

The Miller-Pettengill enterprises

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Bethinking of Olde Orleans

During the 1870s and 1880s, Clarendon had its golden years. Those were the years of greatest activity and population. The great forests in the Tonawanda swamp area were being cut of at a tremendous rate.

Ogden Miller and Walter Pettengill owned the old Farwell stone grist mill. They could see the great possibilities in these forests and set up a huge saw and planing mill operation. They also took advantage of the great production of apples around the Clarendon area and started up an evaporator. This led to a cider mill and a stave mill.

Miller and Pettengill were the first to introduce the 24-hour process of generating cider into vinegar instead of the old year-long aging method. These enterprises gave employment to a great number of people and the payroll certainly had a great impact on the local economy.

In 1888, Miller and Pettengill decided they had to get located on the railroad because the hauling of their products by team from Clarendon was not economical. They built a plant in Holley, where later the Duffy Mott factory was located and gradually closed out their business in Clarendon.

About the time that Miller and Pettengill moved their business to Holley, Miller could see change coming and decided to move to Caledonia in 1888. They set up about the same sort of business they had in Clarendon. Grandson Fred invented a mechanical bean harvester and other farm tools that became standbys for farmers for many years all through this region.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Walter T. Pettengill, left, and Ogden S. Miller.