

The Visschers previously manufactured applesauce in large batches using copper kettles, producing as many as 24,000 cases of applesauce in 1924. Smith brought with him an interest in innovating and improving that production process, inventing a method for continuously cooking the apples to improve uniformity and quality. In 1930, Frank Visscher died and the business passed to Smith and McCagg.

During the 1930s, Smith would file at least three patents for cooking apparatus used in the manufacturing of applesauce; an apparatus for preparing food substances (1935), a method and apparatus for refining fruit sauces (1935), and an apparatus for making fruit products (1939).

According to Smith's sons, George and Clayton Smith, their father was a pioneer in the applesauce industry, largely due to his invention of the above listed apparatus. By the 1950s, other manufacturers were utilizing these machines to continuously cook down their product. The company remained under local ownership until 1979 when it was sold to Pillsbury.

Around 1929 or 1930, William Smith constructed a large applesauce can at the intersection of Rt. 63 and Rt. 104 on the south side of the road. A replica of the Very Best brand applesauce, travelers could stop for a sampling of the locally known product.

Lyndonville Canning Company pioneered applesauce production

By Matthew Ballard, Orleans County Historian Posted 4 May 2019 at 8:32 am



“Overlooked Orleans” – Vol. 5, No. 18

LYNDONVILLE – Taken some time in the late 1920s or early 1930s, this image shows thousands of bushels of apples piled outside of the Lyndonville Canning Company. Yates farmers established a cooperative canning company in 1916, which was then purchased by Theodore and Frank Visscher in 1917. The Visschers marketed their products under the “V.B.” label, which stood for “Visscher Brothers.”

In the early 1920s, the Visscher Brothers advertised the sale of Cumulative Preferred Stock at a cost of \$100 per share; the annual dividends of seven percent were paid to owners on a quarterly basis. Shortly after, William A. Smith and Wilson McCagg purchased 50 percent of the business and the two men began to gradually shift production from a variety of vegetables to apples.