

# When It Comes To Cotton Innovation, We Started Early

Recently we were very proud to have our [new website](#) highlighted on the [Nonwovens Industry website](#).

One of our favorite quotes from that blurb was: “Barnhardt’s story dates all the way back to the turn of the 20th century when it began as a modest supplier of layered cotton batting, horse drawn buggy seats, and filler for quilts and comforters.”

Our history of cotton innovation is something we’re very proud of. And [our revamped site](#) has [a full Innovation page](#) that highlights our Pilot Kier, Pilot Cards, AFIS Fiber Analyzer, as well as a ton of information on our various fibers and finishes. But today, we thought we’d place a little more emphasis on our earlier innovations.

At the turn of the 20th century—and as the Nonwovens Industry mentioned—our cotton batting found its way into cushioning for furniture, horse collars, and those buggy seats. Obviously today this might not seem like much, but back then that batting had a huge impact in creating greater comfort on what was certainly some very bumpy rides. Then, in 1911, we took the concept a step further by selling the first cotton batting used inside an automobile to Packard Motor Car Company.

Later, after we built our [bleachery](#), we were also a leading provider of cotton mainstays such as surgical dressings and cotton balls. During World War II, we served our armed forces by providing 25% of the dressings for battlefield treatment and military hospitals. Medically speaking, the place where most consumers became most familiar with cotton was through that ubiquitous tuft pulled from the top of a pill bottle. Again, these applications are taken completely for granted

today, but back then we were creating entirely new uses for our favorite wonder fiber.

Of course today, better cotton is based more on research and metrics, and we collaborate with our partners to create new products. Whether it's developing a chlorine-free process to bleach and purify our cotton, tailoring the fiber process and finish to exact specifications, or even creating nonabsorbent cotton like [HyDri™](#), we've consistently shown that we're committed to finding new and better ways to maximize the natural fiber. This dedication to innovation spans [more than 100 years](#). And we plan to remain dedicated for at least 100 more.