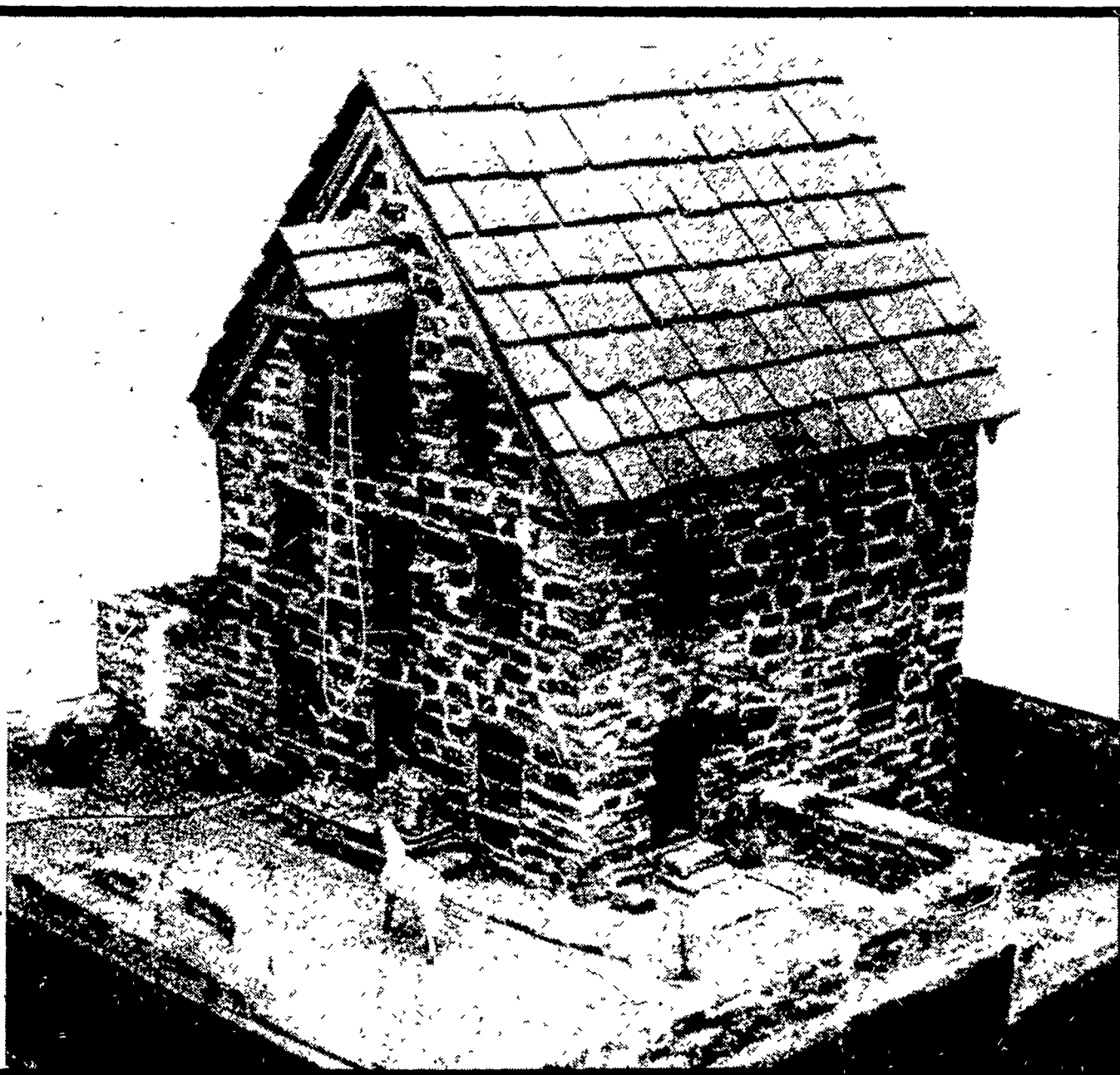


This replica of the original Eshelman Mill was built by a "Red Rose Feeds" customer in Ohio, and is on display at the Red Rose Feed Store in Quarryville.



Replica at Quarryville feed store

Old Eshelman mill of historical value

By DIETER KRIEG

LANCASTER — An old stone building which was used for the manufacturing of guns in the late 1700's and a half century later was turned into the first John W. Eshelman Mill, has been described as being of "outstanding historical significance for Lancaster County." According to a study done by the Lancaster County Planning Commission, the site and structure are worthy of highest priority for restoration and preservation. Efforts are consequently being considered to keep the presently badly deteriorated structure from going into ruins entirely.

Lancaster County Central Park, which adjoins the old Eshelman property, may consider annexation of the historical grounds and a fund of \$25,000 has already been established to help with incurred costs. The money will be made available by the Redevelopment Authority of Lancaster County, and has been earmarked for purchase of the site and basic rehabilitative work. A firm proposal on the matter has not been made yet, however.

The old stone building was reportedly in use as the William Henry Gun Factory in the late 1700's. The structure itself is believed to date back to the 1780's. John W. Eshelman began his milling business in the stone structure in 1842, an enterprise which later spread to the Midwest and as far

south as Georgia. The trademark was the red rose and the name, of course, Red Rose Feeds.

Although the old mill is all but forgotten today, its historical significance was known to a few people for decades already. One such individual is an Ohioan whose name has been forgotten but whose contribution to local history is displayed in the Red Rose Feed Store, Quarryville.

There, for all to see, is a replica of the old mill, complete with tiny electric lights, hinged doors, a working water wheel, and realistically looking millers. Built of stone, slate, wood, and plaster, the replica has been on display here for a little over a year. The Quarryville feed business received it from an Eshelman mill in York County when it changed ownership. All of Eshelman's mills, incidentally, were purchased by the Carnation Company in 1974.

Although the old replica was damaged somewhat and in need of a thorough cleaning, the management at the Quarryville store recognized the historical significance of both the model and the original site and went to work on the replica.

According to Jack Eshelman, a great grandson of the milling business' founder, the replica in Quarryville is not exact, but "it is well done." He estimates it was made in the

late 1930's. The occasion, he believes was probably the 100th anniversary of the company. An Ohio customer made it, he told Lancaster Farming.

Lancaster County's historical organizations and interested individuals claim there's a need to restore the original property. The purpose, they explain, is to

provide the community with an example of what water power was used for a century or two ago and how it was used to produce rifle barrels and feed.

To get the restoration project underway, the Lancaster County Planning Commission will need sponsoring businesses or organizations.



Located on the banks of the Conestoga Creek, southeast of Lancaster, the old Eshelman Mill is gaining attention from the public because of its historical significance. The structure dates back to

about 1780, although John W. Eshelman didn't begin manufacturing his famous "Red Rose Feeds" there until 1842.