

Watermills
of
Montgomery County
Iowa

The Montgomery County Historical Society

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2000

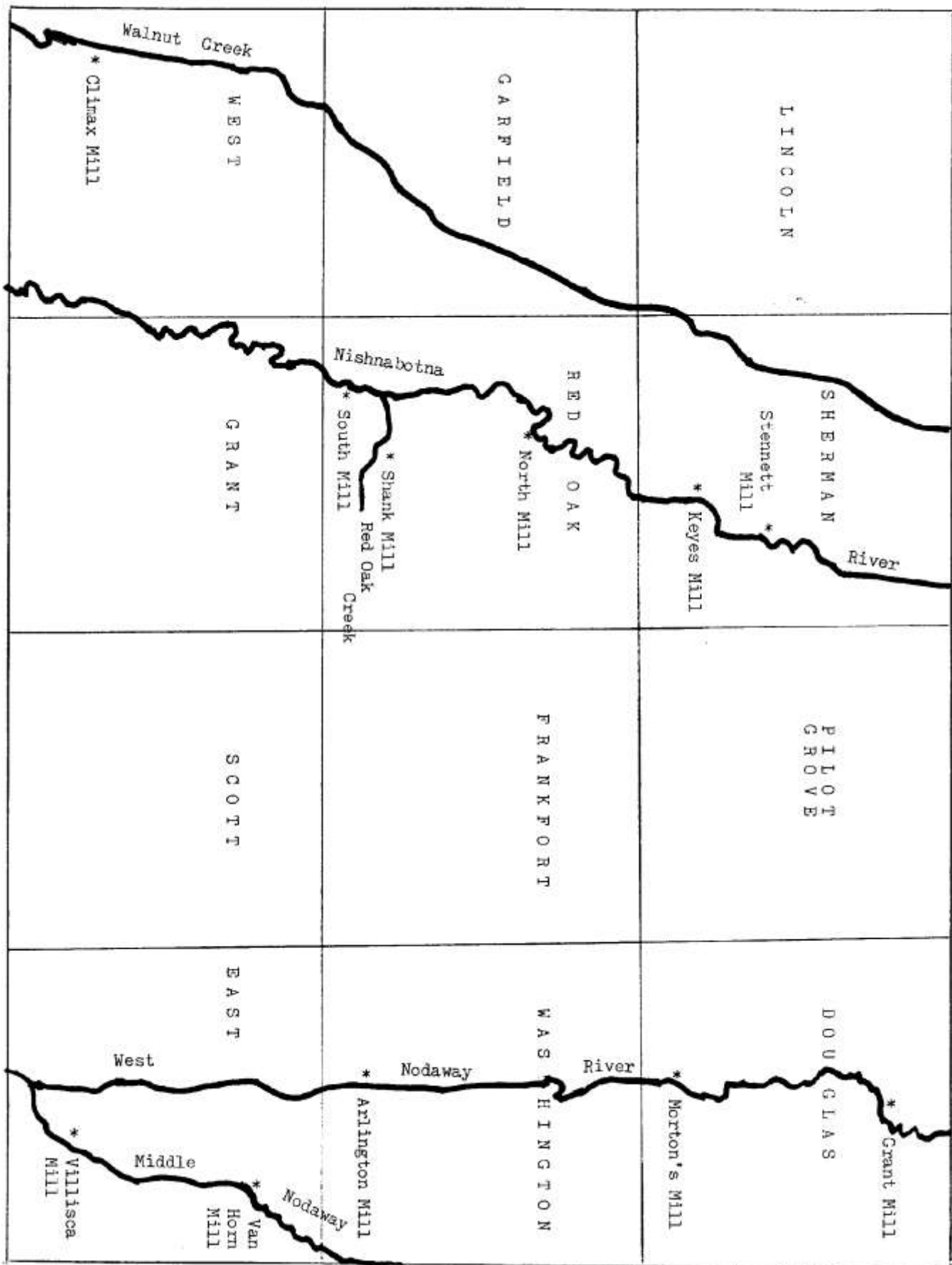


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THE STORY OF OUR MILLS

The mill was invented when a cave dweller placed some seeds on a flat rock and pounded them with another rock, thus making the grains easier to chew. The largest, most modern mill of today is just a refinement of that basic principle.

Ages passed without significant improvement of milling methods. Then some early genius decided there must be an easier way to obtain the daily bread, and learned to harness the forces of nature to do man's work. In the low flat lands of Europe, such as Holland and Denmark, windmills were erected. In other areas, water power was developed. The Pilgrims had lived in Holland, so they were certainly familiar with windmills, but after they came to this country they built water mills.

As the pioneers moved westward, mills followed, but there was always an interval before the mills caught up. The first settlers in Montgomery County had to go long distances to mills. All of the early accounts speak of going to Savannah and Rockport, or even to St. Joseph. There were mills at Shambaugh and Hawleyville at that time, so presumably those were not grist mills.

There was a desperate need for sawed lumber, but little has been said on the subject. Apparently they generally made do with what little they could saw by hand until local mills were established.

Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa; 1875; Andreas Atlas Company; Chicago, Illinois; (hereafter 1875 Atlas); page 419: Montgomery County...Several of these streams afford sufficient water power for mills...The streams are all supported by springs, and consequently never go dry...

A History of Montgomery County, Iowa; by W.W. Merritt, 1906; The Express Publishing Company, Red Oak, Iowa; (hereafter 1906 History) page 28: ...The resourceful and inventive white man harnessed these waters to mill wheels and for years the lumber and flour mills were operated by this power. There was something about the old mill, its water wheel, its dam, with the calm waters above and the whirling torrent below; the pleasant nooks for fishermen, the moments passed in gossip among the country people who gathered there that made life seem a little brighter...Romance no longer lingers about a mill where power is supplied by steam or electricity... Milling was the principal manufacturing industry in the county at that early time and the people took much pride in the old mills...

The first dam in the county is said to have been built in 1854 on the West Nodaway, where Grant is now. A ditch was dug to carry water to a set of burrs for grinding cornmeal, but it was a small local project.

10 August 1876; *Villisca Review*: (from a talk prepared for the Centennial Fourth of July)
...To David Silket belongs the honor of being the pioneer miller of this county, commencing three miles above Red Oak in 1855 and building a saw and grist mill...It was quite a luxury for people to get their milling done so handy, after the experience in travelling to various points in Missouri for two or three years...Silket built a saw mill on the Nodaway in 1859 now known as Morton's mill. He died a year or so afterwards...His ambition was to build a mill at every point in Montgomery county where a mill was needed, as soon as the demand would justify...

Eleven watermills were established at various sites in the county. There were two on the Middle Nodaway River, three on the West Nodaway, four on the Nishnabotna, one on Red Oak Creek and one on Walnut Creek. In 1883 a water powered flour mill was built at the southeast edge of Villisca; it was the last mill in the county to set up a water power system. Alternate steam power was added a few years later.

The water powered sawmills were not very efficient, and were eventually replaced by more powerful steam mills.

Several of the early water saw mills added burrs for grinding corn. Later those mills added flour burrs. Stone ground flour can still be obtained at various places. It isn't as fine or as white as modern milled flour.

Tradition says that the first flour mill in the county was the Keyes Mill in Sherman Township. It was built about 1857 as a flour mill.

The dam was the most vulnerable part of the water power structure. Every high water was potentially disastrous, and it was a continual battle to keep the dam repaired. In 1875, the *Review* reported that the Van Horn mill dam had washed out three times that summer.

The earliest dams were probably rather crude affairs, but little has been found concerning the structures. The following items give some information about the mill dams:

16 November, 1904; *Red Oak Express*: ...The (Silket Mill) dam was used as a crossing for teams for several years before the first bridge was built.

1906 History; page 189: ...people on horse back crossed back and forth on the dam...(at the Shank mill)

20 January, 1876; *Review*: ...The (Arlington) dam is built of square timbers, bolted and tied securely together and rising like a wall of masonry, gives it a great power of resistance.

1 November, 1917; *Grant Chief*: ...A strip of concrete was laid the entire width of the dam, across the bottom, upon which the overflow will fall when the river rises. This is a great improvement and will keep the water from washing out a hole next to the dam and from undermining the logs...

20 August, 1920; *Express*: ...A large section of the center of the concrete dam at the old north mill fell this week, leaving the old timber dam exposed...

It would seem that the earliest dams were constructed of logs or timbers, and later were covered with successive layers of other materials, such as earth, rocks and concrete.

The dams provided the means for another commercial venture. The mill pond behind the dam produced ice of good quality and thickness. It was sawed into blocks, which were packed in sawdust or straw, and stored for summer use.

There were several different types of water wheels available to the early millwrights. The best known one is the picturesque overshot wheel which is depicted on so many calendars. Water was carried to the top of the large wheel by a flume or trough; it dropped onto buckets or fins, pushing the wheel around. It was efficient, but needed lots of water. It couldn't operate in the winter time.

For an undershot wheel, the force of the water was delivered to the base of the wheel. It wasn't as large or as powerful as the overshot wheel, but could be used in small streams where the water flow was minimal. The North Mill had a wheel of that type; possibly all the early mills used that system. The wheel at the North Mill was contained in a structure built onto the side of the mill, which protected the wheel from ice and trash, and allowed the mill to operate in the winter. That may have been standard practice.

A more modern style of water wheel was the metal turbine. It was an underwater device, which permitted year-round milling. Probably none of the early mills used turbines. They had to be made at factories, and the delivery problem likely prohibited their use until after the Civil War. The Stennett mill was equipped with a turbine when it was erected in 1868.

When the new Grant mill was built in 1873-74 it had three turbines, making it a powerful mill for its day.

The "roller process" by which nearly all grain is ground today was brought in from Hungary in 1870 to grind the hard wheat then being introduced in the west. The new process was needed because millstone grinding cannot make white flour from hard wheat. The pressure required to crush the grain generates enough heat to discolor the flour. In the new process steel rollers with grooved surfaces squeeze the grain as they turn against each other. The process was patented and the product was known as patent flour.

The people of a community of necessity spent a lot of time at the local mill. Perhaps that is why most of the mills became recreational centers. The mill ponds were favorite sites for picnickers, from twosomes to whole communities. Many people camped at the

mills, perhaps for a week or two at a time. Crowds of iceskaters enjoyed the ponds in the winter time. Fourth of July celebrations and political meetings were held at the mills.

Fishing was a popular pastime at all of the mills. Some of the anglers had row boats or canoes. Sometimes boat rides were offered for pay. At Grant a series of small steam boats were built. In the summer of 1891 a boathouse was built at the North Mill to house rental row boats.

The Arlington mill was a community center. Many baptisms took place in the mill pond, and church services, parties and dances were held in the mill. There was a ball diamond at the Van Horn mill.

For many years milling was a highly profitable industry in Montgomery County. In 1882, Thomas Hallam was operating the mill at Grant. It is said that he paid \$150 a month rent, a large amount for that time, and was still making money. Then the era of the small local mills was over, and gradually the old water mills disappeared.

Fire was an ever-present hazard in mills. The Arlington Mill burned in 1908, and was not rebuilt. The Stennett mill was struck by lightning in July 1912 and was destroyed. The North Mill burned in December 1904, and was rebuilt, only to burn again 27 December 1912. The Villisca mill burned in January 1933 and was not rebuilt. It hadn't been a water mill since 1902.

Then the Grant mill was the only water mill left in the county. It processed flour until 1940, and used water power off and on until that time. For more than 80 years there had been a mill on the Nodaway; it had out-lived its time to become a relic of the past.

WATERMILLS

of Montgomery County

ARLINGTON MILL

On 15 June 1855, John Nash bought the Northwest quarter of Section 28, Washington Township, from the United States. He sold the land in 1857 to William, Robert and Samuel Dunn; (DB 1:211) William bought his brothers' interests 29 July 1858. (DB 1:444) William built a sawmill on the West Nodaway, but the date isn't known. It may have been after 1860; the census for that year gave William's occupation as "Gentleman", while the 1870 census reported him as "miller at sawmill". David Russell is said to have been employed there.

9 February 1900; *Villisca Review*: Thomas Russell of Orleans, Nebr. is visiting his brother David Russell and others...Mr. Russell was formerly a resident of Washington twp. and built the first sawmill at Arlington.

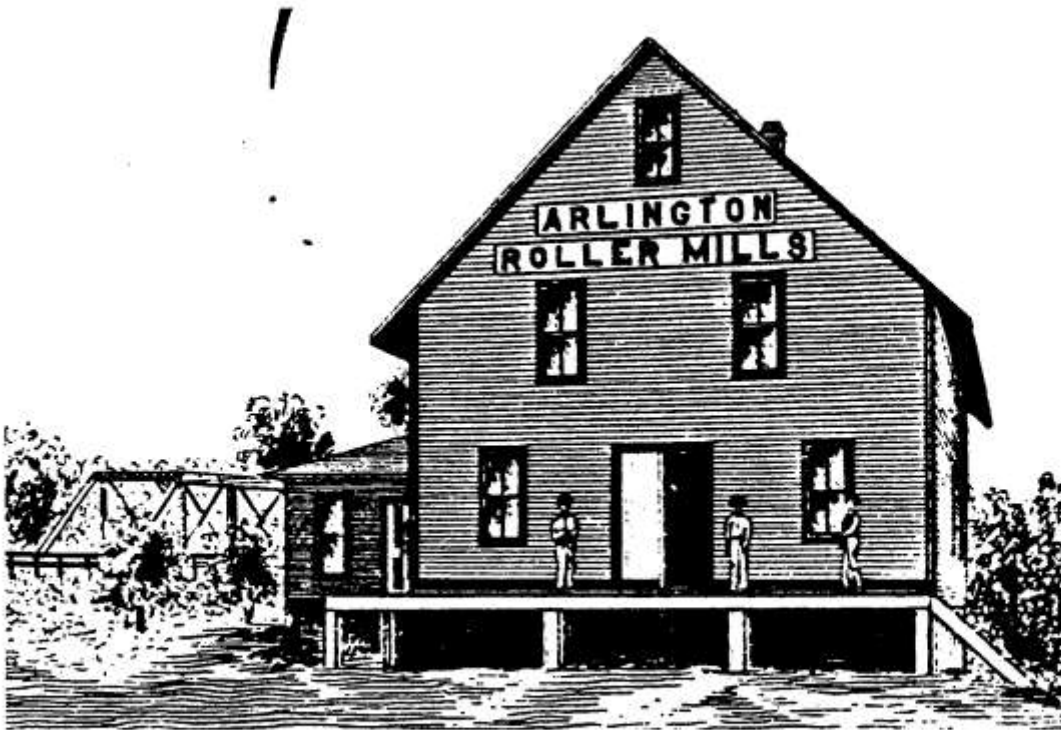
1 April 1873; DB 7:337: William Dunn to Samuel Morrow...\$900; Section 28, containing 10 acres...and also the mill known as the William Dunn Mill...

28 May 1874; DB 7:416: Samuel Morrow and wife to John W. Ellenwood...\$1,000...and the right to erect and maintain a dam eight feet high from the surface at low water mark...

8 June 1874; DB 7:623: John W. Ellenwood and wife to Samuel M. Smith...\$500...one half interest...

Samuel Smith was owner of the mill at Grant. John Ellenwood had been a miller there before moving to Washington Township.

20 January 1876; *Review*: About January 1 of the present year, the new Arlington Flour Mills situated six miles north of Villisca on West Nodaway River, began work and have been busily engaged ever since. The building is commodious, filled with good machinery and is doing good work. Both mills are run by water power. The dam is built of square timbers, bolted and tied securely together and rising like a wall of masonry, gives it a great power of resistance...The proprietors, Ellenwood & Smith, are both practical millers, and with the large field of patronage they have about them there can be no question about their prosperity.



27 September 1877; *Express*: A new east and west road has recently been opened through the Nodaway bottom, crossing the river at Arlington Mills in Washington Township...

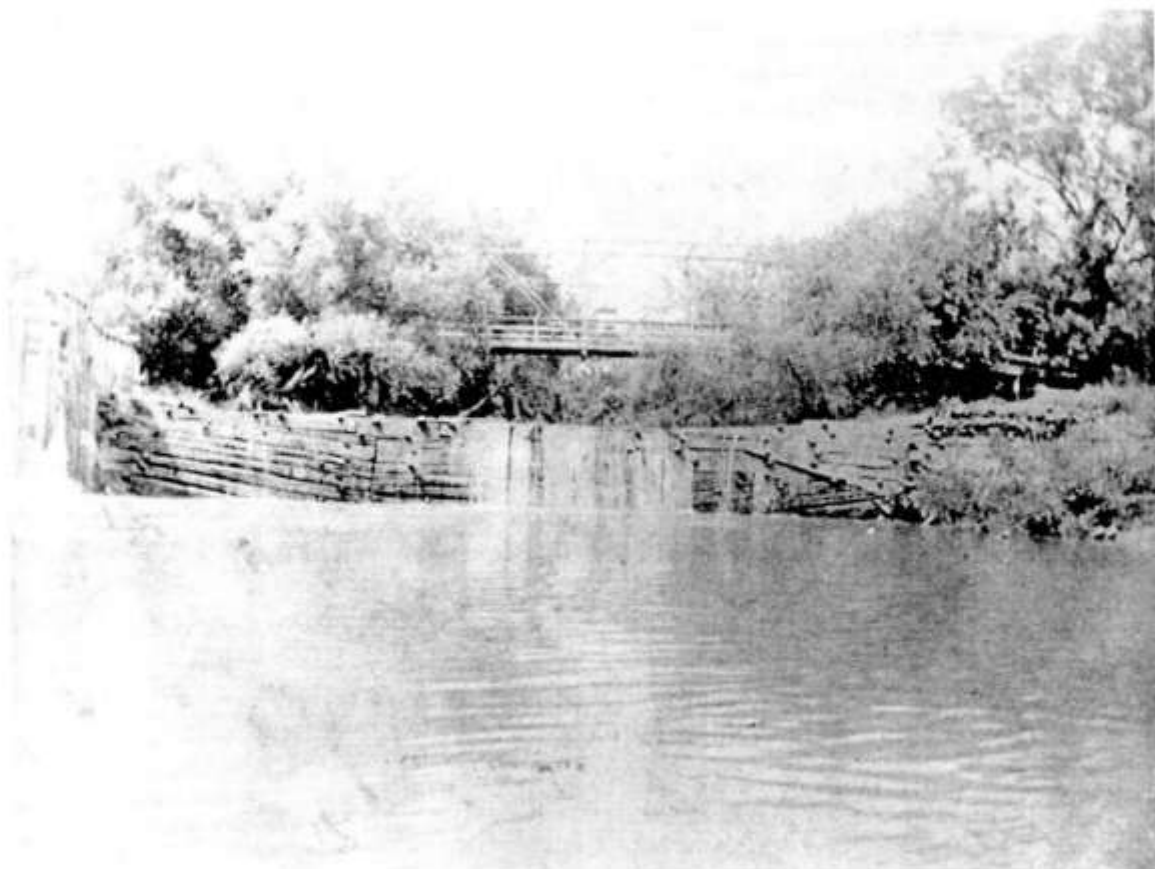
1 November 1877; *Review*: The Arlington Mills flour has gained a well-established reputation for its uniform excellence through-out this vicinity...For sale at the "Farmer's Store".

18 April 1878; *Review*: The Arlington Mills have a good dam now, and it is to be hoped that the farmers in that vicinity will have no further trouble about getting their milling done.

27 June 1878; *Review*: Jos. I. Shafer has been the efficient miller with Mr. Ellenwood at the Arlington Mills for some time past.

History of Montgomery County, Iowa; 1881; by Iowa Historical and Biographical Company; (hereafter 1881 History) page 727: ...Mr. Ellenwood owns a half interest in the Arlington Mill, on West Nodawa River; the mill was built by J.J. Shafer, at a cost of \$7,000 (saw mill and grist mill combined), with a capacity of grinding from twenty to twenty-four bushels of grain per hour, and the saw-mill to cut three thousand feet of lumber per day...neither drought nor cold has ever hindered the running of this mill.

17 January 1882; DB 16:92: Samuel M. Smith to John W. Ellenwood, \$4,000 for one-half interest...



Arlington Mill Dam

- 24 August 1882; *Review*; Washington Twp: ...J.W. Ellenwood, proprietor of the Arlington Mills, is preparing to put in artificial banks of rock, a very good improvement to his mill property...
- 15 February 1883; *Review*: ...The cattle being fed at the Arlington Mills by John Wagner are prospering finely considering the weather. And by the number of loaded wagons turning that way, there must be quite a quantity of corn stopping there. John Ellenwood's improvements on his mill are now completed. He has now splendid capacity to do work right up to order. Those who want good work and that done when you want it go there for it. Geo. W. Anderson is doing the milling...
- 8 August 1884; *Express*: That honest old miller, J.W. Ellenwood, of the Arlington Mills, north of Villisca, continues to turn out excellent flour to his numerous patrons, and during the fall and winter months he does considerable in sawing native lumber...
- 5 July 1885; *Express*; Washington: J.W. Ellenwood came very near losing his mill by fire one night last week. He was aroused at 3 o'clock a.m. by some fisherman shouting that his mill was on fire. Someone had been carelessly smoking a pipe and dropped a coal in the bran box. When Mr. Ellenwood got to the mill the fire had burned a hole through the floor...

18 February 1886; *Review*: The new steel rolls of the Ellis pattern, for John Ellenwood's Arlington Mills arrived Tuesday. There are four pairs of them...

18 February 1886; *Review*; Dunnville: Jno. Ellenwood will do quite a business in the lumber sawing line this spring and summer.

8 April 1886; *Review*: The Arlington mills started up again last week with a new outfit of the most approved machinery, including four sets of rolls, for the new process of grinding.

9 September 1886; *Review*: Carr Raney at Arlington Mills...

3 July 1936; *Review*: ...C.C. Raney...later moved to Arlington Mill...and for several years was employed in the flour mill there. The milling business was first started there with a sawmill in which the cutting was done by a saw similar to a crosscut saw operating in an up and down fashion by water power.

The crosscut saw was later replaced with the circular saw and in the '70s John Ellenwood and Sam Smith erected the flour mill, a three story building with basement, on the river bank. Stone burrs, which were installed for grinding when the mill was built and were used for many years, were later replaced by rollers...

17 November 1887; *Review*: The Arlington Mills have been crowded for sometime past for storage room, and Jno. Ellenwood determined recently to enlarge his space. He is now building on an addition of 16 feet and the same height and width as the main building. This will enable Mr. Ellenwood to handle more easily his largely increasing business.

28 August 1891; *Express*; Sciola: J.W. Ellenwood...has built a large granary near his mill.

10 October 1893; DB 25:605: John W. Ellenwood to Alfred Hebard...

(Note: Ellenwood contined to run the mill and live in the mill house until the property was again sold in 1902.)

29 November 1894; *Review*; No. 10: J.W. Ellenwood has lately placed in his mill a steaming apparatus which both facilitates the work and greatly improves his flour.

3 June 1897; *Review*; No. 10: J.W. Ellenwood's mill dam has been rebuilt and he is now running the mill.

22 March 1900; *Review*; Tenville: During the high water of last week a portion of J.W. Ellenwood's mill dam was washed away but by a few days of labor of men and teams they were able to close the flood gates Monday evening.

5 April 1900; *Review*; Tenville: J.W. Ellenwood who had the misfortune to lose a portion of his mill dam last week, this being the fourth time, has again repaired it by using gravel and slough grass sod and is now able to grind.

- 15 February 1901; *Express*: Adv. – For Sale – Arlington Mills...by the A. Hebard estate.
- 11 March 1902; DB 32:176: Anne M. Hebard to J.D. Farlin...
- 19 March 1902; *Review*: J.D. Farlin took possession of the Arlington mill Monday and is now prepared to serve old and new customers. He expects to install new machinery and run an up-to-date mill. A.L. Hallam, a first class miller, will take charge of the business.
- 30 July 1902; *Review*; Tenville: We understand the recent high water is cutting its way back of the flume leaving the mill in a critical condition.
- 13 August 1902; *Review*: J.D.Farlin has recently had the Arlington mill refitted with the very best and latest improved machinery to turn out the best grades of flour. To assure you that the mill is making a success, it has been running every day since the new machinery has been put in. Try a sack of Old Reliable flour and you will always be pleased.
- 17 September 1902; *Review*; Tenville: J.D. Farlin is repairing the water wheel at the mill.
- 22 October 1902; *Review*; Tenville: The Arlington Mill is now running day and night. J.D. Farlin expects to put in an engine this week so he will be able to grind rain or shine, wet or dry, high or low water.
- 21 January 1903; *Review*; Tenville: John Farlin, proprietor of the Arlington Roller Mills ...turns out about 3,000 pounds of Old Reliable daily...
- 17 July 1903; *Review*; Tenville: ...a number of young people from Villisca visited the Camp Moonshine at Arlington Mill last week.
- 15 July 1904; *Review*; Tenville: There is no more prominent place in or around Tenville than the camping ground east of the mill where rusticators congregate from various parts of the country to enjoy a week or two of real camp life.
- 5 October 1905; *Review*: L.T. Johnson and Bert Bliss of Clarinda have rented J.D. Farlin's mill and adjacent buildings. These gentlemen formerly ran the mill at Nodaway...Mr. Farlin will devote more time to the interests of his ranch in Nebraska.
- 20 December 1906; *Review*: J.D. Farlin has rented the Arlington Mills six miles north of town to John Boatman of Mt. Etna, who will start running today. Mr. Boatman's lease is for a term of five years...It has been six months since people have "heard the merry sound of the mill-wheel turning round".
- 5 December 1907; *Review*: Adv. – From now on we will deliver feed in any quantity to parties in Villisca. - J.W. Boatman, proprietor; Arlington Mill.

5 March 1908; *Review*: Fire Destroys Arlington Mill -

Fire, from an origin not definitely known, completely destroyed the Arlington mill on the West Nodaway river, 6 miles north of Villisca, Wednesday evening of last week, (26 February) between the hours of 10 and 11 o'clock. Mr. John Farlin, who owns the mill, places his loss at about \$3500 with \$2000 insurance.

J.S. Boatman, who was employed by Mr. Farlin as miller, was visiting at a neighbors at the time of the fire and was just returning home when he saw the blaze. At first he thought it was a straw stack, but soon the awful truth became apparent, and an alarm was sounded. The fire seemed to have originated in the upper part of the mill, as the top burned before the bottom. In less than 30 minutes the structure collapsed. Nothing could be done to save any part of the building or its contents. Mr. Boatman lost about \$75 worth of grain, feed and tools, which he kept in the mill.

With the destruction of the mill, an old land mark is lost to Washington Township. The mill was built by J.B. Morrow...on the site where William Dunn had constructed a saw mill several years before. Mr. Morrow sold the mill to J.S. Ellenwood and Mr. Farlin purchased it of Mr. Ellenwood. Its loss by fire is a keen one for Mr. Farlin who, if he builds again will probably not build more than a feed mill to take its place.

One Man's Life; by John Sherman Baker; page 11: ...Many a time I went with my father up to Tenville Grist Mill. It was driven from a large water wheel on the south end of the dam. This dam was built of heavy timbers, pilings, boards and dirt. We took 5 to 10 bushels of wheat each time to have it ground into flour and bran. We waited for the mill operator to grind it, and sometimes we had him grind corn for cornmeal.

The dam was east of the old bridge about 200 feet and was 10 or 12 feet high. No water could run over the top of the wheel which was on a large shaft with a pinion on the other end driving a ring gear on a shaft that came up above ground to lower floor level. A belt pulley there with a belt running into the mill to drive the grinders, sifters and elevators up into the storage bins.

After the mill burned down, the old dam was partly left and made a perfect swimming hole below it where water pouring over it washed out a hole 10 or 12 feet deep and 25 wide and nearly 100 feet long. We put in two diving boards off what was left of the dam that were 5 or 6 feet above water. We had more fun there than any swimming pool ever will have. If it was too cold to swim we fished. Caught some of the largest carp that I ever saw anywhere. If it was froze over we skated on it. Many a happy hour we spent there until the river was straightened and that ended it.

CLIMAX MILLS

1906 History; page 192: Mrs. Sophronia Dean Shank...taught the first school in the county in August 1856...The school was in a log cabin near Climax. The day of opening the school there was no furniture whatever. A new sawmill had just commenced operation and the school had to wait until some slabs could be obtained for seats...

A map made in 1857 shows a mill where the trail from Franklin Grove to Glenwood crossed Walnut Creek, about where Climax is now. It may have been called the Lewis Mill. Nathan Lewis lived in the vicinity in 1856, but nothing has been found to connect Nathan with the Lewises who were prominent in milling circles during the 1870s and 1880s. It isn't known if it was a water mill or if it was propelled by steam. It probably wasn't there long; it may have been washed away in the floods of July 1858. The next mention of a Climax mill refers to the sawmill built on the west side of Walnut Creek about 1867.

6 November 1867; DB 3:315: William David to George M. Nash and John D. Oxley... \$350...NENE Section 30 T71 R39...

8 November 1869; DB 5:9: George M. Nash to William A. Glover...\$2000...undivided one half NENE...

Hawthorne Church; 1865 – 1990; ...At this time (1869) the farmers could take their wheat to the mill at Meadmore (now Climax)...

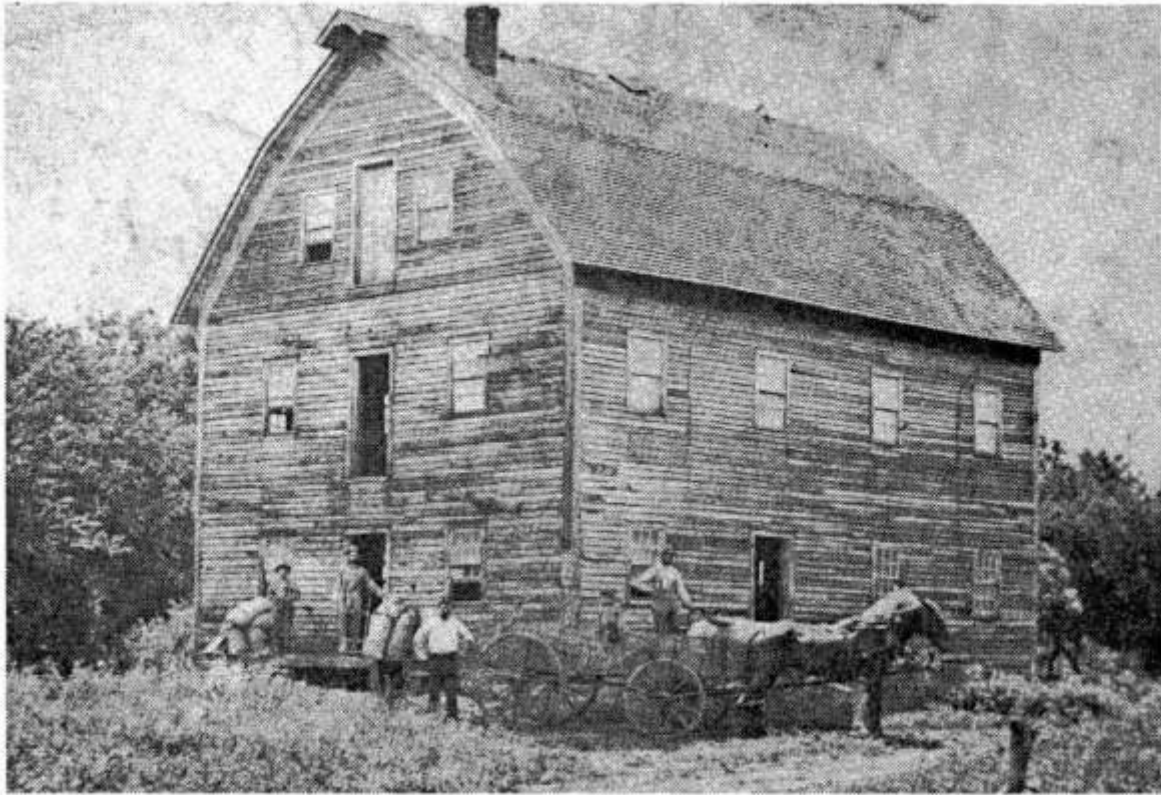
1881 History; page 735: ...the grist mill was built in 1870. The saw-mill was built three years before...

26 December 1872; DB 9:357: John L. Oxley to Milton M. Johnson of Gentry County, Missouri...\$5000...Undivided one-half Northeast quarter Northeast quarter...

5 March 1874; *Express*: Adv. - Walnut Flour Mills – West Township...GLOVER & JOHNSON still mean *business*. Custom work made a specialty; satisfaction guaranteed. Saw attached to power. Bring on your grists.

7 August 1875; DB 10:536: Milton M. Johnson to Enoch Kenworthy of Dallas County... \$3500...undivided one-half Northeast quarter of the Northeast quarter...subject to three mortgages...

1875 Atlas; page 501: ...Several of these streams afford sufficient water power for mills. There...are two on Walnut creek.



Climax Mill

20 April 1876; *Express*; Climax: ...Mr. Kenworthy...one of our millers, a very good and substantial citizen...Mr. Glover, the other miller is doing a flourishing business...

(Note: These two items seem to indicate that the saw mill and flour mill were separate businesses.)

26 September 1876; DB 11:70: William A. Glover to Enoch Kenworthy...\$4,000...undivided one-half NENE...

8 November 1877; *Express*: ...E. Kenworthy is the proprietor of the Climax mill, and has recently made improvements on that structure to the amount of \$800, putting in a new water wheel, etc. etc. He is doing a very good business and has a fair local trade at Essex and other points...

30 August 1880; DB 15:96: V.T. Nichols to Enoch Kenworthy...\$1.00...QC...one fourth acre...

(Note: This may be the site of the two houses that were mill property.)

1881 History; page 734: Kenworthy, Enoch, miller, sec. 30; PO Climax...in 1875, he moved on the farm where he now lives. He bought a half-interest in the grist-mill and has run it ever since, under the firm name of Kenworthy & Porter; runs two sets of burs; capacity of the mill, seventy bushels of wheat and one hundred bushels of corn per day. This mill runs more days in the year than any other mill of the county.

It is located on Walnut creek, which is fed by springs, and always has an abundance of water. He has two dwelling houses...both belonging to the mill...

12 July 1881; DB 13:545: Enoch Kenworthy to Phebe Lewis...\$5200...NENE.

6 October 1882; DB 16:552: Phebe and J.R. Lewis to T.C. Davis and John Higginbotham ...\$8200...NENE...

2 November 1883; *Express: Adv.* – The Central City Mills – Davis & Porter, Proprietors, Climax – These mills have been newly reconstructed - almost made new. Feed grinding done on short notice, and satisfaction guaranteed.

29 November 1883; DB 19:27: John Higginbotham to Charles Porter...\$4000...undivided one-half NENE...

2 January 1884; Red Oak *The People's Telephone*: ...While in Climax we made the acquaintance of T.C. Davis, the manager and proprietor of the flouring mill of that place...Notwithstanding the disrepute his mill had fallen into, by those who preceded him, Mr. Davis is now busily employed most of his time. We had an opportunity, at many times and places, to sample the bread made of flour turned out by T.C. Davis, and the ladies...all concurred in pronouncing his flour equal to any bread material they had ever used...

26 December 1884; Red Oak *Sun*; Climax: The mill at this place is crowded to its full capacity and is running day and night. The obliging millers, Davis & Porter, are pleasant and agreeable men to deal with.

9 January 1885; *Sun*; Climax: Our Climax millers are rolling new machinery into their mills by the wagon loads, regardless of the hard times.

6 February 1885; *Sun*; Climax: Business is lively with our millers. Their mill is full of grain of all kinds and mill feed by the car load which they are selling at low prices.

13 March 1885; *Sun*; Climax: The mill is running again on full time, and we are informed by the proprietor that the new machinery gives good satisfaction and they are turning out some first class flour.

29 May 1885; *Sun*; Climax: The mill is doing an extensive custom business, running on full time, and still selling flour at \$2 per cwt.

2 October 1885; *Sun*; Climax: The mill stood still a part of last week during which time the proprietor put in some new machinery, among which was a modern machine for dressing flour...

30 October 1885; *Sun*; Climax: The mill will be ready to grind buckwheat by the 3d or 4th of next month.

- 18 December 1885; *Express*; Climax: Our town of Climax contains the mill and post office combined, with T. Davis as miller and postmaster...
- 11 June 1886; *Sun*; Climax: Climax has decided to celebrate the Fourth...The committee ...have secured the beautiful grove just south of the mill, where there will be plenty of shade...
- 19 August 1887; *Sun*; Climax: Some fine stone is being taken out of the quarry at the mill.
- 12 October 1888; *Sun*; Climax: T.C. Davis is making quite extensive improvements in the forebay of his mill, putting in new timbers and other material.
- 26 October 1888; *Express*; Climax: Our miller has been improving the mill by putting in a new race.
- 31 October 1890; *Express*; Climax: Thomas Davis, our genial miller, has disposed of his undivided interest in the mill property. He is to have charge of the mill however for a season.
- 20 November 1890; DB 23:540: Thomas C. Davis to Charles Porter...\$300...undivided interest in NENE...including the mill machinery and all fixtures belonging to said mill also the dwelling houses and store buildings and all out buildings now on said land...Porter agrees to pay the \$3000 note and mortgages covering said land...
- 5 March 1891; *Express*; Climax: During a recent freshet part of the mill dam was washed away...The old mill is now silent and stands as a monument of former usefulness.
- 3 May 1892; DB 24:251: D.F. Porter to Susan L. Beckwith...\$800...East quarter NENE... Ten acres...With all appurtenances belonging thereto except a store building and small dwelling house and the use of said quarter of an acre of land on which said two houses now stand until said houses shall be disposed of...

The mill closed between November 1890 and March 1891. Tradition says that it was a feed mill for a time after the flour mill closed. It is thought that Charles Porter dismantled the mill and used the lumber in the construction of a barn. The barn burned many years ago.

MILFORD/GRANT MILL

26 August 1854; DB 1:114; William Stipe to Thomas Donoho; land in Section 10 T73N R36W...

History of Grant, Iowa; 1976; Bicentennial Committee; page 15: In 1854, the first dam was built across the Nodaway River at Milford... (page 21): ...by William Stipe and Thomas Donoho. They dug a ditch to carry the water to a corn burr for grinding cornmeal...



Grant Mill; from the Andreas Atlas, 1875 – The one-story structure to the left of the mill is probably the sawmill. It may be the original mill built in 1857.

8 May 1856; DB 1:114, 115: Thomas Donoho to Samuel M. Smith of Michigan and Charles E. Bell of Connecticut...\$700...40 acres, Southwest quarter Northwest quarter Section No. Ten...including water and mill rights.

Smith probably returned to Michigan then, as he is not recorded in the 1856 Census. The 1875 Atlas says that he came into the county in 1857. He was here in August 1857, but didn't vote in the election held then, so perhaps hadn't been here long enough to meet the residence requirement. The 1857 map of Montgomery County didn't show a mill but sometime before December of that year a sawmill was set up on the property purchased in 1856.



In 1893 an addition was built on the back side of the mill.

5 December 1857; DB 1:373: Charles E. Bell to Samuel M. Smith...SW quarter NW quarter section ten...excepting and reserving...the saw mill...and mill privileges...

1976 *History of Grant*; page 21: ...Smith and Bell widened and deepened the mill race... The first mill had only one floor and was built for the purpose of sawing lumber as well as grinding corn. The frame timbers were hewn with an adze. The hardwood planks of the flume were hauled in by wagon from Adair county...The second year a burr for making flour was installed....

25 December 1858; DB 1:435: Charles E. Bell to Holly Bell of Conneticut...\$500... undivided half of the...Smith & Bell Mill and yard lying North & South of said mill containing two acre more or less with the water privileges and with all the appurtenances...

23 May 1859; DB 1:488: Holly Bell to Simeon Hunt & James Shores...\$500...undivided one-half Smith & Bell Mills also the mill yard...

15 August 1859; DB 3:87: S.M. Smith to Thomas Donoho...\$300...undivided one-half of Mill privilege and the appertences thereunto...



Grant Mill Dam

4 September 1865; DB 3:86: James W. Brown and H.A. Brown to Thomas Donoho...one dollar...sell and quit claim...the Smith & Bell Mill...

20 March 1867; DB 3:333: In the case of Holly Bell vs. Simeon Hunt and James Shore... Be it remembered that by virtue of an execution to me directed issued from the district court 20 October 1865...in case wherein Holly Bell plaintiff and Simeon Hunt and James Shore defendants commanding me to levy the same upon the goods chattles of the said Hunt & Shore to satisfy the judgement interest and costs in the above case and for want of sufficient personal property whereon to levy to satisfy the same I did on the 8th day of January AD 1866 levy the said writ of execution upon the following described real estate...undivided interest in the Smith & Bell mill...and after having advertised the sd property for sale...I did on the 16th day of March 1866...proceed to sell sd property to the highest bidder...and Holly Bell by J.W. Brown atty then and their bid for the whole described property the sum of one hundred dollars...the sd Holly Bell then and their received the sheriffs certificate of sale for a Warranty Deed... and assigned the same to Thomas Donoho...I did convey unto Thom. Donoho all of the right title and interest...signed, John Shafer sherriff of County of Montgomery...

14 November 1867; DB 3:330: Thomas Donoho to S.M. Smith...\$600...land known as the Donoho Mill Propperty...Also the mill privilege and the appurtinances...

5 June 1874; *Express*: Minutes of the Board of Supervisors: ...Ordered, that Samuel M. Smith be authorized to build a bridge across the mill race of his mill, at Milford, according to the following specifications, viz: Abutments to be of stone 30 feet long, 12 feet high and 2 ½ feet thick. Bridge 16 feet wide, joice underneath 3x10, Floor, Elm Plank 2 inches thick, and the Bridge to be built in a workmanlike manner throughout for the sum of \$279.32.

In 1873, S.M. Smith started work on a new mill to replace the one he built about 1857. It is said that the mill had been idle for a few years before the new one was erected. The newspapers which should have carried an account of the new structure are missing, but it was probably soon after the mill was finished that Smith built the new bridge.)

20 January 1876; *Review*: ...the live town of Milford...They have...a fine flouring mill, erected by S.M. Smith at a cost \$17,000. This mill converts a large amount of wheat into flour, not only for the denizens of that vicinity, but large amounts are sent to Villisca, Atlantic, Red Oak, and other places...

22 August 1877; *Express*: ...The mill at Milford is an industry of which her citizens may well be proud. It is one of the newest and most complete mills in the county, and being situated in the center of such a productive grain region, does an immense amount of work and brings a great deal of trade to Milford. Smith & Phillips are the gentlemanly proprietors, and B.L. Blackburn, an old-time and experienced miller, the chief workman.

8 May 1879; *Express*: ...The Milford flouring and sawing mills is owned by Sam'l. M. Smith and operated by Smith & Baldwin...Mr. Baldwin formerly ran the Manker mills, north of Red Oak...

19 November 1879; *Express*; Milford Millets: The scales at S.M. Smith's mills have been repaired and are in use, being convenient for weighing cattle as well as grain, etc.

6 May 1880; *Review*: One of the best flouring mills to be found in the west is at this place; S.M. Smith, Prop. and under the management of J.H. Baldwin and W.A. Glover.

1881 History; page 468: Town of Milford - The first mill was built here in 1856, by Smith & Bell, for the purpose of sawing lumber. Mr. S.M. Smith says he had to go to Adair county for lumber to make the flume for this mill. He also had to haul corn from Missouri the first winter...and had to pay \$1 per bushel for it. The next year he put in a run of burs which lasted till he built his new mill in 1873-74; the new one cost \$15,000. This new mill is 30 x 44 feet, and three stories above the basement. Mr. Smith planned and superintended the work himself, but C.W. Spear was the head mill-wright. This mill has a 16-foot head of water and three Lefler turbine wheels, which drive two run of burs and all the machinery for making "new process" flour, besides running the sawmill also. Connected with the mill are facilities for feeding five hundred head of cattle.

20 March 1882; *Review*: Mr. Thomas Hallam of Quitman, Mo, has rented Smith's mill at Milford...

It was reported later that Hallam paid \$150 per month rent and still made money. That was an impressive amount of money for those days.

11 July 1884; *Express*; Milford: ...Jolly Miller Coates...

28 August 1884; *Review*: J.H. Baldwin, miller at Milford...will take charge of the Manker mill...

4 October 1891; *Express*; Douglas Township: The Milford Mills had a gasoline engine explosion last week, wrecking the engine entirely.

4 June 1892; *Sun*; Milford: Sam'l M. Smith is pushing work on the new mill dam. He expects to have the mill ready for work by the middle of July. The millwrights are also hard at work putting in the improved "Pansifter Roller Process." It's a new invention and marks an era of progress in the milling business.

17 June 1892; *Sun*; Milford: The sloop of S.M. Smith is a craft of two tons burden and will be seen principally in the interest of the Milford dam site...The *Ponderosa* makes several trips daily to and from the stone quarry...

5 August 1892; *Sun*; Milford: Mr. Williams, the master mechanic at the flouring mill, has got through and left for home at Moline, Ill. Mr. Nye, the miller, has concluded to move away, and Mr. Van Horn, expert miller, is in charge at present.

16 September 1892; *Review*; Mortons Mills: S.M. Smith has his flouring mill all in running order. The capacity of the mill is 55 barrels a day...

18 November 1892; *Express*; Milford: S.M. Smith is in pursuit of an engine as there is not enough water to run the mill...

26 May 1893; *Sun*; Milford: Sam'l M. Smith has established a flour exchange for the Milford mills at Elliott with H. Hinman in charge. The new machinery is the latest and the mill is turning out an excellent grade of flour at a capacity of 50 barrels a day.

22 June 1893; *Review*; Milford: "Uncle Sam" Smith is expecting his new gasoline engine for the mill this week...Our mill was treated to a steamer last week to moisten the wheat preparatory to grinding.

28 September 1893; *Review*; Grant Breezes: Our mill is to have a 3-story addition and a new engine to use when the water is low.

12 January 1894; *Sun*: Henry Redmon, miller in Sam'l M. Smith's mill at Milford...says the new 85-horse-power gasoline engine lately put in there is working nicely.

- 19 December 1895; *Review*: Adv. -
 Patent Pansifter Flour per sack \$1
 Pansifter Flour per sack 90 cents
 Baker's Choice Flour per sack 85 cents
 The flours are made at Milford Mills.
- 23 April 1897; *Express*; Milford: S.M. Smith, the pioneer miller of Milford, has sold his mill and will retire from the business.
- 7 October 1897; DB 26:484: S.M. Smith to Heman K. Givan...Sub-Lot 1 of Sub-Lot 2 of Lot 3 SWNW...
- 15 March 1900; *Review*; Milford: James Paullin, Mr. Givan's miller, hired to O. DeWitt at Stennett.
- 22 March 1900; *Review*; Milford: The new miller, Mr. Harris, has commenced work for Givan.
- 24 April 1901; *Review*; Milford: At present the busiest man in Milford is C.K. Givens the miller. He is building a new dam.
- 10 September 1901; DB 31:296: Heman Givan to H.A. Vanschoiuck...Undivided one-half SL1 SL2 L3 SWNW...
- 20 September 1901; *Sun*; Milford: E.H. VanSchoiack, of Elliott, and Elmer Smith have bought the Milford mills of H.K. Givan. Mr. Givan has leased Mr. VanSchoiack's half interest in the property and business for a year.
- 18 October 1901; *Express*; Douglas Twp: The Milford millers are putting in a new steam engine.
- 21 August 1902; DB 33:323: H.A. Van Schoiuck to L.D. Powell...Undivided one-half...
- 29 August 1902; DB 30:581: Heman K. Givan to L.D. Powell...Undivided one-half...
- 5 September 1902; *Sun*; Milford: L.D. Powell, of Red Oak, now owns the Milford Roller Mills. He traded the Cottage hotel in Villisca to E.H. Vanschoiack, of Elliott, for the latter's interest, at a valuation of \$6000. Then he bought H.K. Givan's interest, town lot property in Red Oak going to Mr. Givan. The total consideration for the mill was about \$10,000.
- 15 July 1903; DB 32:256: Lucian D. Powell to Frank Zappe...
- 28 October 1903; DB 34:11: Frank Zappe to J.W. Winter...



The John Winter Mill, about 1905

- 19 February 1904; *Review*; Milford: Mr. Winter, who owns the mill, is remodeling it, putting in some new machinery and fixing it up in fine shape...
- 16 August 1905; *Elliott Graphic*; *The Daily Grant Graphic*: (special for the reunion) The Milford Roller Mills have shut down so the water will be deeper for the boats...
- 31 May 1907; *Sun*; Milford: J.W. Winter has traded the Milford mills, his residence property and the farm near Milford which he recently bought of T.R. Westrope for 640 acres of land in Missouri.
- 17 July 1907; DB 34:316: J.W. Winter to J.W. Rush...
- 29 November 1907; DB 34:317: J.W. Rush to Lucian D. Powell...
- 20 March 1908; *Sun*; Milford: J.W. Winter, who recently traded the Milford Roller Mills for a farm, has leased the mills for a year.
- 22 September 1908; DB 34:392: L.D. Powell to S.E. Wait and J.W. Dean...

25 November 1908; DB 36:46: S.E. Wait and J.W. Dean to Gustav H. Peters...

25 November 1908; 36:74: G.H. Peters to Frank A. Lawrence...

6 March 1909; DB 36:146: F.A. Lawrence to M.L. Luebben...

2 September 1911; Sheriff's DB 20:132: Sheriff to L.D. Powell...

17 January 1912; DB 38:115: L.D. Powell to David Dewees, Frank Dewees and George Jones...

26 January 1912; *Express*; Grant: A large deal was closed here Thursday when Frank Dewees and Geo. Jones of Fontanelle became the owners of the mill and they will at once begin to put it in operation.

(Note: The mill had been idle since the dam washed out in 1909.)

29 March 1912; *Sun*; Grant: A new 40-horsepower gasoline engine has been added to the equipment of the Grant Milling Co's mill.



This is the way the mill looked from 1914 to 1940.

9 October 1913; *Review*: The Grant Milling Co. had begun repairing its dam in the Nodaway River at Grant and are meeting with opposition from land owners abutting the river. They have served a notice claiming all rights to a dam site forfeited by the three years the dam has been out. Nevertheless the Grant Milling

Co. intends to go ahead with the dam, claiming their power rights are still in force. The location is ideal for the power dam and with the cheap power, the mill should be a good thing for Grant and vicinity.

23 July 1914; *Sun*; Grant: Messrs. Dewees and Jarvis have built a raised platform on the east side of their flour mill so that farmers can drive up with their loads of grain and dump it as in an elevator.

The Atlantic Southern has built a spur of track from the main line to the north side of the mill, so the millers will be enabled to load cars with great convenience.

3 August 1916; *Chief*: The Grant Mill Co. is replacing the dam across the Nodaway, which was washed out by the high water a year ago.

7 June 1917; *Chief*: Citizens of Grant now have the opportunity to give the town a real boost...Chas. Jarvis and Frank Dewees of the Grant mill have been making a careful inventory of sentiment in regard to the installation of an electrical power plant...

...Power will be generated at the Grant mill which is equipped with a 40-hp oil engine and two water wheels which will supply sufficient power for local requirements...

(Note: Sounds good, but for some reason it didn't come off.)

23 August 1917; *Chief*: Chas. Jarvis has sold his interest in the Grant Mill to Frank Dewees. This leaves the mill in the hands of Mr. Dewees and his father, D. Dewees.

1 November 1917; *Chief*: Frank Dewees and a crew of men were busy last week repairing the dam across the river here. A strip of concrete was laid the entire width of the dam, across the bottom, upon which the overflow will fall when the river raises next spring. This is a great improvement and will keep the water from washing out a hole next to the dam and from undermining the logs...

2 October 1919; *Chief*: The Grant Milling company are making extensive improvements in the way of an entirely new milling system. The old rolls and the old bolting system are being removed and the American Midget Marvel system installed which combines the rolls and bolting system in one small space not one quarter as large as that required for the old system which will be operated with only a fraction of the power heretofore required to operate the old plant.

In the past the flour manufactured by the Milling Company has been as good as procured elsewhere except that it was not quite as white as that of other plants, but with this new system there should be no reason why the output of the Grant Mills should not be as white as the whitest and as good as the best. No fear need be entertained regarding the cleanliness of the flour, since the wheat is put through a process which cleanses it as effectively as though it were washed with soap and water...Before being ground it must first pass twice through the receiving separator where the straws, sticks and broken weed stems are removed, then it goes through the milling separator twice where all small foreign elements such as oats, weed seed and small particles of all kinds are removed, after which it passes through four

separate scouring machines three times each and at length comes into the new bleacher now being installed clean and bright...

13 October 1921; *Chief*: The Grant Milling Co. are putting a new foundation under the south side of their mill.

14 January 1924; *Express*; Grant: Grant is right up to snuff when it comes to the light proposition. The Grant Light and Power company has turned their plant over to Frank Dewees proprietor of the Grant Mills. Mr. Dewees has installed a large generator and has arranged to use either a large forty horse engine or water power, and now when we push the button light penetrates into all of the dark corners.

(Note: That arrangement lasted a little over two years.)

1 April 1927; *Review*: The following reminiscence of early days in old Milford...is contributed by a well known resident of Grant who was born there 64 years ago. (S.E. Smith)

...That first old saw mill...A spot was cleared of timber and brush for a long yard which was well filled with logs, then the old saw was started to humming. But first, logs were brought up on the logway and for this purpose a yoke of oxen was kept in readiness. The whip stalk touches the noses of the oxen lightly. The chain is hooked, the driver gives the word and the oxen slowly tighten up on the chain. The driver winds himself up into a sort of double bow-knot brings his whip suddenly around high over the backs of the oxen, producing a report equal to that of a small cannon, at the same time yelling at the top of his voice at the oxen.

The log is pulled up on the logway, and with the use of handspikes and cant hooks the log is rolled down on the carriage, the head blocks properly adjusted and the dogs that hold the log in place securely driven into the side. The sawyer pulls the lever and the mill is soon going. Slowly the log creeps up to the swiftly moving saw. As the slab of lumber drops down, it is shoved out into the proper pile.

...The old saw mill passed out of existence long years since, and even most of the trees that once clustered about the old mill site have disappeared...

However, many evidences of the existence of the old saw mill are still to be found in this community. Numerous houses still contain some of the lumber which was sawed at that mill...

27 August 1937; *Review*; Grant: Work was started last week to rebuild the dam that was washed out by the early spring rains.

13 July 1939; *Review*: The mill at Grant has taken on new life this year and is operating by water power for the first time in many years.

30 August 1939; *Review*: Down By The Old Mill Stream - It's a far cry from 1873, when the Grant flour mill was built by Samuel Smith, to 1939.

The old mill was constructed in the days when farm boys used to ride on horseback with sacks of grain and wait for their flour to be ground.

Now, 66 years later, the farmers bring their grain to the mill in motor trucks...

26 years ago last January, Frank Dewees bought the Grant Mill from Lucian Powell of Red Oak, who had gained possession of the property through litigation. Mr. Dewees is still running the mill with the assistance of Owen Davis. The mill has a capacity of 25 barrels of flour a day.

Although powered by water, the Grant mill does not have the picturesque outside mill wheel. Instead there is a turbine under the mill, which the water turns horizontally rather than vertically. The mill wheel is under 13 feet of water and there is four feet of water under it....

1 August 1940; *Review*; Grant: At the meeting of the Montgomery County Conservation league held last week in Red Oak, arrangements were made for fixing the dam at Grant and the river will be stocked with fish.

No date for the closing of the mill has been found, but the milling had ceased by this date. The doors of the mill remained open, as livestock feed was sold there. Also, a number of persons still had flour due them, and they were urged to come and get it. Frank Dewees, the owner, became ill, and the mill was closed completely about the first of December.

30 October 1941; *Review*: - A picture of Grant Mill -- Caption: Old flour mill on the banks of the West Nodaway river at Grant, which will soon be torn down by Ellis Parker of Anita, Ia., who recently purchased it...

KEYES MILL

History of Cass County; 1877; by Lafe Young: Samuel Harlow Tefft, native of Rhode Island...to California, seeking gold...He at last sold all his shares in the mines, and returned east in 1855, and soon located in the Hawkeye State. He went to Montgomery County, and erected a mill at Stennett's Grove, and in the spring of 18(5)7 sold out and came to Lewis...

8 October 1857; DB 1:333: John M. Harlan to John Keyes, Henry K. Peck and Ira H. Peck of Lewis, Cass County...\$50...Beginning at the SW corner of the SE quarter of Sec 27 T73 R38 thence north 25 rods thence east 27 rods thence south 25 rods and thence west 27 rods containing four acres and 15 rods together with the appurtenances thereunto belonging.

There is no record of Harlan acquiring the land he sold to Keyes and the Pecks.

8 October 1857; DB 1:334: Jason Strait to John Keyes, Henry K. Peck and Ira H. Peck of Lewis...\$200...The south half of the west half of the SWSE section 27...containing 40 acres (less 4 acres and 15 rods known as the Mill tract)...

By October 1857 the four-acre parcel was known as the Mill tract, but surely there was no mill on it as it sold for \$50. Perhaps Tefft built a sawmill there, then sold it to John Harlan.

1881 History; page 634: Kerrihard, Thomas F. - ...His father, W.H. Kerrihard, moved to Montgomery County, Iowa, in 1857, and settled near where Wayne Stennett now lives, building a small mill and it is believed manufactured the first flour ever manufactured in Montgomery County; he afterward lived a year at...Manker's Mill. In 1860 he located in Red Oak and built the steam flouring mills...

1906 History; page 29: ...on the Nishnabotna River...the Keyes Mill, near Stennett, swept away by a flood July 4, 1858, and never rebuilt...

20 December 1858; DB 1:478: Ira H. Peck, County of Cass, to John Keys and Henry K. Peck...\$2000...the undivided one third part...SWSE...and also land in Sec. 23...

1906 History; page 328: 1866; Wayne Stennett appointed to superintend building of bridge across the Nishnabotna River at the old Keys Mill, near Stennett.

28 January 1871; DB 6:91: John Keyes et al to Wayne Stennett...SWSE...

MORTON'S MILL

- 10 August 1876; *Review*: From a talk given by H.G. Thurman on the Centennial Fourth of July: David Silkett...built a saw mill on the Nodaway in 1859 now known as Morton's mill...
- 20 July 1860; DB 2:110: Theodore Whitney to David Silket...\$25...commencing at the NE corner of the SESW section 33 T73 R36 thence running South 20 rods thence West 16 rods thence North 20 rods thence East 16 rods to contain two Acres...
- 1860 Census; Douglas Township:
7/7 - David Stipes
George Silcott age 21 Sawyer
- 18 January 1862; DB 2:175: James Watson, Guardian to the heirs of David Silket, to Leonard Lott and Henry S. Lott...\$496...The above land was sold and deeded as Mill property on which is situated a saw mill known as the Silket mill on the Nodaway...
- 25 April 1864; DB 4:516: H.S. Lott to John Morton and Silas Morton...\$200...undivided one-half...two acres...on which is situated a sawmill known as the Silkett mill on West Nodaway...
- 1906 History; page 328: 1865 - Bridge to be built at Morton's Mill across the West Nodaway.
- 24 February 1866; DB 15:604: H.S. Lott Administrator of the Estate of Leonard Lott deceased...to John and Silas Morton...\$100...undivided one-half...on which is situated a sawmill...
- 29 April 1875; *Review*: Wallace P.O. - We understand that a new post office has been established in this county, four miles north of Sciola, at or near Morton's Mill by the above name; J.W. McClintoc, p.m.
- 5 August 1875; *Review*: Adv. - Mill and Farm For Sale - The undersigned, living 12 miles north of Villisca, on the West Nodaway, will offer for sale, during the next 30 days, his mill and seat, known as "Morton's Mill." He will aslo (sic) sell his farm of 80 acres improved land. Terms will be made known by applying to me at the mill.
SILAS MORTON
- 19 June 1877; DB 11:334: Theodore Whitney to Silas Morton...\$250...commencing 20 rods south of the north east corner of the SESW section 33...thence 30 rods south thence west 16 rods thence north 30 rods thence east 16 rods containing three acres.



The mill was moved and remodeled into a barn.

1881 History; page 472: Morton's Mills - Mr. S. Morton built his first mill here in 1863-64, on sec. 33, in Douglas Township; but there had been a saw-mill here before. He put in one run of burs and the other necessary mill machinery, at a cost of \$1,800; and in Sept. 1875, there came a flood and washed it all out. In 1876 he put up a frame mill three stories above the basement, 30x40, one run of burs and all accompanying machinery, driven by Leffel's patent turbine wheel. The whole cost from \$5,000 to \$6,000.

6 September 1877; *Express*: ... S. Morton is building a mill 30x40 feet, with 18 feet posts, on the site of his old one...

17 January 1878; *Review*: The new grist mill of Silas Morton near Wallace has been completed and now running on custom work. The old mill was entirely destroyed by the high waters in the Fall of '76. A site for the new building, some 30 rods below, was secured from Mr. Theodore Whitney and a race cut from the old dam which remains as before...In making the excavation a large burr oak was found some 20 feet below the surface in such a state of preservation as to be used for pins about the frames and foundation piles for the building....

There were floods in September of both 1875 and 1876. The local papers failed to mention the mill either time, but it was probably in 1876 that the structure was destroyed.

- 19 August 1878; County Road File #56: Beginning 60 rods west of south east corner Section 4, Washington Twp., running thence in a northerly direction...thence one-fourth mile north to the quarter section line, thence west to the river, thence north to Morton's Mill thence north to the bridge at center of Section 33 T73 R36.
- 25 March 1880; *Review*; Morton's Mill: Silas Morton, known as "the honest old miller" settled in the year 1863, and commenced milling the following year. Uncle Jake McCully was for ten years employed at the mill. Native lumber was also quite extensively manufactured here. In 1875 the high waters so damaged the mill that it became necessary to erect a new one, which was built the following year with all the modern improvements. Mr. Bryson (Byron) Blackburn, who had charge of the mill during the past year, will on account of ill health, return to Milford about May 1st, at which time Mr. Morton will assume his old position as miller...
- 23 February 1883; DB 16:438: Silas Morton to J.W. Kimel...\$5500...Lot No. 1 of the SESW, section 33...
- 18 January 1884; *Express*; Morton's Mill: Mr. J.W. Kimball has moved from his old home in Illinois to this place to take possession of the mill property that he bought of Mr. Morton last spring. He has had the mill repaired and new machinery put in it until he has a first-class mill. He is now putting up a store 18x26, to accommodate his customers...
- 7 February 1884; *Review*; Mortons Mills: J.W. Kimel has got his store almost completed and will have the goods in before long. and is doing a thriving business with his mill with that lively Sam'l. Collins at the hopper.
- 1 August 1884; *Express*: Kimel's Mill, in Washington township (formerly known as Morton's Mill), has been greatly improved under its new manager and proprietor. The latest improved machinery has been put in, and the building thoroughly overhauled and painted. It has a never failing water power and turns out an excellent brand of flour. In connection with this business, the proprietor, Mr. J. W. Kimel has established a general merchandise store in which can always be found a good selection of goods. Lara Kimel, a genial and accommodating gentleman, officiates as postmaster...
- 5 November 1886; *Sun*; Mortons Mills: A.G. Burnett, the new miller, has arrived and is at work in Mr. Kimel's mills.
- 21 June 1888; *Review*; Mortons Mills: Mr. Kimel's dam across the river at this place has been badly damaged by the recent rains. A large hole has broken through underneath thus causing the dam to settle in the center.
- 13 July 1888; *Sun*: Villisca, July 10 - The *Letter* tells of a suspension bridge across the West Nodaway river which J.W. Kimel has erected as a private enterprise at his mill near Morton's Mills post office. The bridge is 100 feet in length, is supported

by wire cable, and will bear up 2000 pounds weight with safety. It is patterned after the Niagara suspension bridge, and is a great convenience to the public as well as undoubtedly a profitable stroke of enterprise for Mr. Kimel.



The heavy timbers used in the interior of the mill were also used in the barn. Howard Peterson shows a sturdy anchor for haying equipment.

19 December 1889; *Review*: The (band) hall stands on the road running east and west past Mr. Atwood's and across the bridge directly north of the mill...

8 July 1892; *Sun*; Morton's Mills: It took vigorous work all day last Sunday to stop a leak in the mill dam.

12 May 1893; *Sun*; Morton's Mills: J.W. Kimel has had the washout at the mill repaired. The water cut a channel about 10 feet wide around the water wheel.

29 September 1893; *Sun*; Morton's Mills: Kimel's mill hasn't turned a wheel for four months. The mill dam is still out.

That was the last item found concerning the mill. It may not have run again, and was surely closed at least by the time of the 1895 census when J.W. Kimel was listed as a farmer.

13 April 1900; *Sun*; Morton Mills: M.I. Cross has torn down the old mill and will use the lumber to build a barn.

It is said that the lean-tos were removed, and the top taken off; otherwise, the whole mill was moved to the farm west of Morton Mills where Duane Bergren lives. New wings were built on the east and west. The dilapidated structure was burned about 1990.

20 November 1908; *Sun*; Mortons Mills: Fletcher Gourley has bought the old buildings which stand on the site of the old mill and will move them to his farm.



North Mill, built in 1859



The North Mill dam, showing the back of the old mill and the lean-to built to house the flume and water wheel.

North Mill

15 June 1855; Patent; U.S. to David Silkett: SESE Sec. 8 T72 R38...

15 October 1855; Patent; U.S. to David Silkett: NENE Sec. 17 T72 R38...

10 June 1856; Patent; U.S. to David Silkett: SWSW Sec 9 T72 R38...

1881 History; page 370: In 1855 David Silket built a saw mill on the Nishnabotna, about two and a half miles above the town site of Red Oak, and the same year a post-office called Oro was established there with J. J. Zuber as postmaster. In July, 1857 Mr. Silket also built a grist mill at this place.

16 December 1904; *Express*: ...The dam was used as a crossing for teams for several years before the first bridge was built...

1881 History; page 338: 3 October 1857; Ordered by the County Court, that a bridge be built across the Nishnabotna river at Silket's Mill where the County road crosses it.

1906 History; page 280: ...Early in 1857 a ferry was established at the saw-mill...During the winter of 1857-58 a bridge was built across the river...The next July the bridge washed out...

An 1857 map shows the mill on the west side of the river, which runs north and south through Section 17. The mill was north of where the east-west road crossed the river. That may have been inaccurate, as all early accounts state that the road crossed the river at the mill.

15 June 1894; *Sun*: "In 1858 the Nishnabotna river was so high that the water went from hill to hill," was the testimony of Benj. Davis, a few days ago..."There was a team of horses drowned during that time right where the fair ground now is," he said. "The water rose so rapidly and the current was so swift that they were swept away. There were a number of farmers in the river bottom who had to paddle for the hills in feed troughs."

No record found says that the flood destroyed the Silket mill and dam, but it seems unlikely that they could have survived. No further mention has been found for a mill in that location. The next account of the Silket mill refers to one built in 1859, a quarter-mile upstream, where the river runs east and west. It became known as the North Mill.

3 December 1859; DB 1:535: Solomon Stout to David Silket...\$15...one square acre in NW corner NW quarter section 16...

1906 *History*; page 29: Mills located on the Nishnabotna were: ...the old Wheeler Mill (originally built in 1859)...

20 August 1920; *Sun*: ...The mill dam...at the site of the old north mill...is about to go out ...The dam was originally built in 1859...

1881 *History*; page 634: ...W.H. Kerrihard moved to Montgomery County in 1857, and settled near where Wayne Stennett now lives, building a small mill...he afterward lived a year at what is known as Manker's Mill. In 1860 he located in Red Oak and built the steam flouring mills...

15 July 1865; DB 3:107: Wm. J. Taylor, Guardian, to P.P. Johnson...\$2000...Joel, Sarah, Elizabeth and William Silkett, minor heirs of David Silkett deceased...to P.P. Johnson...one acre in the NE corner of Section 17 and one acre in the NW corner of Section 16 and one acre in the SW corner of section 9 and 34 acres in the SE corner of section 8 together with the Mill Property and all the appertainences thereunto belonging...

Several sources state that Wm. H. Kerrihard owned the mill during the mid 1860s, but no such record has been found. Perhaps he leased the property. One account said that James Bryan built a flume while Kerrihard was there.

_____ 1867; Title Bond: (found in the probate file of Thomas M. Gordon) Know all men by these presents that I Philip P. Johnson...am held and firmly bound unto Thomas M. Gordon of Freemont county in the _____ sum of seven thousand five hundred dollars in the payment of which I bind myself firmly by these presents _____ conditions as follows.

Whence Philip P. Johnson...has agreed to sell and convey unto the said Thomas M. Gordon aforesaid for the consideration seven thousand and five hundred dollars the...premises known as the Silket mill property with all the appurtenances thereunto belonging. Thomas M. Gordon has agreed to purchase said premises and to make payments...

7 October 1868; DB 4:53: Robert C. Gorden...administrator of Thomas M. Gorden ... to E.B.N. Strong...\$1500...land known as the Silkett Mill property...

Told to Nelle Medhurst by William Melton shortly before he died in 1938: ...I, with my parents, on December 18, 1868, moved to Red Oak Township for that winter...A man named Strong owned the (North) mill at that time. He made rolling pins and potato mashers from the native maple lumber, turning them out on the lathe he had. These he would give to the women who came to the mill...

17 May 1873; DB 7:365: P.P. Johnson to S.M.B. Wheeler...\$4000...known as the Silkett Mill Property...See Bk. 3:421 District Court records.

(Note: No doubt Bk. 3:421 explained just how Johnson regained title to the mill property, but the record cannot be found.)

5 March 1874; *Express*: Adv. - SWEEPSTAKES MILLS

S.M.B. WHEELER, Owner and Proprietor

Highest Price Paid for Wheat

Mr. Wheeler would inform his old customers and the public generally, that his lease of the mill to J.P. Agler & Son has been cancelled, and that he is again carrying on the business himself, and that he is prepared at all times to grind grists or exchange flour for wheat. The mill will hereafter be known by its old name of "Sweepstakes" instead of "Empire Mills", by which latter name it has been known since it has been in the hands of the Messrs. Aglers...

1 April 1875; *Express*: Assessor's report of Red Oak Township – SWEEPSTAKES MILLS – S.M.B. Wheeler, Proprietor – ground 48,000 bushels of wheat and 3,400 bushels of corn, worth in the aggregate \$50,320, Flower \$48,320 and meal \$2,000. Hands employed three.

30 January 1877; DB 11:96: Salmon M.B. Wheeler of Cass Co. to John J. Manker... \$19,000...mill property...

31 January 1877; DB 11:97: John J. Manker to Henry E. Manker...\$6000...undivided one-third...

3 May 1877; *Express*: Since Manker & Son have taken hold of the Standard Mills near this place, their custom has rapidly been increasing and the flour turned out is of the finest quality.

30 June 1880; DB 15:45: J.J. Manker, T.S. Manker, H.E. Manker and Sarah E. Manker to the Red Oak & Atlantic Rail Road Company...\$1,300...right-of-way across land... being used in part for and including a mill site as lies within 50 feet of the centre of the main track...said Rail Road Company shall allow the Grantors...the Right and privilege of using the Bridge or trestle near the East side of said Land on said Rail Road line as said Trestle or bridge is now built as an under ground crossing for Stock & teams...

1881 *History*; page 633: Holcomb, Jedediah L. - Millwright - ...He put new machinery in Manker's mill...

1881 *History*; page 638: Manker, J.J. & Sons - ...Then in 1877, bought the mill near Red Oak, since known as Manker's mill. This mill is forty feet square, three stories high and stands on a solid ledge of rock; it is two miles north of Red Oak, on the north branch of the CB & Q railroad, and on one of the most traveled roads leading into Red Oak. It has all the latest improved machinery, and three run of burrs, with water power for double its present work.

22 July 1878; DB 11:421: John J. Manker to Tamson S. Manker...\$4000...one half the undivided two-thirds...being the mill Property known as the River Mills...

- 8 May 1879; *Express*: ...the Milford flouring and sawing mills (are) owned by Mr. Sam'l. M. Smith and operated by Smith & Baldwin...Mr. Baldwin formerly ran the Manker mills, north of Red Oak...
- 13 February 1882; DB 16:238: T.S. and J.J. Manker to William Clark...\$6416.66...one-half the undivided two-thirds...being the mill property known as the River Mills excepting a railroad right-of-way...
- 19 October 1883; DB 19:5: J.J. Manker to E.D. Godfrey...
- 15 August 1884; *Express*: IMPORTANT CHANGE – The Manker mill is to be reconstructed and greatly improved. The contract has been let for an almost entire change in the system of making flour by the introduction of the roller process. It will be a fine improvement.
- 5 December 1884; *Express*: The River Roller mills, two miles north of Red Oak, commenced business last week. The new machinery is of the Allis & Co. manufacture, and is conceded by all millers to be the best in use. The outlay has been an extensive one...This mill now has a capacity of turning out eighty barrels of flour every twenty-four hours, and all who have tested their new brand of flour say that it excels everything they ever before used. They pay the highest cash price for good wheat delivered at the mills...
- 20 February 1885; *Express*: The River Roller mills undergo a partial change in proprietors, Mr. J.H. Baldwin retiring. Mr. Clark will associate with him his two sons, Ed and Frank, under the firm name of Clark & Sons.
- 3 April 1885; *Express*: We are glad to learn that the different brands of flour, manufactured by Clark & Sons, are taking the place of foreign. Mr. Clark informs us that as the weather moderates and the sharp corrugations on his new rollers become more smooth by use, he can improve his different brands. This is as it should be, and we hope that the people will appreciate home manufacture. This mill is one of the best markets our farmers have at present for their wheat, and they should stand by it...
- 25 August 1885; DB 19:550: E.D. Godfrey to J. J. Manker...\$8200...undivided one-third...(mill property)
- 1 September 1885; DB 19:577: H.E. Manker...to Wm. Clark...\$4000...undivided one-sixth...(mill property)
- 20 August 1885; DB 19:595: J.J. Manker to J.W. Brown...\$8166.70...(mill property)
- 20 August 1885; DB 19:596: H.E. Manker to J.W. Brown...\$4083.30...undivided one-sixth...(mill property)

12 August 1887; *Sun*: Clark & Co., of the River Roller Mills, advertise that they have shipped in a car load of selected winter wheat for sale as seed, with the idea that farmers can raise winter wheat all right enough here.

27 July 1888; *Independent*: Clark & Co's. mill has been shut down the last three weeks, while a new flume has been put in...

Montgomery County, Iowa; 1889; page 40: The River Roller Mill, two miles north of Red Oak is conducted by Wm. Clark & Co. It has a full system of the Ellis Roller Process, 8 sets, with 75 bbls. daily capacity.

20 September 1889; *Independent*: Frank and Ed Clark have leased the River Rolling Mills, and are overhauling them preparatory to a big business...Their father Wm. Clark will...help in the management of the mill.

29 May 1891; *Express*: Adv. - We desire to call the attention of the citizens of Red Oak and vicinity to the fact that we have recently made extensive improvements in the River Roller Mills, at an outlay of considerable money, and are now manufacturing a new brand of flour superior to any hitherto put on the market. "Gold Band" is a high grade of flour and will compare favorably with any on the market.

Clark & Co.

29 May 1891; *Express*: Adv.-

Clark & Co., Millers

Red Oak, Iowa

Dear Sirs: ...If you can ship me another carload of flour at the same price you may do so at once.

J.S. Carlyle

Chicago, Illinois

26 June 1891; *Sun*: Clark's mill, two miles north of town promises to become a popular pleasure resort. A boat house has been built there and row boats have been bought to rent out to pleasure parties.

21 October 1891; *Sun*: Earl McCament is employed at Clark & Co's River Roller Mills.

Biographical History of Montgomery and Adams Counties; 1892; page 415: William Clark is a member of the firm of Clark & Co., proprietors of the River Roller Mills near Red Oak. This mill was established about 1870, by Samuel Wheeler...It was later operated for some time by J. J. Monk. Mr. Clark leased the mill in 1882 and afterward bought out the owners. The building is a substantial one, forty feet square and about forty feet high, has a double set of rollers, with a capacity of eighty barrels a day, of first-class flour.

11 August 1893; *Express*: After a ten days shut down Clark & Co's mill is again in operation...The old hexagon reels placed there 20 years ago were taken out and

replaced by Jarrett's round reels of the latest pattern. The old fashioned midling stones have given way to rolls throughout, and other pieces of machinery added...

- 11 August 1893; *Sun*: Adv. - We have just added recent, valuable machinery to our mill, of the most modern invention, and are now able to supply our customers with a superior grade of flour. Our mill is the most complete in every detail of any in this part of the state, and the quality of flour is A No. 1 in every particular...

CLARK & Co.

- 12 January 1894; *Sun*: T.H. Dearborn has 89 men and 37 teams at work on his ice harvest this week. He is cutting from above the dam at Clark's River Mills, north of town ...

Christmas Edition; 1894; *Independent*: Adv. - THE RIVER ROLLER MILLS...the property of Clark & Co., are situated two miles north of Red Oak, on the Nishnabotna River. This is the oldest milling plant in the County. As early as 1857 a grist mill was built at that point, and a post-office named Oro established. With the advent of the railroad the post office was moved to Red Oak, but on account of the fine water power the mill remained. Although an old establishment the plant is new and modern, the mill having been thoroughly overhauled within the last two years and a complete roller system with all the latest improvements in machinery introduced.

The popularity of their well known brands "Gold Band," "Home Rule," "Silver Leaf" and "Red Star" proves the superior quality of the work they turn out.

To facilitate the handling of the output of the Mill they have an office and exchange in the city, located on West Reed Street, where orders are taken for Flour and all kinds of Feed. Telephone 119.

The Capacity of the Mill is Eighty Barrels Daily.

- 16 July 1897; *Sun*: John Wyss, from Superior, Neb., has purchased the interest of the Wm. Clark estate in the River Roller Mills, and associated himself with I.W. Brown, under the firm name of Brown & Wyss. Mr. Wyss has been in the milling business at Superior for the past 12 years...

- 13 August 1897; *Express*: The landscape at that romantic spot known as the north mill is being sadly marred; the proprietors are having the picturesque old structure painted white.

5 May 1899; DB 29:475: J.W. Brown to B.B. Clark...\$1.00 etc...

19 November 1900; DB 20:117: Sheriff's Deed to New Hampshire Banking Co....NH Banking Co. vs J.W. Brown, Helen Brown, John W. Wyss, Maria Wyss, B.B. Clark, Rosa Clark, Jesse W. Clark, Nellie M. Clark, Maria J. Clark, Frank H. Clark, E.D. Clark, Edgar E. Clark and Bell McMullen, defendants...At public sale premises sold to NH Banking Co. for \$6750.27...

- 14 June 1901; *Sun*: The Clark mill, known as the north mill, the property of the New Hampshire Bank, of Nashua, is being repaired and will be operated under direction

of John Hayes, agent of the bank. The dam will be rebuilt. J.W. Smith, from Omaha, will be in charge as miller. He is there now putting the plant in shape for running.

26 June, 1902; DB 32:187: New Hampshire Banking Co. to J.W. Atherton...\$8000...

22 April 1903; DB 33:396: J.W. Atherton to C.J. Kampe...\$5000...

29 April 1903; *Red Oak Republican*: The north mill has been sold to C.J. Kampe of Essex, who it is understood, will put it in shape for operation...

11 September 1903; *Sun*: Kampe & Hyler, the new proprietors of the north mill, are overhauling the machinery and making repairs and improvements generally. They have been delayed by the excessive rains and floods, but expect to be able to begin grinding by Oct. 1.

16 December 1904; *Express*: Last Wednesday morning at about five o'clock, Charles Naurtc, who lives in the old Schrader property near the north mill, discovered that the mill was on fire. He sounded the alarm to Mr. Hyler, who lives close by, and together they ran to the burning building. The fire had gained such headway, however, that it was impossible to get inside at all, so the entire building, machinery, grain and flour were reduced to ashes in a very short time. Mr. Hyler says that he is utterly at a loss to know what started the fire. It appears that the flames first started in the northeast corner of the mill. This corner is over the water, which makes the mystery still deeper. The loss is a very heavy one. The building and machinery was worth in the neighborhood of \$5000 and there was \$2000 insurance. There were 3000 bushels of wheat and 300 sacks of flour in the mill and on this there wasn't a cent of insurance. The mill and contents were owned by Messrs. Hyler & Kampe.

According to the best authority obtainable, the north mill was the oldest mill in Montgomery County. It has been a land mark here since a very early day. The mill was built by David Silkett, father of Jacob Silkett, in the year 1857. The dam was used as a crossing for teams for several years before the first bridge was built.

The first equipment of the mill was very meagre, indeed, though the original building was as large as it was in after years.

The mill was owned by Wm. H. Kerrihard, father of Henry Kerrihard about the year 1865. It was at this time that James Bryan put in a flume. The mill has changed hands several times within the past 30 years. The father of E. Wheeler once owned the mill and it was known as "Wheeler's Mill". Again it was known as "Gordon's Mill", and some 25 years ago, the Mankers had charge of it and it was known as "Manker's Mill".

The Mankers sold out to the firm of Clark & Brown, William Clark, deceased, and Isaac Brown, being the members of the firm. Within the past 15 years the mill has changed owners four or five times and has been idle part of that period. Messrs. Hyler & Kampe have had the mill but a couple of years and had succeeded in building up a good business.

12 June 1905; DB 33:544: D.J. Kampe to Elmer and C.A. Kampe...\$3500...

28 July 1905; *Express*: Rebuilding the North Mill - C.J. Kampe has a force of men at work making preparations to erect a new mill on the site of the old mill above town. The Emerson flour mill was bought by Mr. Kampe and the material is to be used in the new mill. The Emerson mill has been idle for five or six years. Mr. Kampe intends to rebuild the dam, so the famous old spot north of town will still continue to be a place of interest.



The second North Mill building was erected in 1905.

16 February 1906; *Sun*: Adv. - MILL NOW RUNNING - The North Mill, on the site of the one burned down, is again in operation and we are making flour every day. You can bring your wheat to the mill and have it ground, or take it to our Flour Exchange north of the Red Oak National Bank and exchange it for Flour and Feed.
KAMPE BROS.

17 September 1907; DB 35:182: Elmer and C.A. Kampe to F.J. Quinby...\$1.00 etc...

20 September 1907; *Express*: The North Mill has been sold by the Kampes to a Mr. F.J. Quinby of Nebraska...Mr. Quinby is to make a number of improvements at the North Mill including the building of a side track from the railroad at that point.

20 December 1907; DB 32:511: F.J. Quinby to Lysle I. Abbott both of Douglas County, Nebraska...

16 November 1908; DB 36:43: Lysle I. Abbott to A.H. Brown...

16 November 1908; DB 36:54: A.H. Brown to H.J. Stiger...

23 February 1909; DB 34:411: H.J. Stiger to Walter and W.A. Tenney...\$6000...

7 January 1910; *Express*: Tenney Bros., of the North Mills, have purchased a 70-horsepower gasoline engine for their mill, and will no longer be compelled to depend upon the uncertain old Nishna for their power. They expect to repair and rebuild the dam, but not until late in the summer. They have employed Mr. Helms, an expert millwright, to fix up the mill in tiptop shape, and it is expected that before very long the old mill will be converting much of Montgomery county's wheat into an excellent grade of flour.

1 April 1910; *Express*: Tenney Bros., proprietors of the North Mill, report that...The mill has been fitted with new and up-to-date equipment and everything is in readiness to do a regular milling business.

15 July 1910; *Sun*: Tenney Bros. recently installed in their North mill the latest electric process for manufacture of flour. The improvement cost about \$1000.

No further record has been found, but the Tenneys installed a steam generator in a new building erected for that purpose. The dam was rebuilt, too. Apparently either system could generate electric power to run the mill.)

1 April 1911; DB 35:599: W.A. Tenney to Walter Tenney...\$6250...undivided one-half... Together with the new Ten foot concrete dam located on said premises and also mill, engine room with boiler and engine located on said premises...

3 January 1913; *Express*: The Burning of the North Mill - Big Red Land-Mark Destroyed by Fire - ...

3 January, 1913; *Sun*: Walter Tenney sustained a \$12,000 fire loss last Friday morning when the North mill, located two miles north of Red Oak, was completely destroyed by flames which were discovered between 10 and 11 o'clock. In considerable less than an hour the whole building was leveled to the ground.

The fire started near a point where the pipe from the heating stove went through a partition in the office. Earlier in the morning there had been a hot cob fire in the stove in the office, but it had gone out. The fire was discovered by A.L. Tenney when he went into the office to get an oil can, the flames at that time being confined to a bag of silk which is used in the flour sifters. The bag was hanging on the wall near the stovepipe hole.

Mr. Tenney forgot about a fire hydrant and a fire extinguisher with which the mill was equipped and ran out to get a bucket of water. When Walter, who heard his father's cry of fire, opened the door to enter, the flames seemed to spread to the whole building at once. Nothing could be done to save either the building or its

contents, and in a surprisingly short time the building was a mass of ruins. A great many people from Red Oak and the country north of town hurried to the mill in hope of rendering assistance, but could only watch the building burn. Walter was fortunate enough to save his books.

The building was valued at \$3000 and the milling machinery and equipment at \$9000, and there was no insurance. About six months ago insurance policies aggregating \$7000 expired, and since that time the mill had been uninsured, although Mr. Tenney had planned to take new policies shortly. In addition to the building and machinery 950 sacks of flour, 140 bushels of wheat, 120 bushels of corn, 30 bushels of oats, four tons of shorts, about 1500 pounds of bran and \$80 worth of flour sacks were burned. Practically the only machinery not ruined was a 80-horse-power engine and boiler, which were only slightly damaged. Mr. Tenney will either rebuild the mill or put up an electric power plant, using water power with steam auxiliary.

The mill which was burned was erected by C.J. Kampe about seven years ago, the old mill having burned the year before. The building and machinery were formerly in Emerson, but the structure was torn down and moved and the machinery was later installed here. Shortly thereafter Walter and Will Tenney bought the mill and later rebuilt the dam. The present dam is a good one, made of concrete, and two cars of cement were required for its building. For some time past Walter Tenney has owned the mill, Will having sold out to him.

The building was 48x66 feet in size, three stories high and basement. Its capacity was 75 barrels in 24 hours.

1915; Red Oak; *Who's Who and Why*: RIVERVIEW PARK - For many years Red Oak people have known the spot familiarly referred to as "the old North Mill." Now a few years ago the mill burned to the ground, and a pang of disappointment struck the hearts of many people for they feared that the old pleasure resort would be no more. But W.A. Tenney has come to the rescue with Riverview Park. He has located a restaurant and electric power plant on the very foundation of the old North Mill. He has built a skating hall, a bowling alley, a slippery slide and other devices of the modern pleasure resort. He has opened the park to the public for boating, tenting or picnic privileges, and he has thus saved the "old North Mill" site from oblivion. Patronize this park and help a good project along...Go out there, hire a tent and enjoy outdoor life...

17 October 1992; *Express*: Lowell White will be 101 next week - "...I helped Bill Tenny tear down the old fairground that had gone broke in 1913-1914. Then we went two miles north to make the Riverview Park. I managed the skating rink the first summer. The last August I was there I ran the steam engine for the merry-go-round..."

The following material was gleaned from visits with Lowell White: Timber at the mill site was cut and a traction steam engine was brought there to saw dimension lumber for the buildings at the park. The old amphitheater at Pactolus Park in Red Oak was torn down and the salvaged lumber was also used. The park opened in the summer of 1914,

and closed after only two or three years.

The power plant at the park was run by the old mill wheel. Ice in the mill pond was sawed into blocks; the cakes were floated through the flume and onto the wheel, which then raised them to the top of the bank. There they were stored in the ice house.



Riverview Park was built on the site of the North Mill.

20 September 1918; *Express*: Old Mill Wheel Still Doing Service - One of the oldest mill wheels in existence...is in operation daily at the old north mill site two miles north of Red Oak where Tenney Brothers have been operating a sorghum mill for the past two weeks.

The old mill wheel, which generates the power to run the cane press and the electric lights, and to pump water, was built in 1848, and was for many years the power which turned the machinery for the old north mill before it burned to the ground six years ago. When Tenney Brothers sent to Pennsylvania recently for repairs for the old wheel, the company which sent them the repairs wrote back that the part sent in to the company showed that the wheel is the oldest one in existence that they know of, and they stated that as long as it runs they will keep it in perfect repair free of charge.

Tenney Brothers started running their sorghum mill Friday of last week and expect to make a three weeks' run this year...The building erected and used as a dining hall when Riverside park was opened a few years ago is now being used to house the machinery employed in manufacturing the sorghum...

20 August 1920; *Sun*: The last mill dam in Montgomery county is about to go out, it being the re-constructed dam at the site of the old north mill, 2 miles north of town. A large section of the center of the concrete dam fell this week, leaving the old timber dam exposed. Each time the river comes up from now on will continue the destruction. The dam was originally built in 1859. The other mill dams of the

county have been washed away or partly so in the past few years.

(Note: The Grant mill dam was used for about 20 years after that.)

12 July 1926; *Express*: Grant beat the Red Oak town team 7 to 1 at the North Mill diamond yesterday afternoon...

21 May 1928; *Express*: Fire...leveled one of Montgomery county's landmarks when it razed the old Tenney homestead at North Mill...The home has a long history. It was originally built of native lumber more than 35 years ago...Old timers declare that it replaced an old log cabin...In the sixties a Mr. Zuber built the first house at that location...

25 March 1932; *Sun*: ...Dragline crews started in three places on the road north of town last week and have been working day and night in order to throw up the grades as quickly as possible.

The channel change at the north mill is completed and the Nishna is flowing through the ditch instead of the old "S" curve...At the "boat dock" just above the dam - where rowboats and launches were tied up during the days when Riverview park was running at the mill site, there was an excellent fishing place....now it looks like Red Oak creek...

The new bridge is straight north of the dam several hundred yards...There will be quite a fill at the north mill, and about a mile of relocation...

SHANK SAWMILL

1906 History; page 189: Henry and William Shank built the first sawmill on Red Oak creek in 1857 near where Seventh street crosses the same. The single sash saw was propelled by an old fashioned water wheel and the neighbors could get sawing done for 50 cents a hundred. This mill fulfilled its mission, notwithstanding the fact that at times it had to be thrown out of gear to get sufficient motion to work its way through the log. One of its patrons facetiously suggested that it could be easily changed into a hazelnut huller. It was a hardy pioneer in its chosen field and was put out of commission one day during a surging flood after about eight years' service.

The reservoir was not large but it was deep and people on horseback crossed back and forth on the dam....

1881 History; page 688: Henry Shank - ...From 1857 to 1865 he was engaged in the sawmill business....



The back of the South Mill, showing the power plant added in 1893 and the south branch railroad.

SOUTH MILL

- 24 December 1866; DB 3:110: J.E. Gepford to Jacob Stover...\$100...commencing at the SW corner of the SESW Sec 32 T72 R38 thence north 20 rods thence east forty rods thence south 20 rods thence west 40 rods to the place of beginning containing five acres...
- 27 April 1867; DB 3:595: George Gordon to Jacob Stover...\$320...beginning 35 and one-fifth rods west of the north east corner of the East half of the southwest quarter Sec. 32...thence south 50 rods thence West to a stone on the west line of said east half etc...thence north to the northwest corner of the east half of the southwest quarter ...thence east to the place of beginning...14 acres ...
- 23 July 1868; DB 4:195: Jacob Stover to Charles H. Lane...\$1500...undivided half real estate and appertences being a mill and mill privileges...
- 3 January 1870; DB 5:100: Jacob Stover and Charles H. Lane to Burlington & Missouri River Rail Road...\$4100...a strip or parcel of land...So much of the SENW and so much of the NESW...as belongs to us. Reserving the privilege to taking earth and Rock of the East side of said Rail Road on said Tract after said Rail Road is built not injuring said Rail Road or obstructing the Ditches belonging to the same - As lies within fifty feet on the East side and 33 feet on the West side Except for six rods above and ten rods below the centre of the East end of the mill building to be 16 feet of the centre line of the main Track of the BMRRR...
- 11 November 1870; Misc. Deeds 1:210: Jacob Stover leased mineral rights to Nebraska State Coal Mining Company...19 acres in Section 32...
- 10 June 1872; DB 8:21: Jacob Stover to C.H. Lane...\$6000...real estate (mill property)...
- 19 August 1872; County Roads File #148: C.H. Lane presented application for a County Road from the east end of the Bridge near the mill thence north...to the intersection of 5th Street in R. Road Addition...(Approved January 1873)
- Montgomery and Adams Counties Biographical Sketches*; 1892; page 333: Jacob Stover ...removed to Henry county, Iowa, where he resided until 1864, when he came to Montgomery county, and built a watermill called the Old Keystone Mill, which he operated until 1872...
- 1 April 1875; *Express*: Report of Red Oak Township Assessor: Keystone Mills – J.R. Lewis, proprietor-ground 28,346 bushels of wheat and 3,400 bushels of corn. Flour worth \$28,000 and meal \$1,900. The mill employed four hands.

- 22 December 1875; DB 10:520: C.H. Lane to Wm. H. Lewis and J.E. West...\$11,500... real estate...including mill and mill site...
- 6 January 1876; *Express*: Messrs. West & Lewis have purchased the Keystone mills one mile south of town and will continue the business in a more driving manner than ever. They are both practical millers and will certainly do well.
- 9 December 1876; DB 12:259: J.E. West to Joseph Lewis of Warren County...\$4650... undivided one-half...including mill and mill site...assumes one-half mortgage for \$10,500 given to C.H. Lane...
- 24 December 1877; DB 12:543: Wm. H. Lewis and Joseph Lewis to C.H. Lane...\$10,180 ...grist mill and mill site...
- 27 March 1878; *Telephone*: W.H. Lewis & Co. of Red Oak are running Lane's mill on most approved practices. The Mill is first class as regards machinery and Mr. Lewis is conceded to be one of the best practical millers in the West, so it is no wonder that the "boss flour" in this market is stamped with the name of W.H. Lewis & Co.
- 19 June 1879; DB 14:314: C.H. Lane to J.F. Heimer...\$10,000...mill and mill site...
- 18 September 1879; *Express*: The Lane Mill, just south of town, has recently changed hands. Mr. C.C. Burson a miller with a lifetime experience now having charge. Many new and substantial improvements have been added to the mill...All kinds of mill work done promptly and satisfactorily and the highest prices paid for grain.
- 1881 *History*; page 631: Burson, Clement C.; miller: ...learned the milling trade at Indianola. About the first of March 1879, he went to Fremont County, Iowa, worked for a short time for Jacob R. Lewis, then came to Red Oak, worked a short time for Lewis & Lane (millers). On July 1, he leased the mill south of Red Oak, and has controlled it since.
- 15 February 1882; *Telephone*: Heimer's flouring mill, south of town is so nearly completed that the workmen think they will have it in running order inside of six weeks.
- (Note: That must have been when the mill building was moved 180 feet north of the site where it was built.)
- 1 September 1883; DB 18:75: J.F. Heimer of Polk County to A. Heimer...\$14,000...mill and mill site...
- 13 December 1883; DB 19:52: Augustus Heimer to L.C. Heimer...\$7000...the undivided one half of the South half of SWSNW and the undivided one half of sub lot No. Two of Lot No. Four of the East half of the SENW and the undivided one half of Lot No. Two of the NESW all in sec. 32...

16 January 1884; *Telephone*: A. Heimer, proprietor of the grist mill, one mile south of Red Oak, has been doing satisfactory work for all who favored him with patronage during the last year or more, and still, the superior flour Mr. Heimer turns out, for some reason, is not mentioned in public print. On making inquiry respecting A. Heimer's capabilities as a miller and standing as a man, we are surprised to learn that the newspapers of Red Oak have all given him the go by. Mr. Heimer is a worthy citizen, an experienced miller, and in every way worthy of the high reputation he has gained.

During the last two years, Mr. Heimer has overhauled the mill, (formerly constructed by C.H. Lane) and put in new work throughout. No one need to fear getting their grist spoiled, if they take it to Mr. Heimer's mill to grind.

30 May 1884; *Express*: The road running past the Heimer mill, south of town, is very dangerous, running as it does between the railroad track and the river. In case a team should meet a train when coming or going to the mill there would be great danger of the horses plunging into the stream. Mr. Heimer has given land for a new road east of the mill and has had it laid out. All that is required now is working, and this should be done by the proper authorities.

30 September 1884; DB 19:297: L.C. Heimer and J.F. Heimer, husband and wife...to W. Henry Williams...\$15,000...

21 November 1885; DB 18:306: W. Henry Williams to Henry Baumhover...\$8000...the Heimer Milling Property, with the water power privileges appertaining...

1 January 1886; *Sun*: H. Baumhover, from Mt. Carmel, has bought the Heimer mill, half a mile down the river, paying \$8000 therefor. He will begin making improvements at once and will put in a full set of Odell rollers and other new machinery. The cost of the improvements will foot up about \$7000. J.W. Ivers has the contract...

26 March 1886; *Sun*: The flouring mills just south of town are running with bran new machinery now, being supplied with the roller process. Mr. Baumhover is figuring on increasing the capacity this summer from 75 barrels to 150 barrels a day.

9 April 1886; *Sun*: John Ivers has built a boat 19 feet long for use at the Baumhover mill. He has christened it the "City Belle".

The recent high water of the Nishnabotna did a lot of harm to the dam at the lower or Baumhover mill. The damage was promptly repaired.

29 April 1887; *Express*: H. Baumhover, owner of the Concentrated Roller Mills south of town, has made large outlays in the improvement of the property and putting it in condition for doing first class work. He has the same system as the big Pillsbury Mills of Minneapolis although not so extensive.

20 October 1887; *Independent*: Adv. - TO FARMERS - The Keystone Concentrated Mills south of town are now ready for Custom work. Satisfaction assured.

- 1 March 1889; *Sun*: Work has begun on the new bridge over the Nishnabotna at the Baumhover mill.
- 5 July 1889; *Sun*: An addition 12 x 48 feet has been built on the east side of H. Baumhover's Keystone Mills to give room for growing business.
- 4 April 1890; *Express*: Adv. –
 The Keystone Concentrated Roller Mills
 Now making the best Home-made Flour
 We make only one grade
 Straight Grade Flour
- 27 November 1891; *Sun*: H. Baumhover of the Keystone Mills, has put in a flour exchange north of Hilliker's shop, and will make exchange the same as at the mill.
- 17 June 1892; DB 24:237: Henry Baumhover of Carroll county to W.F. Dutton...\$14,000 ...Heimer Milling Property...with the water privileges.
- 8 July 1892; *Sun*: W.F. Dutton, from Petersburg, Neb., has traded for the Keystone Roller Mills...Mr. Baumhover, the former proprietor, gets farming land in Boone county, Neb...L. Baumhover, who has been operating the mill will remain with Mr. Dutton for a time to assist him in getting acquainted with the mill and its patrons...
- 7 October 1892; *Sun*: W.F. Dutton has arranged for further improvement to the Keystone Mills by which the present capacity of 75 barrels per day will be increased to 100 barrels per day. Steam will be put in later.
- 11 November 1892; *Sun*; Adv. We are now able to offer to the people of Red Oak and vicinity another brand of flour which we have satisfied ourselves by actual test is equal to anything on the market, whether made North or South, of hard or soft, winter or spring wheat; Pillsbury's or Washburn's Superlative not excepted. Our reputation so far, we think will justify you in giving an article a trial, at least, when we recommend it with our usual guarantee. Ask your dealer for a sack of Keystone Fancy Patent. There can be nothing better made.
 KEYSTONE MILLS, Red Oak.
- 30 December 1892; *Sun*: W.F. Dutton, of the Keystone Roller Mills, has leased the Chas. Kelly business building, corner of Second and Coolbaugh and is fitting it up with bins, etc., for use as a flour exchange...
- 6 January 1893; *Sun*: W.F. Dutton, of the Keystone Roller mills, is putting in 22-foot wagon scales for hay, grain and coal at his flour exchange office...
- 27 January 1893; *Sun*: Increasing business at the Keystone Roller Mills of W.F. Dutton has made demand for the new 75-horse power engine that is expected today and that is to be put in forthwith. The Mills are to run day and night.

3 March 1893; *Sun*: Adv. - We are no longer an old water mill by a dam site, but are fixed out with a bran new 70-mule power engine of the latest and most improved pattern, that can pull the tail of anything in the country. No more high water, nor low water, dry weather nor cold weather flour, but always warmed up, ready to bake. "Straight" will now be just a little better than ever, while our Fancy Patent will be forte extraordinary, a way up in G...If you will buy your wife a sack of "Straight" and a new tin biscuit cutter, we will guarantee satisfaction and a good night's sleep. A few sax always on hand.

KEYSTONE MILLS.

10 March 1893; *Sun*: Adv. - The Keystone Mills are now prepared to receive and grind all the wheat that can be brought to them, not to exceed 500 to 600 bushels per day. We have storage for 10,000 bushels of wheat and flour and are prepared to receive and store that amount at any time. Farmers, it will pay you to bring us your wheat. Clean up your bins, get your hauling done and your summer's stock of flour on hand before spring work commences. Get your wheat made into flour and keep it. You will see a big advance in flour before another crop. Save plenty of seed and sow it. Wheat will not always sell for 50 cents. Come in and see us, and get our ideas and some flour. Your interests are ours. We give 30 to 34 pounds best flour per bushel, worth 2 1/4 c. to 2 1/2 c. KEYSTONE MILLS.

14 April 1893; *Sun*: A boating park and picnic ground project to utilize the advantages around W.F. Dutton's Keystone mills, a short distance south of town, is being considered. Fine shade and sod, good fishing and about a mile of boating favor the project. There is talk of making a landing place at the foot of Coolbaugh st., and running boats to the ground. No doubt the project would pay well, for it would prove popular from the start.

(Note: Nothing further was found concerning this proposal, but the mill grounds were a favorite picnic spot.)

18 April 1893; DB 24:415: W.F. Dutton to Myron L. Gregory...Heimer Milling Property ...with water power privileges appertaining...

2 June 1893; *Sun*: Adv. - TAKE NOTICE. To protect ourselves and to convince the public that half of the lies told about us are not true, we will until further notice, sell, and deliver to any part of the city, "STRAIGHT" FLOUR AT 85c PER SACK. We mean business. Spot cash takes one sack or a hundred; every sack warranted. Further - To users of Pillsbury's best: If you will use "Straight" flour according to the printed instructions contained in each sack of Pillsbury's flour and it does not make just as light, just as sweet, and just as wholesome bread in every respect, we will present each party so making the trial with 100 pounds of our best Patent which has no superior. Save your dollars and lay in a stock of flour. We don't want the earth and a mortgage on the moon, but we do want the same privilege we accord every one else, that of minding our own business. Store opposite court house. Telephone 62. Here to stay, KEYSTONE MILLS

29 September 1893; *Sun*: Adv. - H. Baumhover is again in possession of Keystone Mills, and will run the business in the same old way, so satisfactory to the public. The Exchange, one door east of the Hotel Johnson, is open again and business is going right along. All the old friends of the Baumhover management and the public in general are invited to remember the Keystone Mills in their business.

H. BAUMHOVER

Clerk of Court Records; Montgomery County, Iowa: (The following notes were taken from records of a series of law suits over the South mill.)

9 June 1892: W.F. Dutton of Boone County, Nebraska, signed a mortgage on the mill property...to Henry Baumhover of Carroll County, Iowa...\$3400...property known as the Heimer milling property, lying adjacent to the city of Red Oak.

1 May 1893; Frost Manufacturing Company, Galesburg, Ill., sold to Dutton machinery, etc., for the mill..."furnished said materials for use in a certain frame grist mill situated...(mill property)...

October term of court, 1893: Henry Baumhover vs. M.L. Gregory, I.E. Gregory, Frost Manufacturing Co., Henry W. King & Co., Dorsey Bros. & Co., Whitebreast Fuel Co., E.A. Hall, D.S. Ashby, Red Oak National Bank...

District Court; August 1894; Paragraph 7: Statement of Frost Company: That said improvements have been set up adjacent to said mill, that about the same time a frame structure was built over said improvements to protect the same from the weather, which structure is independent of, separate and apart from said mill building except that said mill building constitutes one side thereof, viz. the north side; that said improvements...are located within said structure and are separate...

Paragraph 9: ...That their only connections to the said mill is when by the use of a spur pinion the machinery of the mill is attached to the engine...

Paragraph 6; Statement of Baumhover: ...that the removal of the same would render said mill entirely useless and worthless for use and operating purposes as a mill...that said improvements furnish the only motive power to said mill...The boiler ...is set and encased in many thousand brick...the engine is on a base expressly constructed for it and is anchored on said base by 12 anchor-irons...the well which was dug for said pump...

9 September 1895; Sheriff's Deed 20:93: to Henry Baumhover...Real Estate in litigation sold by Sheriff 18 August 1894. Baumhover bought it for \$3761.95...

11 April 1896; DB 29:117: Henry Baumhover of Carroll County...to G.W. Pickering of Page County...\$1900...real estate (mill property)

22 October 1896; DB 29:132 QC: George W. Pickering of Page County to Paul Traut, Dubuque County...\$4000...real estate including mill and machinery except scoops, platform scales and office furniture.

31 August 1897; DB 29:195: Paul Traut to A.E. Keen...\$6000...real estate...also all the machinery contained in the building situated on the above described premises.

Pictorial Atlas of Montgomery County, Iowa; 1899; *Red Oak Express*: Keystone Roller Mills: building 30x30, four stories high. Two runs of burrs. In 1898 Mr. Keen ran the mill and lived in the house on the hill.

2 February 1900; DB 30:302: A.E. Keen to Louisa Traut...\$2000

17 May 1901; *Express*: T.B. Draper has about closed a deal for the south mill. If he secures possession he will start it up again.

21 December 1903; DB 32:272: Louisa Traut to N.E. Wilson...\$1,100...real estate...

2 February 1906; *Sun*: Adv. - BUILDING FOR SALE - The building known as the South mill for sale at a bargain. N.E. Wilson

21 September 1906; *Express*: SOUTH MILL IS DOOMED - The recent sale of the Keystone mill building, or better known as the "South Mill," by Nate Wilson to J.M. King, will remove one of the early landmarks of Montgomery county. Although not the first mill to be built in the county, it is the oldest one standing at the present time.

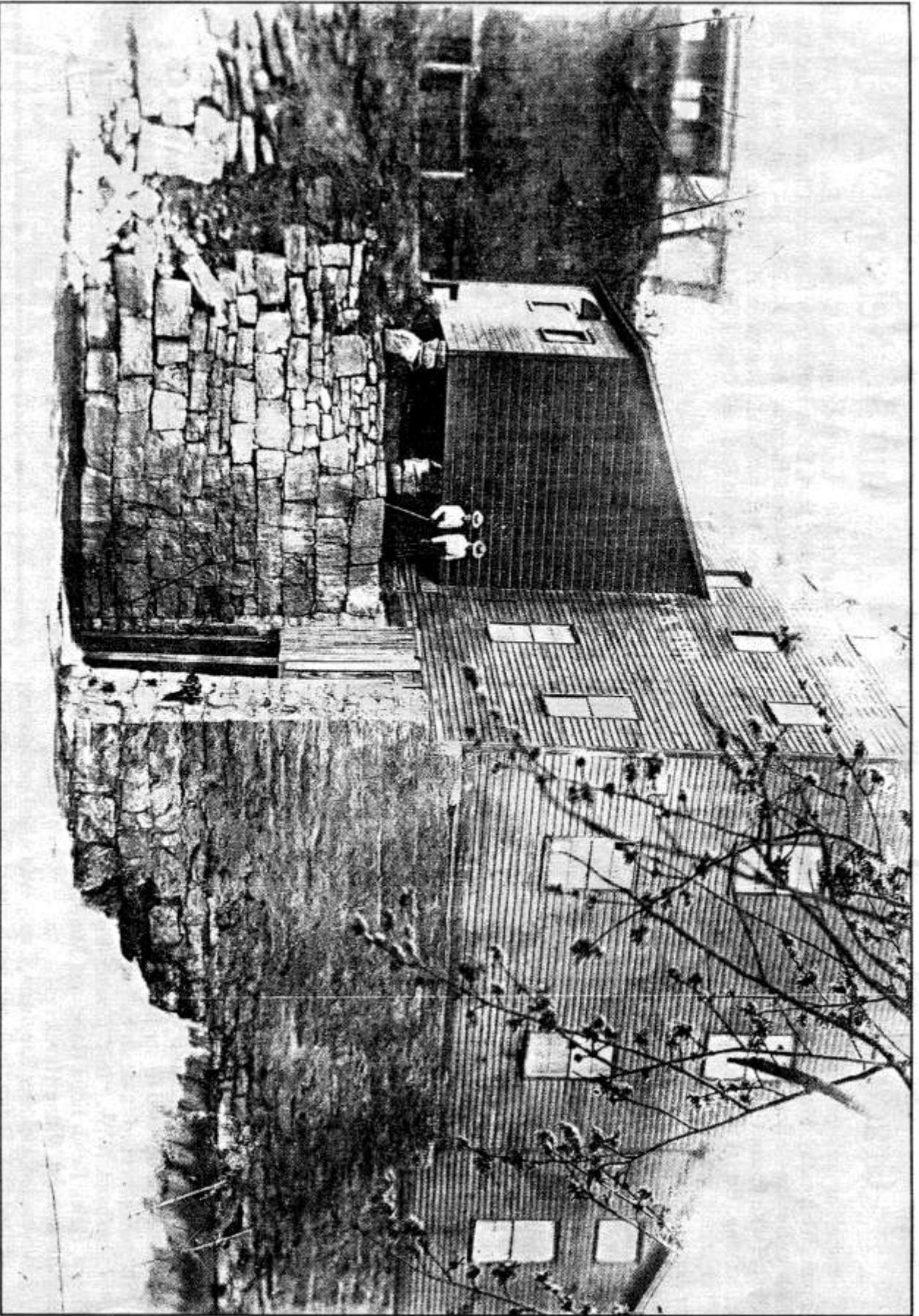
A brief mention of the early history of the above mill may be of interest...The "South Mill" was built in the early '60's by Jacob Stover and a Mr. Lewis. David N. Cook was the contractor and James Roseberry, of Sherman township, hewed the timber from trees adjacent to the mill, irrespective of whose land they happened to grow on. The mill at that time stood 180 feet south of its present location and was only about one-half its present size. Mr. Stover ran the mill until 1872 when it was sold to Julius Heimer, who after several years sold it to W.W. Williams, manager of the Chicago Board of Trade. It 1885 it was sold to Henry Baumhover, of Carroll, Iowa, who changed it to a roller mill and enlarged the building. It was later sold to Wm. Dutton, who added steam power. It was then sold to A.E. Keene, who sold it to Paul Keer, of Keokuk, Iowa, and he to Nate Wilson. Last year Mr. Wilson disposed of the machinery in the mill to parties living at Osceola, Iowa. Mr. Wilson retains the twenty-six acres of land. Mr. King will use the building in the construction of corn cribs and other buildings on his farm just west of the mill site.



The Stennett Mill, showing the elevated walkway connecting the mill with the miller's house on top of the hill. The road ran under the walkway.



The back of the Stennett Mill



Stennett Mill

STENNETT MILL

27 November 1867; DB 3:331: James Linn to George A. Davis and Enoch Harris...\$100
...West 4/5 SWNWSW...8 acres in SW corner of NWSW...

27 November 1867; DB 3:344: William Glen to George A. Davis and Enoch Harris...\$60
...North half NWSWSW...five acres...Except one half of the stone and mineral and
timber on the said land...

24 July 1868; DB 4:158: Enoch Harris of Madison Co. to Henry Reynolds...\$50...
undivided half of 8 acres SW corner NWSW...

24 July 1868; DB 4:202 QC: Enoch Harris to Henry Reynolds...\$30...Undivided half of
five acres...NW corner SWSW...

1881 History; page 532: What is now known as Watson's mill was first built in 1868-69,
by George Davis and R.H. Reynolds, at a cost of \$8000; it was 24x40 feet, three
stories high, with turbine wheel and one run of burs. In 1872 this mill was sold to
Woodmancy & Knapp, and they sold it the same year to J.S. Watson, the present
owner. He has doubled the size and put in four run of burs, and machinery for
making the "New Process" flour; and it is now valued at \$15,000.

12 July 1912; *Sun*: ...It was erected...from lumber sawed from native walnut timber...The
large turbine which furnished power for the mill was purchased in Springfield, O., it
being shipped by rail from there to St. Louis, thence by Missouri river packet to
Council Bluffs and was hauled from the river boat landing to the mill site by a team
of six oxen...For several years after the mill was built there was no bridge across the
river, and a large ferry boat served to bring the farmers from the east side of the
river to the mill with their grain and back with their flour and feed.

21 August 1869; Supervisor's Minutes: Davis Mill road is established...to run at the foot
of the bluff on the west side of the mill...

5 January 1870; Supervisor's Minutes: G.A. Davis presents a petition of 26 persons
asking that a county bridge be built across the East Nishnabotna at the Grist mill of
Davis & Reynolds.

11 January 1870; DB 5:84 QC: George A. Davis to Lorenzo Woodmancy of
Pottawattamie Co...\$500...undivided half...south half NWSWSW...

11 January 1870; DB 5:87: George Davis to L.D. Woodmancy...\$5000...undivided half
west 4/5 SWNWSW...

- 16 May 1870; DB 7:1: R.H. Reynolds to Ed Knapp...\$2000...undivided one fourth W 4/5 SWNWSW...being one half my interest in 8 acres in the SW corner NWSW...
- 15 April 1871; DB 6:233 QC: Henry Reynolds to L.D. Woodmancy...\$250...undivided one fourth of north half NWSWSW and undivided one fourth of five acres NW corner SWSW...together with the undivided half of the buildings therein.
- 1 June 1871; County Road File #69: Davis Mill road...road leading from Woodmancy's mill running north so as to run along the foot of the Bluffs to the west line of the east half of the North East quarter of Section 22...
- 1 August 1871; DB 6:341 QC: Woodmancy to James Watson of Pottawattamie Co. ...\$700...undivided 3/4 N half NWSWSW...
- 1 August 1871; DB 6:381 QC: \$200...North half NWSWSW...to correct an error in a deed to Ed Knapp on May 16, 1870, wherein the land was described as being on the NW quarter of said section...
- 1 August 1871; DB 7:41: Henry Reynolds to L.D. Woodmancy...\$2000...undivided one fourth north half NWSWSW...
- 1 August 1871; DB 7:61: Lorenzo Woodmancy to James Watson of Pottawattamie Co... \$7500...undivided 3/4 of west 4/5 SWNWSW...
- 1 August 1871; DB 7:62: Edw. W. Knapp to James Watson...\$2000...undivided one fourth west 4/5 SWNWSW...
- 30 September 1871; County Road File #85: James S. Watson petitioned for a road 40 feet wide...(field notes) crossing the Botany 408 links south of the Watson mill, thence intersecting the road known as the Davis mill road following said road to the section line between sections 15 and 22...thence west on section line...
- 3 June 1873; Supervisor's Minutes: P.P. Johnson, contractor, is hereby authorized to change plans of bridge at Watson's mill from original to square truss.
- 10 July 1875; DB 10:441 QC: William Glenn et ux to J.S. Watson...\$10...north half NWSWSW...
- 22 July 1880; *Review*; Elliott: W.S. Lewis is grinding the wheat at Watson's Mill while Mr. W. is off to Arkansas for his health.
- 10 May 1882; *Telephone*: J.S. Watson's many friends will be sorry to learn that he has sold his flouring mill...with the intention of giving up the trade...
- 27 April 1883; DB 16:589: James Watson to Thomas Lytle of Page Co...\$9700...west 8 acres SWNWSW...

- 14 August 1883; DB 16:590: Thomas Lytle to Philip P. Johnson...\$10,000...real estate...
- 15 August 1883; *Telephone*: P.P. Johnson has exchanged the Kerrihard mill property, with Thomas Lytle & Co., for the old Watson Mills, eight miles north of town...
- 19 February 1886; *Sun*: W.H. Pike & Co. have the contract for building a stone dam for P.P. Johnson across the Nishnabotna river at the old Watson mill. They will also build a large stone barn for Mr. Johnson just north of the mill.
- 31 August 1888; *Independent*; Stennett: After a long and tedious overhauling of the Johnson flouring mill it is now ready for business. This mill has been refitted all through with all the latest necessary machines to do first class work, both for custom grinding and the merchant trade. Having leased this mill of P.P. Johnson we will run the same in the interest of the public...
Wm. J. Taylor & Son
- 31 January 1890; *Express*: The residents of Stennett were well supplied with fish last Saturday. During the day Silas Taylor, who is running the mill, discovered that something was wrong with the power, as the machinery was stopped. An investigation revealed the fact that the wheel was clogged by a large number of fish which had gathered there. Some 400 pounds were taken out.
- 21 March 1890; *Sun*; Stennett: The Johnson mill has passed from the management of Wm. Taylor & Son, and is being run by a Swede whose name we do not know.
- 18 August 1893; DB 24:445: P.P. Johnson of Elmore Co., AL. to Smith McPherson... \$40,000...other land besides the mill property...
- 18 September 1893; DB 24:447: Smith McPherson to T.J. Hysham...\$20,000...one half of deed 24:445...
- 1 August 1894; DB 26:83: Smith McPherson and T.J. Hysham to C. and E. Seeley of Buffalo Co., NE...\$1000...Lot 1 of west 8 acres south half NWSW and west 4.79 acres NWSWSW...being a strip 656 1/4 feet long and 318 feet wide...also the right of backwater or overflow on said section for a mill dam same hight (sic) or one foot higher than the one now located thereon...
- 2 November 1894; *Sun*; Stennett: The mill property known as the Watson mill has been thoroughly repaired and the roller system put in by the new proprietors, Seeley & Son, and the mill is now in operation.
- 30 August 1895; *Sun*; Stennett: The new dwelling house at the Seeley mill, owned by the mill firm...was burned down on Aug. 22...
- 29 March 1896; *Sun*; Stennett: The rock wall between the Seeley mill and the bridge was badly washed out last week.

- 8 January 1897; *Sun*; Stennett: A gang of Indians have taken possession of the land east of the Seeley mills.
- 11 June 1897; *Sun*; Stennett: Seeley's new flour house is completed. The mill has also been supplied with an iron safe.
- 20 August 1897; *Express*; Stennett: C. Seeley & Son have been putting in new machinery in the mill...
- 25 February 1898; DB 29:247: C. Seeley and E. Seeley to Orson DeWitt and A.L. Chrisman...\$13,000...mill property...
- 4 March 1898; *Sun*; Stennett: O. DeWitt & Co. have traded their stock of merchandise for Seeley & Son's flouring mill near Stennett and the stock is now being invoiced preparatory to the transfer. M. Seeley, who has been managing the mill, will move to Elliott and G.R. Barr will occupy the residence at the mill where Mr. Seeley has been living. O. DeWitt will remain in Elliott and will put in most of his time on the road in the interest of the mill.
- 13 May 1898; *Sun*; Stennett: DeWitt & Chrisman shipped 500 sacks of flour to Villisca Tuesday and a car load Wednesday.
- 19 May 1899; *Express*; Stennett: Dewitt & Churman received some new machinery for their mill this week.
- 24 May 1901; *Express*; Stennett: The Botna Valley Mill is not running because they have no wheat and don't pay as much as the farmers want.
- 18 April 1902; *Sun*; Stennett: The new county bridge over the Nishnabotna river near Chrisman & Co's mill is completed. It is a 100-foot span and 16 feet wide, taking the place of a bridge that was 75 foot span and 12 feet wide. The new bridge rests on iron tubing anchored in stone. The stone pillars of the old bridge were removed and will be used in county work. The old bridge will probably be put over Walnut creek.
- 25 July 1902; *Sun*; Sherman: A pitchfork was caught in the water wheel of the river mill in such a manner as to prevent grinding for a few days this week.
- 3 October 1902; *Sun*; Elliott: Wm. Scherer...a few years ago was employed in the Seeley mill and hauled flour to Elliott...
- 6 March 1903; *Sun*; Stennett: A lot of new machinery has been installed in the Valley mills of Chrisman & Co.
- 29 December 1903; DB 33:424: A.L. Chrisman and wife to Levi H. Griffith of Audubon Co....\$8200...the same being known as the Valley Mills property...

- 1 January 1904; *Sun*; Stennett: A.L. Chrisman has traded his mill to L.M. Griffith, of Atlantic, and Daniel Zentmeyer, a successful miller of Exira.
- 5 March 1904; DB 32:287: Martin R. DeWitt, minor, by guardian, to Levi H. Griffith... \$400...undivided one sixth...(mill property)...
- 30 September 1904; *Sun*; Stennett: L.H. Griffith is doing business again at his mill, which is running regularly, the damage done by high water in the river cutting a new channel and leaving the mill without power having been remedied.
(Note: The dam was extended across the new channel, making it about twice as long as it was originally.)
- 17 March 1905; *Sun*; Elliott: L.H. Griffith has had a stone wall built across the cut-off south of the Valley mill, so that the cut-off will fill with sediment, causing the water to go down over the dam to the mill, assuring water power the year around.
- 6 February 1906; DB 35:22: Levi H. Griffith to Grant J. Griffith...\$3,333...undivided one third Valley Mills property...
- 10 March 1906; *Sun*: L.H. Griffith, proprietor of the Valley flouring mills...contemplates change of location for his mill...and may move it to Elliott...Mr. Griffith has in mind installing dynamos at the present site of his mill, where he has a big dam and excellent water power...Two or three times the power needed for running the mill will be generated...The Valley mills have a capacity of 50 barrels, or 200 sacks of 50 pounds, per day...
- 26 September 1906; DB 34:232: Levi and Grant Griffith to H.E. Manker...\$6000... Mortgage...mill property...
- 8 March 1907; *Express*; Stennett: The Valley mills started in full blast under the new management on March 1.
- 21 June 1907; *Express*; Stennett: The Stennett mill came very near burning Friday morning but the timely arrival of help and by hard work saved it. There was only a slight damage.
- 12 July 1912; *Sun*: OLDEST MILL BURNED - The old river mill between Stennett and Elliott, known at different times as Watson's mill and Seeley's mill, was burned to the ground late Friday night, it having probably been struck by lightning. The building contained about 2000 bushels of wheat, a quantity of corn, 500 sacks of flour and a small quantity of ground feed. The loss is estimated at between \$12,000 and \$15,000, and there is \$4500 insurance on the building and \$1000 on contents. The mill was the property of the Elliott Milling Co., in which H.E. Manker and Grant and Ross Griffith are stockholders.
While the Seeley mill was not the first one built in the county, it was the oldest mill standing at the time of its destruction. It was erected by George Davis

and R.H. Reynolds in 1868 and 1869...Although the building had been added to since its erection, the original part and the water wheel and dam still remained.

...the mill became the property of Woodmancy & Knapp, and later of J.S. Watson. Since that time it changed hands a number of times, Thos. Lytle, W.B. Seeley and Chrissman & Son having been among those who owned and operated the mill. E. Neudeck, now of Red Oak, served as miller at the old mill during the year 1872.

For many years the mill had been a favorite place for camping, picnics and fishing...

12 July 1912; *Express*: Seeley Mill struck by lightning and burned...Henry Runnels and a Mr. Davis were the builders of the mill, constructing the dam in 1865 and the building the following year.

12 August 1912; DB 33:571: Ollie Griffith and husband to O.C. Cochrane...\$1000...undivided one third...

29 December 1913; DB 36:369: Roscoe C. Griffith to H.E. Manker...undivided one third ...Valley Mills property...

18 June 1914; DB 36:356: O.C. Cochrane to Grant J. Griffith...\$1000...undivided one third...

24 September 1915; DB 38:512: H.E. Manker to Grant J. Griffith \$2500...undivided two thirds...Valley Mills property...Including water wheels and remnants of machinery of the old mill...

30 December 1915; DB 36:453: Grant J. Griffith to George J. Wise...\$3150...the Valley Mills property. Including water wheels and remnants of machinery of the old mill...

16 April 1917; DB 36:580: From George J. Wise to F.E. Shires...\$1300...Valley Mills property ...

7 September 1917; DB 39:151: F.E. Shires to W.E. Draper...\$300...All of that portion of the West 4.79 acres of the NWSWSW lying north and west of the Public Highway as now located and containing one acre.

8 December 1939; *Sun*: Seeley's Mill Site is Scene of Action - The Old Seeley mill site will soon be gone - along with the dam site.

...The big "S" bend of the river, for many years the mecca for fishermen, and ...the most famous picnic ground within easy access to the people of Red Oak, is being wiped out...

For a number of years the people of the vicinity of Seeley's mill site...have wanted the river straightened, and they wanted the road improved and a new bridge.

...Roth Construction Co. was given the contract for the removal of about 30,000 cubic yards of dirt in the cutting of the new channel for the river...The

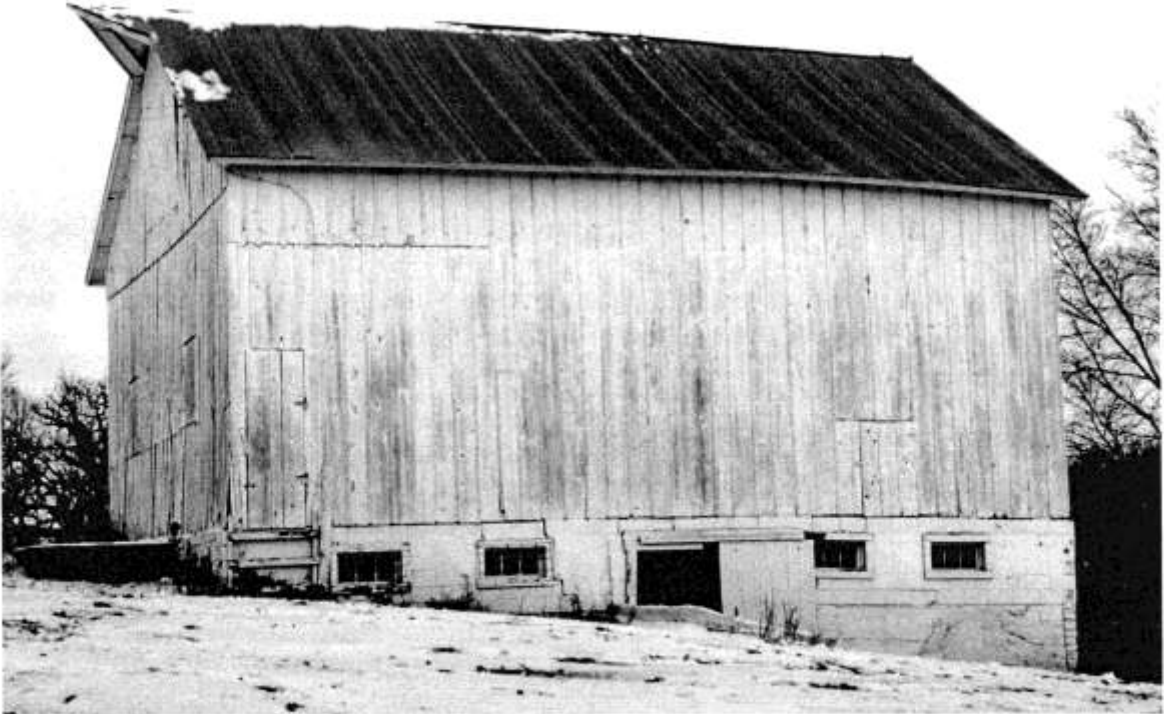
bridge will be moved upstream to cross the new channel (canal) of the river about 30 or 40 rods northeast of where it now spans the river.

14 December 1939; *Graphic*: ...also a new road is being made running from the rail road track on the east side of the river and will join the old road west of the house on the corner at the mill site. The road will be made on the north side of the house.

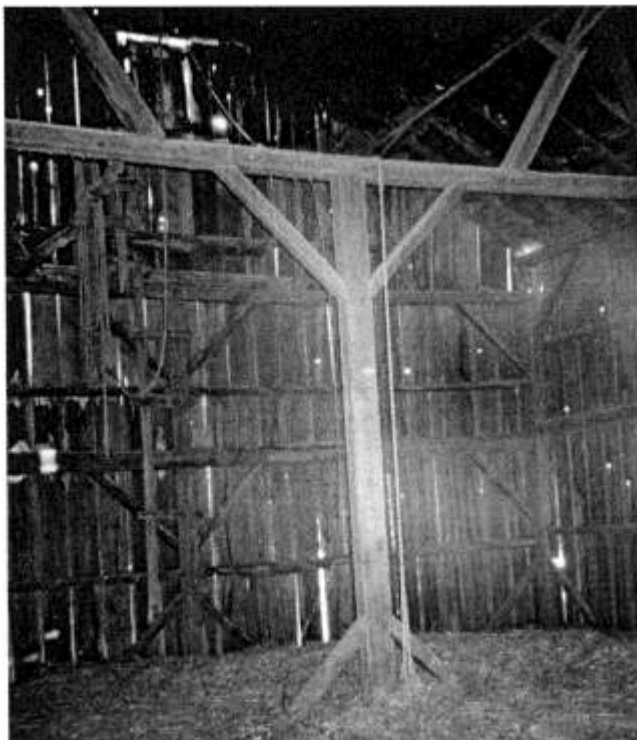
A cut was made from the top of the bluff down toward the river. The dirt which was removed was pushed on down over the old road, the mill foundation and the dam site, making a grade for the new road. The Watson mill road then ran from the Stennett-Elliott road west to Highway 48. The Davis mill road still ran at the foot of the bluff, crossing the fill for the east-west road. In 1952 the bridge was washed out, and was not replaced.

1 April 1952; County Road file #767: ...ordered vacated portion of Highway commencing at a point .10 mile west of the SW corner of the NE quarter of the SW quarter of Section 23-73-38 and running west .075 mile and terminating at this point...

The Davis mill road ran at the foot of the bluff until 1954, when it was moved to its present location at the top of the hill. It is still possible to walk from the road down the cut and over the fill on top of the old mill site.



The frame of the Van Horn Mill was used in the construction of a barn



An interior view of the barn. The timbers are still fastened with pegs.

VAN HORN MILL

7 February 1856; DB 1:49: Thomas H. Benton, Jr. of Pottawattamie County...to Daniel G. McMillin...\$276...East half SW quarter and SWNE and SENW section 11 T71 R36...

1856 Census; Jackson township; Montgomery County:
Daniel G. McMillin; age 37; miller
Samson McMillin; age 55; millwright

1860 Census; Montgomery County:
D.G. McMillen; Sawyer

1906 History; page 125: ...The old water mill on the Middle Nodaway, known first as the McMillen Mill and later as the Van Horn Mill, had been in operation for some time (by 1862) but its old "up-and-down" saw was exceedingly slow as compared with... the "z-e-e-e" of the bright circular saw...Cottonwood, elm and linden were the principal kinds of timber used in those days...

15 October 1864; DB 2:308: Daniel McMillin...to John Van Horn...\$2000...NESW and SENW...

9 September 1875; *Review*: The heavy rains last Thursday afternoon raised the Nodaway over banks in less than twelve hours, and among other mischief carried away the new dam at Van Horn's mill. This is the third time this season that the unlucky dam has gone downstream and with true Iowa pluck the proprietor goes right to work on a new one.

19 July 1877; *Review*: The timbers and iron is on the ground for the new bridge at Van Horn's Mill. The new bridge will not be completed any too soon for the public's safety and convenience, as the old one is almost tottering and could scarcely stand during another rise of the Nodaway.

29 July 1877; *Review*: John Van Horn, of Van Horn's Mills, has recently built a large barn 30 x 40, and an addition to his house of 16 x 28. He is also preparing to build a duplicate mill three stories high.

10 July 1879; *Review*; Nodaway: At the match game of baseball on the Fourth at Vanhorn's mill, the Nodaway boys won the prize. It was a beautiful ball and bat.

29 July 1880; *Review*: ...Mr. John Van Horn has already received the machinery for putting his mills into the best possible shape...

20 January 1881; *Review*: ...Wm. A. Pearce has been engaged for the past eight years as

a miller at the Van Horn Mills.

24 November 1881; *Review*: Mr. Wm. Denniston, until recently the miller at Van Horn's mills...

7 February 1884; *Review*: Adv. – Sale Dec. 11 – Jno. Van Horn is selling stock and farm equipment...

19 June 1885; *Express*: ...has recovered the iron bridge at Van Horn's mill and placed a new bridge across the branch just south of the mill.

17 June 1886; *Review*: Uncle John Van Horn was the victim of a painful accident last week. He was walking in felt soled boots through the flume at the mill and stepped on a rusty nail.

October 1891; *The Illustrated West*; The Blue Grass Region of South West Iowa; page 21: ...The mills running include...the Van Horn mill...

5 August 1892; *Sun*; Milford: ...the master mechanic at the flouring mill, has left...Mr. Van Horn, expert miller, is in charge at present.

2 August 1894; *Review*: ...a few friends spent last Thursday in a picnic camp near Van Horn's mills...

6 June 1895; *Review*: ...a camping party near Van Horn's mills...

24 October 1895; *Review*: John Van Horn is coming to town to live and will therefore have a grand closing out public sale at Van Horn's Mills, this Thursday, Oct. 24. It is a big sale and it will consume all day to dispose of the property.

18 November 1896; DB 27:420: John Van Horn to Zipporah Van Horn...\$1.00...land in section 11...

10 March 1898; *Review*; Hacklebarney: They are repairing the Van Horn Mill dam.

2 April 1901; DB 31:240: Zipporah Van Horn and husband to M.N. McNaughton...\$6500...land in section 11...

6 February 1908; *Review*: Old Land Mark Being Removed - Two men are now at work razing the old Van Horn Mill, which stood on the west bank of the Middle Nodaway river about three miles northeast of Villisca. The mill, which was originally built sometime in the '50's by Daniel McMillen, and later sold to John Van Horn, first stood on the east side of the Nodaway, and for years was where many a pioneer or his son went milling. Mr. Van Horn tore the structure down after he had it a few years and moved it across the river to its present location, rebuilding and improving it considerably. Dr. McNaughton bought it and the farm on which it

stood of Mrs. Van Horn about seven years ago, after the mill had served its usefulness. He is having it torn down but purposed saving the frame to use in the construction of a barn.

5 May, 1992: In March 1952, Don and Rachel Lyle moved onto the old Van Horn place. Don had a great interest in the old mill, and talked to oldtimers about it.

I went to the Lyle home, and Don, Rachel and I climbed into a pick-up for a historical tour. As he drove, Don related the history as it was told to him.

The road north from Villisca followed the ridge. It branched off and ran northeast to the Van Horn mill property. The road turned east there, and only a fence separates it from the present Lyle driveway.

Don thinks there may have been an Indian camp ground on the north side of the road. He has found what seems to be pieces of Indian paint stone there.

On the south side of the road is a flat area where the Van Horn baseball diamond probably lay. There have been some ball games there since the Lyles have lived on the place.

Next on the north side of the road was the Van Horn house. It burned, and the present structure was built in 1926. Across the road south was another house. Probably an employee of the mill lived there.

The road turned then and went down the bank to the edge of the old river bed. At one time Van Horn maintained a foot bridge there. As the road curved to the north we must have passed the site of the dam, but no trace of it can be seen. The outlines of the mill pond are still visible, off to the east.

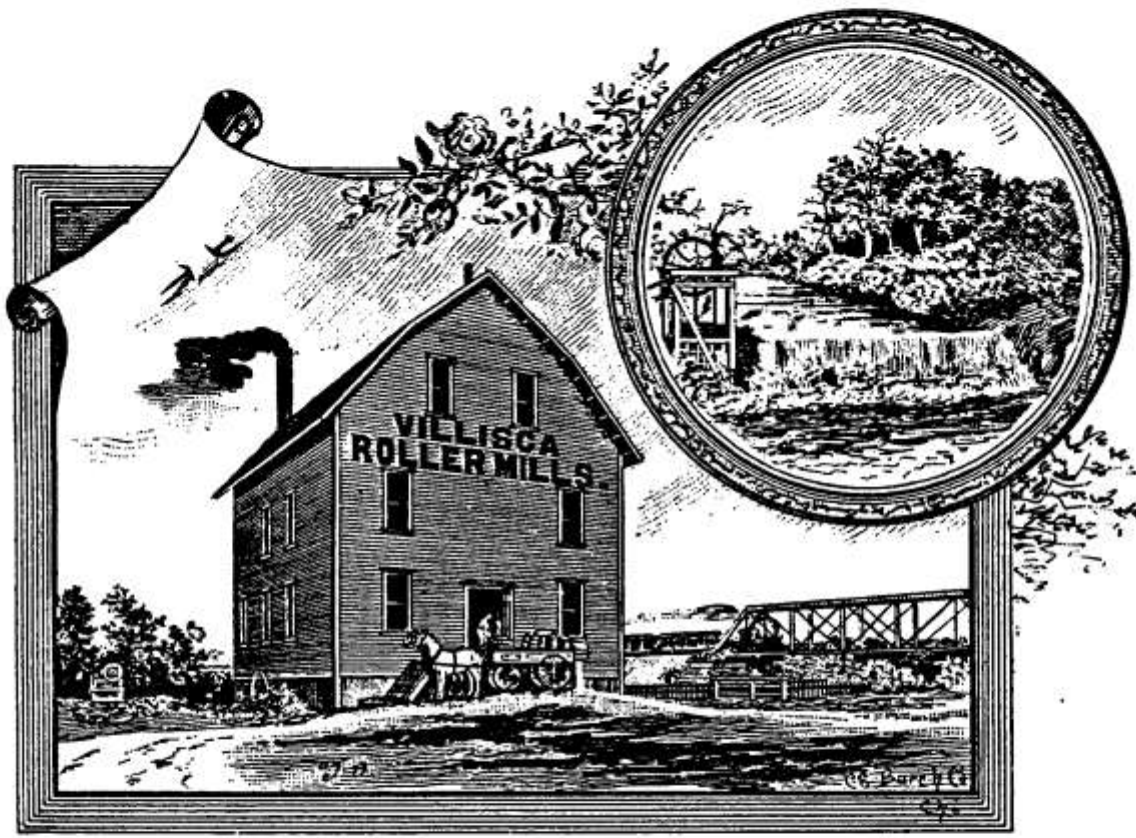
We followed the road past the place where the mill had stood. Originally the mill was on the east side of the river. It isn't known if McMillen had a grist mill, or if Van Horn started one after he bought the saw mill. A few years later, Van Horn moved the mill building to the west side of the river. Unfortunately, no picture of the building has been found, but it is said that there were living quarters above the mill. As local humor put it, with the two houses, that made "three families and 100 dogs".

John Van Horn died 10 August 1901, but he had sold the property a few months before that to Dr. M.N. McNaughton. When the mill was razed in 1908, Dr. McNaughton used the frame of the building to construct a barn, on top the bank just west of the mill site. On the interior, the wooden pegs holding the beams together are still visible. It had a foundation of native limestone. One time the barn blew off the foundation. The old stones had deteriorated, so Keith Warne built a new foundation, and set the barn on it. It is still in good condition.

The road is lost for a ways here, but likely crossed over the mill race and curved around to the east at the base of a high bluff. Oldtimers say there was a small cemetery on top of the bluff. It is said that Dr. McNaughton dropped the stones into a cistern.

We picked up the road again as it went east toward Rossville. Then Don stopped, and pointing to the north and east, said there was an outcropping of coal in that area. The neighbors had helped themselves to it.

Ahead of us was the river; it has been straightened, and now is about a quarter of a mile east of where the mill stood.



VILLISCA ROLLER MILLS

5 April 1883; *Review*: OUR NEW MILL! - Villisca is just on the eve of a boom which, if a successful one will put us on a solid business foundation. To make it a grand success every citizen must contribute his share. The new mill projectors only ask a bonus of \$500 and this ought to be raised within a half a day, if our merchants will look on the right side of the question. Now just a few words to the business men. Do you realize that a new flouring mill will directly benefit at least two-thirds of your patrons? Do you feel that your patrons' interest should be your own? And do you know that those patrons are watching keenly your action in this matter? Think over such questions as these and when the paper is presented to you this afternoon, open your pocket books and give as becomes a man of enterprise and public spirit. Our neighboring towns are taking some interest in the out come of this scheme and a failure must not occur.

27 September 1883; *Review*: On Friday last Mr. Hallam finished his mill dam. He says it is the best made dam in southern Iowa. It is constructed of brush rock and heavy timbers, and is as tight as a drum head, not leaking a drop. Everything is now in readiness for the machinery which will arrive in a few days.

11 October 1883; *Review*: A sudden freshet in the river last week swept out some of the frame work of the sluice way of the new mill dam, causing damage of from \$500 to \$700. Mr. Hallam thinks this will not delay the opening of the mill for business beyond the time fixed upon.

19 October 1883; DB 19:4: Amos P. West to F.L. Hallam and T.A. Richey...\$500...Lot 1 of sub division of Lot 1 of the SENE section 27 T71 R36...containing three and one-eighth acres...And the privilege is hereby granted to said Hallam & Richey...to build a dam across the river on the east of said lot and to use the east bank of the river to construct or repair the same...

3 January 1884; *Review*: BRING ON YOUR GRIST - After many and tedious delays arising from a variety of causes, the new Flour Mill of Hallam & Richie situated at the east side of town was started in full operation on Christmas day and on the day following the first wheat was ground. A visit to the mill elicited a few facts which will interest the public generally and the farmers especially.

The dimensions of the mill are: 36x44, with three stories and basement. It is strongly built and will be underpinned with a stone wall next spring. The walls will also be filled in with brick laid in cement. The arrangement and machinery of the interior are of the latest and most approved style. There are eight pair of rolls and two runs of buhr stones and eleven bolting reels one of them a centrifugal reel, and with all the piping, elevators, belting, etc., was furnished by Nordyke & Newman, of Indianapolis and put in place under the management of their millwright, Mr.

Ballinger. So accurately and carefully was the work done that when the power was turned on every piece of intricate machinery took up the motion as neatly as clock work and has been running smoothly every day since without the slightest alteration or repair. The daily capacity is 100 barrels of flour. The mill is about 200 feet west of the dam and the power is taken from a turbine wheel by means of a wire cable which runs a line shaft in the basement. This unique plan of furnishing water power to a mill is prevalent in Kansas and Nebraska and has many advantages over the old style of building the mill directly above the sluice way where a good foundation is almost impossible. The cable plan is used for the first time in Southern Iowa, at the Villisca Mill. The managers, Messrs. Hallum & Ritchie are experienced mill men, and will take extra pains with their custom work of which they expect a large amount. Mr. Hallam has not been out of the milling business for 20 years and his reputation as a miller in Nebraska, also at Milford, this county, is first class. The firm has put already over \$16,000 in the business here and intend to stand "at the top" for good flour and entire satisfaction to their patrons. Bring on the grists.

18 September 1884; *Review*: During the storm last Monday p.m. the Roller Mills east of town was struck by lightning. It did considerable damage and started a small fire.

16 June 1885; *Sun*; Villisca: The proprietors of our roller flouring mill are contemplating extensive improvements. The present building is to be enlarged by the addition of two wings and new and extra machinery is to be added. The mill is now run to its utmost capacity. Five hands are constantly employed. Messrs. Hallam & Ritchie are deserving of the success they have attained.

16 July 1885; *Review*: John Burris, miller at Villisca mill...

4 September 1885; *Sun*; Villisca: ...The water rose five feet in 20 minutes at the mill on the east side of town, and stood 18 inches deep on the floor in the mill. By lively work all the belting and some of the flour was carried up-stairs before the flood came, but it caught about \$900 worth of grain, etc. The mill was surrounded by the flood so suddenly that a team standing at the door hardly had time to reach safer ground.

1 December 1887; *Review*: The Villisca Mill commenced yesterday running by steam power. Water or steam as the case may be will be used hereafter.

5 April 1889; DB 20:43: Sheriff's Deed to T.A. Richey...property was sold 24 March 1888 at public auction, to John C. Duser for \$2006.34...and afterwards on the 26th day of March 1889 John C. Duser...assigned all his right title and interest to T.A. Richey...undivided one half etc.

Montgomery County, Iowa; 1889; by A.B. Shaw; Corning, Iowa; page 47: Villisca Roller Mills - The Villisca Roller Flour Mills, T.A. Ritchie, prop. It is arranged for either steam or water power, is equipped with the latest and most approved flour making machinery, and being conducted by an experienced miller, is doing a most

successful business, drawing its trade from the four counties. It has a capacity of 75 barrels per day and consumed 55,000 bushels of wheat, chiefly native grown, in 1888, showing that this valley will grow bread as well as blue grass.

23 October 1891; *Sun*; Villisca: T.A. Richey is putting a new flume in his mill dam.

28 December 1898; *Review*: The Richey Mills is receiving great improvements this week. The first story, where the wheat receives the milling, is being given a veneering of brick, and pipes are being laid for use in steam heating. With the additional heat furnished by these improvements, the mill promises to get out a superior grade of flour in the coldest weather.

12 January 1899; *Review*: T.A. Richey, proprietor of the Villisca Flouring Mills, recently took his brother Will Richey into partnership with him. At the same time extensive improvements are being made in the machinery...

12 January 1899; DB 26:584: Thomas A. Richey to William C. Richey...\$2800... undivided one half etc...

16 March 1899; *Review*: The Richey Mills started today turning out flour after a vacation of three weeks. During that time the machinery has been overhauled and renewed and an entire new bolting system, the Pansifter, put in. The flour capacity is doubled. The time tried brands, "Rising Sun" and "Our Pride" will be continued, and in addition a new brand, "The Peace Maker", a full patent flour that will stand up with the finest foreign brands, will be made.

20 February 1902; DB 31:456: T.A. Richey (The said T.A. Richey and William C. Richey being the only members of the firm of Richey Brothers) of Boulder, Colo... to T.O. Davis...\$3750...undivided half interest in the Sub Lot 1 of Lot 1 of SENE sec. 27...except portion conveyed to CB&Q railroad...

26 June 1902; DB 20:535: From C.N. Stoddard to Richey & Davis...Lots 603 and 604, Villisca...

20 August 1902; *Review*: The Villisca mills are running all the time. It will be necessary to shut down a short time while moving our mill into the city but we will have plenty of flour ground to supply our trade while the move is being made.

RICHEY & DAVIS

20 August 1902; *Review*: The Villisca Electric Co. has closed a contract with Richey & Davis to furnish power for their mill for a period of ten years.

19 November 1902; *Review*: Richey & Davis now have their mill located just north of the freight depot. They are running their machinery by power furnished by the Electric Company, and everything is running along just like clock work.

17 December 1902; *Review*: RICHEY & DAVIS - Their mill is now located in the city...

one of the most necessary requirements for every housekeeper who is making arrangements to prepare a big Christmas dinner is flour, because upon it depends the quality of your meal. And it is a sure thing that if you get "Our Pride," "Peace Maker," or "Rising Sun," made by Richey & Davis, your dinner will be a good one...

27 January 1933; *Review: Flour & Feed Mill Burns*; Loss Estimated at \$10,000 - The Villisca mill, one of the oldest business institutions in the city and a land mark here since 1881 when it was built, was totally destroyed by fire Friday morning. The blaze is believed to have started from a spark from one of the early morning trains.

The Villisca mill was constructed in 1881 by Thomas Hallam on a site on the west bank of the Middle Nodaway river a short distance north of the rail road bridge and a new dam was built across the river to supply power for it. Mr. Hallam's son Alex...and Billie Richey...cut all timber for the dam and helped with construction of the mill which was built unusually well and of heavy timber.

At that time Thomas Hallam was operating a mill at Grant, then known as Milford, which he leased for \$150 a month and ran at a good profit. Villisca was without a mill...and Mr. Hallam decided to establish one here to take care of the large amount of milling business in this vicinity which he had been drawing to his mill at Grant.

The mill was completed and in operation in 1882 and, according to Alec Hallam, ran on a day and night schedule for seven days a week to take care of the business. Mr. Hallam then sold a half interest in the mill to T.A. Richey...Following Mr. Hallam's death a few years later, Mr. Richey became sole owner of the mill, and he continued to own either an interest or part interest in the establishment until ...he sold it to Mrs. Tyler.

In the year 1888 the mill, with a capacity of 75 barrels a day, milled 55,000 bushels of wheat, chiefly native grown. At that time it was equipped for either steam or water power but continued to operate by the latter most of the time.

In 1902, at the instigation of the Villisca Community Club and the officials of the electric light plant, the mill was moved from its site on the river bank to the location which it has occupied since. It was transformed into an electrically operated plant and was other wise renovated to correspond with the new, faster moving era. The work of moving the heavily constructed building from the river to the site near the business district was accomplished without harm to the building.