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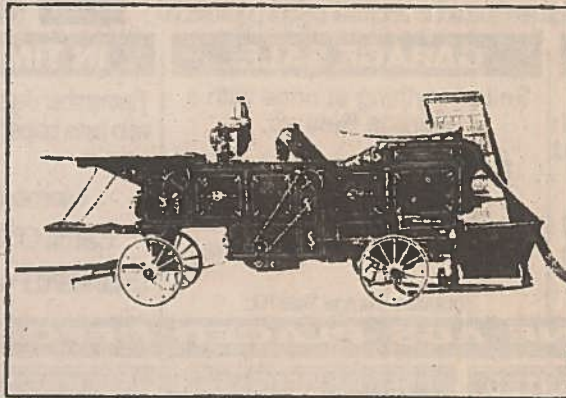
BIDWELL'S BEAN THRESHER

With Orleans County having always been an agricultural community, it stands to reason that farming implements would naturally be produced here. After all, "necessity is the mother of invention."

Such was the case of Bidwell's Bean Thresher. The inventor of the apparatus pictured here was Charles H. Bidwell, who was born in Albion in September 1848. He received his education at the Albion Academy and later graduated from the Brockport normal school. He was one of the first people to introduce steam threshing and over a period of ten years, while pursuing this, perfected his bean thresher.

In 1883, he began in a very small way with the manufacturing of bean threshers in Albion. His business increased and in 1889 he moved his threshers to Medina, where he was able to acquire a larger space. It was while he was in Medina that his business really grew in importance. In fact, the name Bidwell became synonymous with bean threshers. It was a name thought of favorably in all the bean-growing states and Canada because these machines were recognized as being the very best. In fact, one hundred ago, this business claimed to have twice as many Bidwell threshers in actual use than any other make.

Charles Bidwell had an inventive mind and continued yearly to make improvements to his bean threshers. In 1899 he perfected a self-feeder for his machine, which continued to prove that his



C. H. BIDWELL BEAN THRESHER.

product was more than ordinary in its purpose. Around the same time, he also invented a bean harvester which helped expand on the name Bidwell. By 1900, with the growing importance of the business and the inadequate industrial manufacturing space in Medina, this concern moved into a new building erected for the business in Batavia. The bean thresher in the photo was manufactured in Medina around 1897.

Years ago, I've heard old timers tell how threshing beans was one of the most dirty, dusty jobs a farmer had to do. Although the bean-threshing equipment did an adequate job, it was still a mess to work around.