

The “B-C” Messenger

A glimpse of the paper machinery in the early 1900s from archived editions of a company bulletin published by Black Clawson.



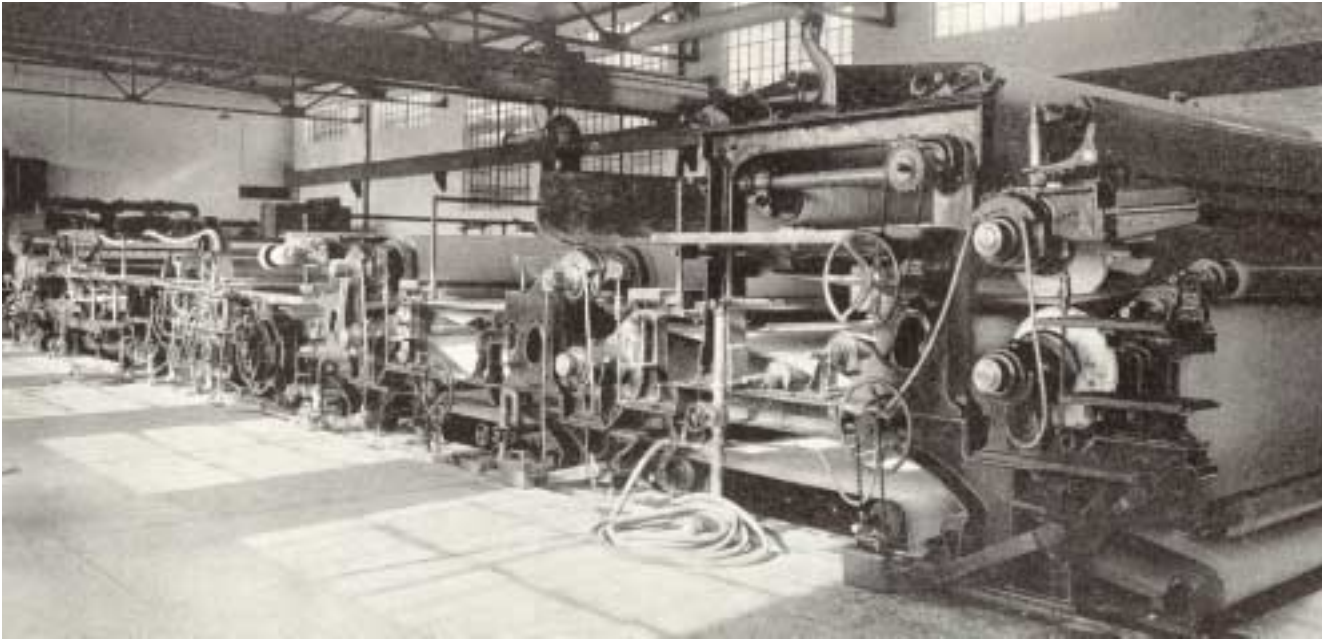
“The purpose of this bulletin is to inform our customers briefly from time to time of the progress made in the development of our paper machines,” reads a footer on the front page of the book.

In 1913, Black Clawson Company began publishing a pamphlet-style bulletin that the company used as a newsletter of sorts to keep its customers—and potential customers—apprised of its activities and technological advances in paper making machinery.

The publication was known as THE “B-C” MESSENGER. It was anywhere from 8 to 10 pages long with a page trim size of 9" x 6". The majority of stories described Black Clawson’s latest paper making machinery and customer services. Many were accompanied by testimonials from satisfied paper companies. But other articles discussed the major events of the times and how those events affected the manufacturing community. One issue of *The Messenger* even gave readers a glimpse of a futuristic paper mill.

Excerpt from the January 1914 issue:

“Flat screens of the diaphragm type are in general use in the United States, whereas Europe is using revolving screens almost to the exclusion of flat screens. The European mills have had plenty of experience with flat screens of various types, but have always found them wanting, inasmuch that they could not produce with them as clean a sheet of paper and as uniform weight as their market demands. They have come to the logical conclusion that pulp cannot be screened clean on the flat screens, no matter how fine the slots are; because the screenings remain on the surface of the screen plates, and some of them are bound to find their way through the slots in the course of time. This objection is avoided by use of the revolving screens, which automatically remove the screenings.”



A 170-inch bookpaper machine that was installed at P.H. Glatfelter Company's mill in Spring Grove, PA in the Fall of 1922.

Below is a letter from P.H. Glatfelter to Black Clawson Company in 1923:

GENTLEMEN:

In checking over a few of our records covering the machine clothing on the 170 inch machine which we recently purchased from you, I thought it may be of interest to have the records on wires, press felts and dryer felts.

In compiling the following data, we do not figure by days, but by the actual amount of paper taken off the machine:

Wires: anywhere from 662 tons up to 898 tons.

Press felts: first felt, 240 tons to 800 tons; second felts, 690 tons to 1415 tons; third felts, 2232 tons. Dryer felts; the original dryer felts, both top and bottom, are still running and look as though they would be good for a month or two longer. Started November, 1922.

These records can be greatly improved upon since our men are now broken in and the machine about up to production.

The highest speed we have run paper up to this time has been 415 FPM, running on a sheet 25 X 38 - 50 pound basis. Our average speed beginning around 360 to 380 FPM. We have, however, operated at 980 FPM without stock on the wire and find it very steady. The dryer gears are very quiet, and we did not notice any more vibration at 900 than we did at 380 FPM.

We take this opportunity to thank you....

Very truly yours,

P.H. GLATFELTER CO.

(signed) P.H. Glatfelter

Another letter from a happy customer:

January 16, 1914

GENTLEMEN:

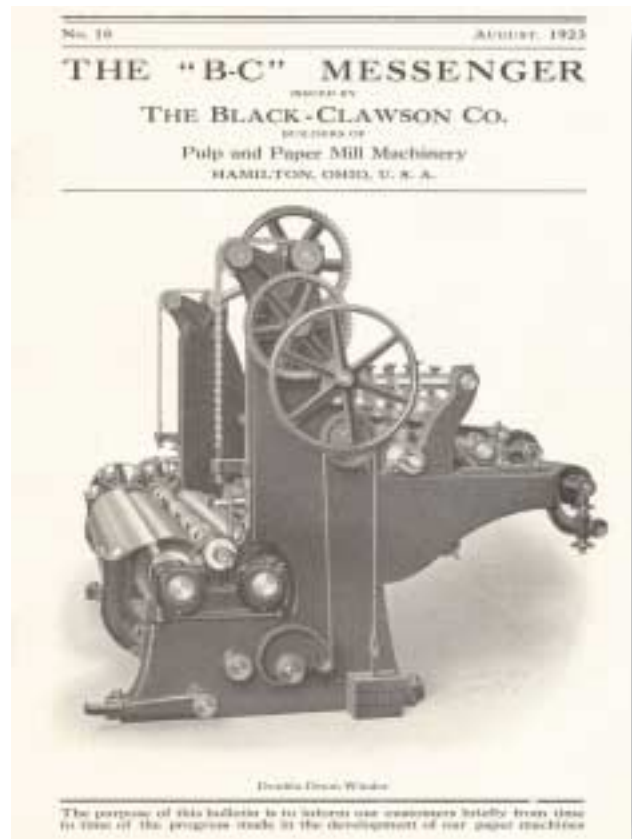
Even after so short a trial as only eleven days, we feel constrained to write in reference to the two Lamort screens you have just installed for us.

From the very first day we got through these screens our full normal production of from 1400 lbs. to 1600 lbs. per hour of high-grade cover papers made from unusually long rag stock. Our paper is certainly cleaner; there is absolutely no waste of stock, and the weights of our paper run very much more uniform than with the flat screens.

These are practically noiseless, and running so quietly without any jar, we feel sure that there will be no repairs, as there is nothing to wear out. The screens run with very narrow belts and take only a small amount of power.

At this writing we have seen absolutely no defects in the workmanship or in the operation of the screens. The revolving brass screen drums look to us to be as well made as anything could possibly be. We certainly gave these screens a severe test last week and this week, and so far have been abundantly satisfied.

Yours very truly,
THE BECKETT PAPER CO.,
T. Beckett, Pres.



The cover of the August 1923 issue of *The "B-C" Messenger* features a double-drum winder. The winder was built in two sizes: one with 12-inch diameter drums and 7-inch diameter slitters for winders up to 100 or 120 inches; or with 16-inch diameter drums and 10-inch diameter slitters for wider machines.

The last issue of *The Messenger* may have been December 1942. However, *PaperAge* editors can't be sure. In the May 1942 edition, an editorial titled "Uncle Sam Calls...and here's how the war affects *The Messenger*..." tells readers the war takes priority over the publishing of the book and employees have other duties to attend to. "So with this issue, we stop regular monthly publication," writes the editor.

However, it was noted that *The Messenger* may again be published if "something of extra importance comes up." And later that year something of extra importance did come up—Christmas. The December 1942 issue was devoted to spreading Christmas cheer. The issue is numbered 212 and is the last copy in *PaperAge's* archives. ■