilton plant commend the company to the industrial world. Everything is absolutely modern and built as it should be to turn out a perfect product. Every foot of piping used is galvanized inside and out, thus avoiding the possibility of iron getting into the paper. As the "Champion" Co. sells only to jobbers, there is no selling expense to add to the cost of the paper; this and many other advantages are offered to the consumer, who receives better paper for the same money or the same grade for less money than can be secured elsewhere. Carrying a large and varied line, the "Champion" Co. can fill up "combination" cars easier than any other manufacturers, thus saving their consumers largely on the item of freight. The "Champion" mills are a pleasant place for its employees to work, being clean, well lighted and perfectly ventilated. The employees work under a progressive wage scale, securing an increase of 5 percent every five years over and above any other increases or promotions that may be received.

The "Champion" company recently finished a new large coating room, 180 by 300 feet and will install ten additional double coating machines which will add fifty tons to its daily capacity of coated paper. Two machine shops are maintained by the "Champion" company and these are fitted with modern machinery, including the largest lathes and drill presses, planers and shapers. All repair work and building of light machines for the company is done at its own shops. The company also maintains a blacksmith shop, tin shop and complete hardware and supply departments. This last department is carefully systematized and contains usually about \$17,000 worth of supplies. The great boiler-house has a capacity of 8,000 horse-power, yet the arrangements are so perfect that the entire battery of boilers is fired by four men. The coal is stored overhead in concrete bins of 4,000 tons capacity, the coal being fed to the mechanical stokers by gravity.

The main engine-room contains three cross-compound engines of 3,000 horse-power each; two of these are direct-connected to generators which run motors in all parts of the plant. There are, in all, 31 steam engines in the Hamilton plant. The generators are directly connected to large engines. Each fly-wheel weighs 150,000 pounds and the revolving part of the generator weighs 70,000 pounds each. This means a weight equal to six car-loads of paper turning almost two revolutions a second. The immense fly-wheel is 24 feet in diameter, and the enormous belt is 135 feet long, six feet wide and nearly one inch thick.



The shipping facilities at the Hamilton plant are unequaled. At the loading platform there can be loaded nine freight cars at once. Every drop of water used in the manufacture of "Champion" paper is carefully purified by the 16 pressure filters used in the Hamilton plant. All "Champion" papers are carefully trimmed and counted before packing. All coated paper is packed in solid cases, lined with water-proof paper of their own make. Each ream is weighed separately.

### **Champion Workers**

In the cutting and sorting room 275 x 240 feet, 125 girls are employed in inspecting both sides of every sheet of "Champion" coated paper. If any defect develops the sheets are thrown aside. Each girl sorts about one ton daily.

The paper stock is filtered to remove foreign substances. Next the "wet machines" where the water is drained and pressed from the stock and the moist paper is carried onto the great endless and seamless "felts", or belts of pure white wool 12 feet wide by 120 feet long, to the drying cylinders. There are 36 of these great cylinders, 138 inches long and 48 inches in diameter. They are hollow and heated with exhaust steam. The paper runs around these "dryers" like a belt until it reaches the end of the machine where it passes through the calendars and the slitting machines and is wound in great rolls. Each of these machines is operated by a 300-horse-power engine underneath the floor, which is of reinforced concrete and impervious to the millions of gallons of water that run off these machines daily. The combined output of these six machines is 110 tons of paper daily. This is the largest book-making room in the world and is 217 feet by 186 feet. The great mill where "English Art Finish" "supercalendered" and "machine finished" book papers are made which is the new addition, is 921 feet long and 160 feet wide and is in operation day and night. The mill was built to manufacture only the very best quality of book paper at the very lowest price.

Although the mill was put in operation at the very start of the recent panic, the quality of the paper produced gave such satisfaction as to keep the mill running at the limit of its capacity --probably the only mill in the United States which did not curtail its product in 1908.

Here are some of the leading facts concerning the largest paper manufacturing plant in the world:

- 492,000 square feet of ground actually covered by buildings (more than eleven acres.) More than one million square feet of floor space (twenty-three acres.)
- Daily Capacity -- 525,000 pounds of finished paper, equal to fifteen carloads.
- Value of Daily Product -- More than double that of any one paper mill in the world.
- Water Capacity -- 33,000,000 gallons daily (sufficient to supply the needs of a city of 200,000 people.)
- Filtration Tank -- 450 feet long, 80 feet wide, 20 feet deep, solid ferro-concrete, concealed under basement of mill.
- One and one-half miles of railroad tracks within our own grounds and buildings.
- Makes a greater variety of papers and cardboards than any other mill in the world.