Before he emigrated to America, the rag merchant Richard Fry owned an interest in two Buckinghamshire mills in the 1720s as well as a paper warehouse in London. He was declared bankrupt in 1730, when he was running the Sheffield Mills in Berkshire. At loose ends perhaps, he agreed to manage a paper mill in Maine proposed by the real estate speculators Thomas Westbrook and Samuel Waldo. He may have heard glowing reports of Maine’s economic prospects from Waldo, who is said to have gone to England for the purpose of recruiting a skilled papermaker. In 1731 Fry arrived in Boston, where he went into business as a stationer, bookseller, papermaker, and rag merchant. He claimed to have collected 7,000 pounds of rags, although it is not clear whether he intended them to be used in Mass. Mill 1 or in his Maine papernaking venture. In 1732 the governor of Massachusetts reported to the Board of Trade that the Falmouth mill was not yet in operation “for want of material.” Although Waldo promised Fry that the mill would be ready for him upon his arrival, the papermaker probably did not occupy his premises in Maine until 1734, when he signed a lease for a term of twenty-one years, obliging him to pay an annual rental of £64 sterling. Fry succeeded in shipping 50 reams of paper to his landlords but quit the mill in December 1736 without having made any payments. Waldo and Westbrook sued him and obtained a judgment for £70, enough to send Fry to debtor’s prison for several years. Waldo then turned against Westbrook, whose property was seized under execution. It is not clear what happened to the mill after Fry abandoned it; nor is it known if he was ever released from prison, although his widow Martha described herself as a papermaker when she signed documents concerning the disposition of his estate in 1745. After the falling out with Fry, Westbrook sought to replace him with George Massey, who filed a deposition in 1740 concerning his part in the affair. I have not seen his deposition (in the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan), which may reveal whether the mill remained in operation while the original tenant was in prison. References: London Gazette, 10–14 Nov. 1730, 2; Shorter 1957, 125, 129, 133; Goold 1875, 159–62; Fry 1908; Hunter 1952, 38–40; Baxter 1934, 24; DAB, 19:333; William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, “Finding Aid for Richard Fry Papers” (1992).

While the Presumpscot mill was under construction, Thomas Westbrook built or planned to build a second mill on the Strandwater River.

References:
- London Gazette, 10–14 Nov. 1730, 2
- Shorter 1957, 125, 129, 133
- Goold 1875, 159–62
- Fry 1908
- Hunter 1952, 38–40
- Baxter 1934, 24
- DAB, 19:333
mill on his property. In 1733 the local minister noted in his diary that he had visited the site “where the paper-mill is to be set.” There is no evidence that Westbrook actually succeeded in making paper in his mill, although Goold claimed that the building was completed and contained papermaking equipment. Reference: Goold 1875, 162–63.

**Westbrook**


In 1795 Samuel Freeman, Joseph Long, and Samuel Fowle advertised for rags they intended to use in a mill they were building “in the vicinity of Portland.” Two years later Freeman was selling writing, printing, and sheathing paper in hopes of recouping “the great ex pense he has been at in erecting works for the purpose.” References: [Portland, Me.] Eastern Herald, 24 Aug. 1795, 4; [Portland, Me.] Oriental Trumpet, 30 Nov. 1797, 1.

The Census of 1810 stated that one paper mill was operating in Cumberland County but did not include any information about its products. Reference: Coxe 1814, tables, p. 3.

The Saccarappa mill burned down in 1813, when it was owned by Partridge & Tower. The proprietors lost all of their equipment, 20 tons of rags, and 20 reams of writings—evidence that they were probably running a one-vat establishment. One of the proprietors may have been the papermaker Joseph Tower, who died in Westbrook in 1829. References: Portland Gazette, 4 Oct. 1813, 3; [Portland, Me.] Eastern Argus, 18 Dec. 1829, 4.

**North Yarmouth**

4. Twelve miles north of Portland.

In 1819 Henry Cox left Mass. Mill 12 to establish a mill in Maine for his two sons, who appear to have taken a partner to form the firm of Harris & Cox. One of the sons may have been George Cox, later a partner in Me. Mill 5. The business failed after manufacturing writing and wrapping grades for about five years. The mill contained two vats in 1825, when the Cox family’s half interest in the firm was put up for sale by auction. References: Dorchester 1859, 603–7; Goold 1875, 164; [Boston, Mass.] Columbian Centinel American Federalist, 16 Apr. 1825, 3.

Note: Gravell & Miller attribute to this mill a HARRIS watermark (Gravell & Miller 2002, wmk 438), even though it was found in a Rhode Island document dated 1813, before Harris & Cox went into business. It is more likely that this paper had been imported from England, where several papermakers named Harris were active at this time.

William Rand and Calvin Stockbridge acquired this mill sometime before 1832, when they supplied information about their concern for the McLane Report. Rand & Stockbridge employed six men, six women, and two boys to manufacture 3,750 reams a year worth $15,000. After about fifteen years, technological progress in the paper trade caught up with them and drove them out of business. Jewett & Read acted as the firm’s agents in Portland, where they sold wrappings, writings, printings, and sheathing papers—a complete range of paper products manufactured on “Neal’s Patent Machine.” I have not found any other record of this machine. References: Goold 1875, 164; McLane Report, 1:18; [Portland, Me.] Eastern Argus, 19 Oct. 1830, 3.

**Kennebec County**

**Gardiner**

5. On the Cobbossee or Cobbossecontee River.

After serving his time in one of the mills around Milton, Massachusetts, John Savels leased Mass. Mill 2 for a while before moving to Gardiner, Maine, in 1806. He built the Gardiner mill in 1812 and operated it as John Savels & Company in partnership with Eben Moore,
John Stone, and local landowner Robert Hallowell Gardiner, who owned the mill site. The mill burned down in 1813 and was rebuilt in sixty days. One of Savels’s ream wrappers is reproduced in Hunter 1950. References: Goold 1875, 163–64; Weeks 1916, 139; Hanson 1852, 172; Hunter 1950, 227, 271.

JS in script = Indian [laid] — ms., West Yarmouth [Me.?], 1815 (Gravell & Miller 2002, wnks 495–96; the Indian is reproduced in reverse); ms., n.p., 1818 (AAS).

JS = GARDINER [wove] — ms., Portland, Me., 1819 (Gravell & Miller 2002, wnks 578–79); printed doc., Rockingham County, N.H., dated in type 182_ and in ms. 1820 (AAS; lacks GARDINER watermark).

Savels bought Gardiner’s share in 1820 and formed a new firm, Savels, Cox & Company, in partnership with one of his employees, George Cox, who also learned the trade in Milton. The partners employed ten men, twelve women, and two children in a two-vat concern capitalized at $20,000 and consuming 46.5 tons of rags a year. They estimated their annual output to be worth $14,000 but reported that their profits were declining because of the “great influx of foreign paper.” The University of Delaware has a ream wrapper with Savels’s name, dated 1823. References: Hunter 1950, 227; Census of 1820, reel 1, item 42; Schreyer 1988, 22.

After Savels died in 1824, his share passed to his son William Savels, a preacher, perhaps active only as a silent partner. Cox went off to build Me. Mill 6 in Hallowell and sold his interest to Moses Springer, who traded under the name of Moore, Springer & Company [Eben Moore, Moses Springer, and William Savels]. In 1832 ten men and twenty women were manufacturing paper worth $22,500 a year from 80 tons of rags costing $10,000. The increase in output between 1820 and 1832 might be attributed to the acquisition of a cylinder machine. The proprietors claimed that they were making a handsome profit because “Small establishments do better than large.” References: Hunter 1950, 271; McLane Report, 1:18; Hanson 1852, 152; Goold 1875, 164; Kingsbury & Deyo 1892, 2:614.

Hallowell

6. On Seven Mile Brook in Vassalboro.

After working in Me. Mill 5, George Cox formed the firm of George Cox & Company in partnership with the Hallowell bookseller Calvin Spaulding and a local printing house, Glazier, Masters & Company. According to Kingsbury & Deyo, Cox had a partner named Talpy. In 1832 Cox & Company employed ten men and sixteen women manufacturing 4,500 reams a year worth $13,500. The mill burned down in 1841 or 1848 and was not rebuilt. References: Goold 1875, 164; Hunter 1950, 227, 271; McLane Report, 1:18; Kingsbury & Deyo 1892, 2:1111.

Knox County

Union

7. On Crawford’s River. This portion of Knox County was formerly in Lincoln County.

Josiah F. Day began manufacturing paper at this location in 1816 or perhaps as early as 1810, when the census officials noted that one paper mill was operating in Lincoln County, producing 4,500 reams a year worth $16,000—a highly optimistic figure for such a remote mill, which would be hard pressed to find customers willing and able to pay an average price of $3.55 per ream. References: Goold 1875, 164; Coxe 1814, tables, p. 3.

The mill belonged to John M’Thorndike and was occupied by John M. Gibbs in 1818, when it burned down. Gibbs lost everything in the fire and moved to Massachusetts, where he started a new business at either Mass. Mill 24 in Waltham or Mass. Mill 30 in Pepperell. Reference: [Boston, Mass.] Yankee, 6 Feb. 1818, 3.

In 1820 this mill appears to have been occupied by Holmes & Follansbee [Elijah Holmes and Leonard Follansbee], who paid an annual rent of $400 and
Fig. 4.1. George Cox & Co. Hallowell, Me. One Ream Wove Pot. Letterpress ream wrapper, 1826, wood engraving by Alexander Anderson. Photograph by Douglas Stone. Courtesy of the Robert C. Williams Paper Museum, Institute of Paper Science and Technology, Georgia Tech, Atlanta, Georgia.
employed eight people, including two or three girls, to manufacture $5,400 worth of writings, printings, and wrappings a year. Sibley offers a cursory account of two unidentified paper mills in Union, one of which appears to be this one, built in 1810, burned in 1818, rebuilt in 1819, and discontinued in 1837. The McLane Report contains production figures for an unidentified mill in Union with a staff of four men and six women manufacturing 1,500 reams of paper a year worth $4,500. Either this mill or Me. Mill 9 could have appeared in the report compiled in 1832, but I believe that this one was more likely to have been in business at that time, when Me. Mill 9 would have been closed for repairs. References: Census of 1820, reel 1, item 36; McLane Report, 1:18; Sibley 1851, 109, 464.

8. On Crawford’s River.

One Bachelder ran the second and smaller mill in Union, founded in late 1820, just in time to be recorded in the Census of 1820. Start-up costs amounted to $1,000, and the prospects of turning a profit were reported to be slim during the current depression. There was no mention of his papermaking business in 1832, when his saw mill in Union was destroyed by a flood. References: Census of 1820, reel 1, item 36; [Providence, R.I.] Rhode Island American and Gazette, 29 May 1832, 2.

9. On Crawford’s River above the Middle Bridge.

Sibley describes a mill “above the Middle Bridge,” which was destroyed by fire in 1843 with the loss of machinery valued at $3,000 and “unwrought stock” worth more than $2,000. He does not identify the owner, but a coincidence of dates suggests that he was Josiah F. Day, whose papermaking career ended in 1843 according to Weeks. If he retired because of that fire, he might have moved from Me. Mill 7 to this establishment sometime before 1832, when it was demolished by a flood. Presumably he rebuilt it and managed to stay in business until 1843. The flood and the fire provide the only evidence for dating this mill. References: Weeks 1916, 139; Sibley 1851, 109, 464; [Providence, R.I.] Rhode Island American and Gazette, 29 May 1832, 2.

Camden


At a cost of $5,000 Ebenezer H. Barrett and John Swann built a one-vat mill in or near Camden in 1828. They were said to be manufacturing $40 worth of paper a day. If so, they were not able to sustain that pace of production as of 1832, when the annual output of the mill was estimated at $6,000. It would have been making around $20 worth of paper per day if it was in operation year round; probably it closed down during the winter months. Five men and six women worked in this establishment, which contained fixed assets valued at $3,000. Barrett put the mill up for sale in 1833, offering easy terms, long credit, and the option of buying quarter shares or the entire establishment. From the Census of 1840, it appears that nothing had changed in its operations and facilities, still capitalized at $3,000 and still providing employment for five men making goods worth $6,000 a year. It burned down in 1841. References: Munsell 1876, 83; McLane Report, 1:18; [Portland, Me.] Eastern Argus, 31 May 1833, 3; Census of 1840.