22 Clinton Street The Quaker Shoe Factory Milford, New Hampshire



On the Burleigh birds eye map of Milford from 1886, this South side of Clinton St. shows just a small strip of unused land between the street and the railroad:

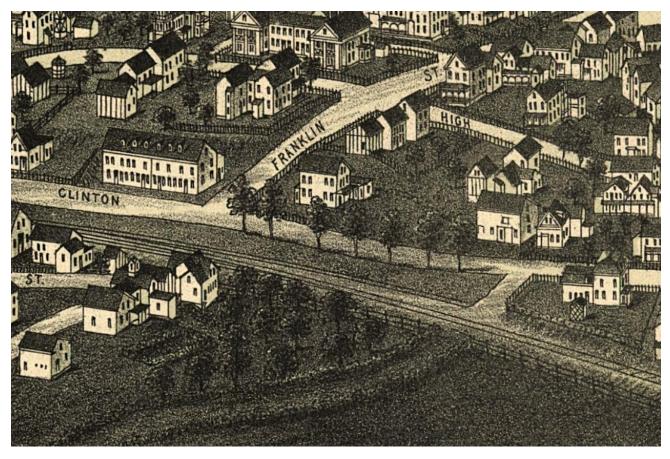


Figure 1 - 1886 Burleigh birds eye map of Milford shows a vacant lot at today's 22 Clinton St.

The McLane Manufacturing Company which manufactured post office furniture had its primary factory on Nashua St. to the West of Clinton St and was located where Cumberland Farms is today. Sometime between 1886 and 1892, the McLane company built a storage building on the property that today houses the building at 22 Clinton St. This storehouse can be seen on the 1892 map of Milford in figure 2 on the next page.

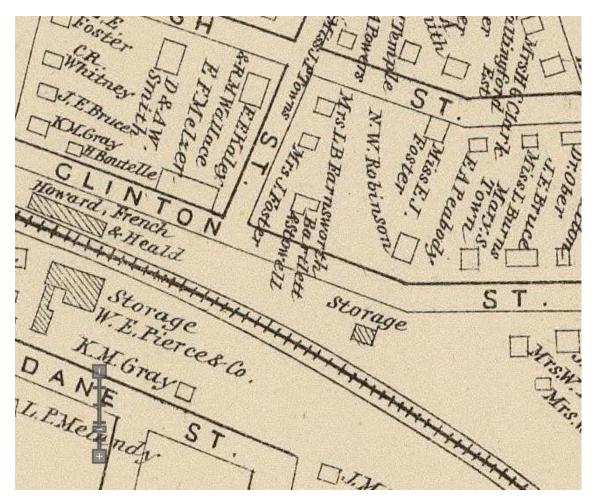


Figure 2- 1892 map shows storage building near the corner on Clinton St.

The Quaker Shoe Company got its start in the town of Weare, NH in the mid 1850's. They were producers of quality women's shoes and sold their shoes directly to area retailers. Around 1910, the owner of the Quaker Shoe Company retired from business and sold his establishment to three young men, Warren Tucker, A.C. Sibley, and Harry Holbrook. Mr. Tucker was a well-established shoe salesman, Mr. Sibley a manufacturing expert, and Mr. Holbrook a young and charismatic insurance agent and businessman from Manchester. With this new team of owners, the ladies shoe business in Weare started to really take off for these men. Business grew to the point that their operation in Weare could no longer support their business, so they looked to move it someplace where they could build a larger factory and to a town that could provide more workers.

The businessmen went to the Milford board of trade and proposed the people of Milford loan them no more than \$15,000 (\$385K equivalent in 2020) to build a suitable factory in Milford and move their operation to town. The agreement was made and residents of Milford were invited to invest at \$100 (\$2,500 equivalent in 2020) per person/family to raise the funds. The Souhegan National Bank would be the coordinator of the financials and \$100 investments started coming in in July of 1912.

By August 22, 1912, the required money had been raised to move forward with the construction of the company's new manufacturing facility. They had selected the location on Clinton Street as a centralized location and had the benefit of being next to the railroad.

QUAKER SHOE COMPANY COME TO MILFORD

Agreement Reached Between Board of Trade and Shoe Manufacturers, and Factory Will Be Built At Once Between Clinton Street and the Railroad. Company Que of the Best in the Business.

Figure 3 - Milford Cabinet July 25, 1912

George Theobald of Concord, NH was hired at this time to physically move the existing McLane Storehouse building off of the lot to make room for the new factory. The old storehouse building was moved to the property directly to the West along Clinton St. Although having been somewhat enlarged over the years, the storehouse building still sits next door at today's 30 Clinton St. The building was moved in late August and early September of 1912.

The firm of E.W. Whitman & Co. of Lowell, MA was awarded the contract to build the new Clinton St. factory building in Milford. They had men ready to begin construction just as soon as the storehouse was cleared of the lot. The goal was to get the building done before Winter and available to support the manufacture and sales of shoes for the spring rush.

MONEY ALL RAISED.

\$15,000 Loan for Quaker Shoe Company is Pledged, Contract for Factory Let and Work to Begin at Once.

Figure 4 - Milford Cabinet August 22, 1912.

-Clinton street has undergone one of the most radical changes in appearance in a short space of time of any street in town. The building which was moved now stands squarely in front of the Clinton house, and seems to loom up in the air more than ever. It is stated it will be used for a storehouse by a merchant in town. The building sets well out to the street, much more than it formerly did, and this with the fact that the Quaker Shoe building will be in line, will give the street at this particular point a somewhat narrow appearance. In a short time all of French & Heald's lumber will be removed, but this space will now be used for lumber by the McLane company, so that it is bound to be one of the busy industrial streets of the town.

Figure 5 - Clinton St. changes - Milford Cabinet Sept. 19, 1912 By December of 1912, the new Quaker Shoe factory building was complete and the Milford board of trade, the owners, and the citizens of Milford were very proud of the new facility. The board of trade hosted a large banquet on December 27, 1912 at both the new Quaker shoe factory and the new French & Heald furniture factory. The French & Heald plant was located just a stone's throw away on the lot that today houses Ledgewood plaza (County Stores).

The shoe factory was promoted as "not one of the enormous shoe factories, employing hundreds of foreigners to shove cheap leather and paper into one end of a machine and carry away cheap shoes from the other". Rather, it will be "A plant where skilled employees make good, old line shoes".

The top floor of the building was setup for the cutting and stitching of the "uppers" portion of the shoes. The 'uppers' are the portion of the shoe above the sole. The ground level floor of the building was setup for the attachment of the shoe soles to

the uppers. At that time, they already had employed 35 workers with the goal of hiring many more people to fill the new factory's capacity. By February of 1913, they had employed 50 and were producing 350 pairs of shoes per day.

Unfortunately, the hopes and dreams of the owners, the board of trade, and the citizens of Milford never really panned out. 11 months later in November of 1913 they had employed over 60 people, many of which were the initial investors in the firm from the year prior. the company was behind on its payments on the original \$15,000 loan and the board of trade was trying to re-coup it's and the townspeople's investment. In May of 1914, just a year and a half after their greatly anticipated move to Milford into their new factory, the owners of the Quaker Shoe Company leased their business and factory to William F. Plant, his son Thomas C. Plant, and a Mr. McLeod. These new business owners were in the shoe business in and around the Boston area and were reported to have plenty of capital to back them up.

The Milford Cabinet does not report a primary reason for the failure of the Quaker shoe company after just 18 months. Many reports point to immediate troubles as the owner's had very limited capital. Other reports point to a lack of experienced workers in their plant. Milford was not a 'shoe' town and the experienced shoemakers of the cities of the time were not willing to relocate to Milford.

SALE OF SHOE SHOP.

Business and Plant of the Quaker Shoe Company Changes Hands. New Owners Are Experienced Manufacturers.

For some weeks a trade has been template operating it along pro-in process of consumation comprising gressive lines are William F. Plant parties in or near Boston. the business is now in new hands and under new management.

The Quaker Shoe Co. came here from Weare, N. H., about two years ago and a modefn, and up-to-date plant was built them by the citizens This plant was well of Milford. equipped for doing a large business For reasons not made public, the was not conducted along business successful lines, one of these reasons it is intimated was insufficient capital A few months ago the company practically suspended the manufac ture of shoes and have since been trying to adjust their difficulties for the heat interests of all concerned The ownership of the real estate was not affected by the difficulties of the Quaker Shoe Co., as its title was vested in ownership of the trustees and stockholders who erected the plant for the use of the company.

over the whole business and com-

the sale of the Quaker Shoe Co. of Newton, Mass., formerly connectplant and business here in Milford to ed with the Queen Quality Shoe Co. This of Roxbury, Mass. Thomas C Plant, trade was clinched on Monday and a son, will be treasurer, and a Mr. McLeod, will be general manager. These young men have the backing of plenty of capital and what is of equal value the advantage of long experience of men in the business to fall back upon.

Deeds have been passed conveying the property to the new company and they are adjusting matters preparatory to starting up the plant as soon as the plans are adjusted. They will continue the manufacture of the Quaker Shoes and will add several other lines of ladies shoes.

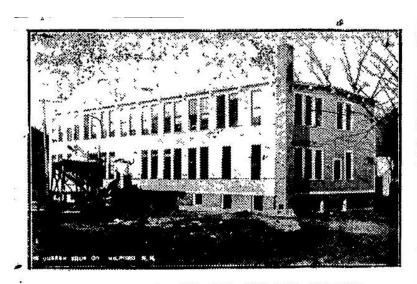
This is the off sesson in the shoe manufacturing business. Fall sam ples are now upon the market and they hope by July first to begin making samples for the spring trade of 1915.

Messrs. Plant and McLeod expect to make Milford their home and a new activity in the shoe business is looked The new owners who have taken for which promises well for Milford.

Figure 6- Milford Cabinet May 21, 1914.

Timing couldn't have been worse for the Plants or the factory on Clinton Street. Though they had every intent of operating the plant in Milford, with the coming of WWI, the Plants were never able to get the factory fully back to operations. There was the possibility of manufacturing soldier's shoes for the war effort, but the equipment housed in the factory was primarily built for the manufacture of women's shoes. By mid-1915, the Plants had more or less abandoned any hope of shoe manufacture in Milford and had leased a building in Manchester to carry on their business.

For the most part, shoe manufacture operations in this building ceased in mid-1914 with the original owners. The Plants had great plans, but they never worked out. The building sat unused for almost 4 years until April of 1918 when The Consolidated Manufacturing Company of Boston leased the building to support the manufacture of women's garments but largely in the manufacture of Army uniforms to support the war effort. The new operation was to be called the Milford Consolidated Company.



RUSH WORK AT SHOE SHOP.

Quaker Plant Being Put Into Condition for Immediate Opening of New Industry. Expected War Goods Will Be Made.

cleaning up the top floor of the Quaker shoe shop and new machinery will be installed and the plant started up within a few days.

The lease of the plant was arranged at noon last Thursday and announced in the paper that afternoon.

The new concern will operate here as the Milford Consolidated company, May 1. It is their intention to employ and will be a subsidiary of the Consolidated Manufacturing company of Boston. The management of the Milford shop will be the same as that of the M. & C. Skirt company of Boston.

In addition to the manufacture of women's garments it is understood company that the Milford factory will be used

A crew of workmen have started | largely in the manufacture of army uniforms, filling some big war orders which the company has taken, and on which it is operating several factories about New England.

> Machinery arrived vesterday by express and is being set up today. More machines will follow, and the concern expects to be producing goods by about 100 hands. The girls will be on piece work after they learn to operate the power machines, which takes two to four weks.

> The concern has leased the plant for a term of years from the Quaker shoe

Figure 7 - Milford Cabinet April 11, 1918

NEW FACTORY NOW BUSY PLACE.

Guns have breeches and men have 'em. The combination is making brisk business for the new plant of the Milford Consolidated company, in the Quaker Shoe building, where 65 hands are now employed, mostly girls and more are coming in this week The concern expects to have work for about 100 this summer.

The breeches for the men are being made for the Quartermaster's department of the army. Army pants are They are put out not tailored to fit. in stock sizes, like automobile tires or umbrellas. They are cut by electricity and stitched and finished on power machines which the girls quickly learn and operate with surprising rapidity The quartermaster's department keeps an inspector on the job, Mr. Hughes, who sees that Uncle Sam gets the proper cloth and workmanship in the pants for his troops.

Breeches on the guns have to have covers, which are not unlike those for the men Breech covers for guns are made for the ordnance department, and the Milford factory is cutting and sewing these garments for the cannon under the supervision of another government inspector, C W Lyness, who is attached to the ordnance departand has leased a house in town where he will establish his family

Straps, buckles and other articles of equipment are also being made for the ordnance department and the shop on Clinton street, 41s a busy place. Superintendent Ozmansky now has the new machinery in and the place is running smoothly and turning out a large amount of goods.

Figure 8 - Milford Cabinet June 20, 1918

50 IRLS WANTED! GOOD PAY GOVERNMENT WORK The Milford Consolidated Company wants immediately fifty more girls as stitchers on power machines and for other work. The employment is interesting and profitable. Wages are high. While learning guaranteed wages of from \$9.00 to \$18.00 will be paid according to stitching or other factory experience. New machinery in new, clean, light, sanitary factory. Girls from other towns will find desirable board and crooms at reasonable rates. Besides earning good pay you will, if you work in the Milford Consolidated factory, be employed on manufacture of supplies for Uncle Sam's fighters and thereby doing much to help win this war. It is a job you can be proud of. . Apply personally or by letter at office. Milford Consolidated Compan MILFORD, N. H

Figure 9 - Milford Cabinet August 22, 1918

By November 1918 issues began to appear with the finances of the Milford Consolidated Company. Reports of lawsuits by the employees over the company missing payroll began to be reported. It was also in November of 1918 that World War I ended which was probably the driving force behind the demise of the Milford Consolidated Company at the factory on Clinton St.

With the end of the war, the factory building saw another period of vacancy until July of 1922 when the Canton Manufacturing Co. of Boston leased the building with the intent of manufacturing men's clothing and securing employment for 100 people. Just a couple of months later Canton Manufacturing was bought by Brattleboro Manufacturing Co. of Keene, NH and planned to manufacture aprons and pants at their leased building. By January of 1923, Brattleboro Manufacturing had closed the doors on the factory and moved all of their equipment to their plant in Keene. They stated the high overhead cost of operating two plants was their reason for abandoning their Milford operations.

In January of 1924, the 11-year old factory building was purchased by the Wolf Waist Company. The Wolf Waist Company was run by the Wolf family. Over the years they had offices and warehouses in New York, Milford, and Lowell, MA. In early 1924, their Milford operation was on the second floor of a building on Garden St. In early April of that year, a fire destroyed the building on Garden St. that also housed an automobile garage on the 1st floor. Though the Wolf company was well insured, this must have been a setback for them. There is very little mention of the Wolf Company between 1925 and 1933. It appears that at some point operations at their newly purchased building on Clinton St. came to a halt. With the great depression that began in 1929 and lasted until 1933, this may have been a contributing factor in the Wolf's temporary manufacturing hiatus. The building on Clinton St. wasn't used again until early 1933.

In April of 1933, Morris Wolf and his partner, Mr. Aronow accompanied by a large number of moving trucks, moved themselves and their clothing manufacturing equipment out of their New York City factory and into the building on Clinton St. At that time, although owned by the Wolf's, the building had been sitting vacant for a number of years. The doors were gone, the windows no longer contained any glass, and the elevator was out of commission. They spent a number of weeks getting the building back into shape and even had a cement floor poured in the previously dirt-floored basement. Though they struggled for a couple of years to make a profit, they continued to work hard and by 1935 had 40 people working in the factory making knitted sweaters, caps, baby clothing, and Angora sweaters.

MILFORD, N. H., THURSDAY, MAY 9, 1935.

WOLF FACTORY HAS MANY ORDERS.

Milford Plant Assured Plenty of Work in 1935, With Enough Orders Booked to Run to December. Factory Started Ten Yéars Ago. Many Difficulties Have Been Overcome in Knit Goods Manufacture. Now Employing 40.

Figure 10 - Milford Cabinet May 9, 1935.

The Wolf Company continued to manufacture clothing at the Clinton St. factory until sometime in 1936. At that time their business was very successfull and they had outgrown the building. They moved all of their Milford operations to their much larger plant in Lowell, MA that they had acquired years earlier. Again, the building sat unused for a few more years until 1939.

Arthur E. Dunn of both Whitman, MA. and Greenfield, NH leased the building in December of 1939 to start a carpet and rug manufacturing business in Milford. Mr. Dunn had long been in the carpet business at other enterprises. At this time, the Milford Civic Club took on the task of doing some window and plumbing repairs to the building. They also assisted Mr. Dunn in finding operators to help establish the carpet making industry in Milford. For about 4

Wolf Plant and Freezer Company Resume Operations in Milford Soon

Wolf Plant Leased to A.E. Dunn, Who Will Make Carpets and Rugs; White Mountain Stave Mill Starts Next Week After Long Shut-Down

Figure 11 - Milford Cabinet December 7, 1939

years, from the start of 1940 through the end of 1943, Mr. Dunn ran a successful business here known as the Monadnock Carpet Company. The larger carpet mills of the big cities concentrated on the manufacture of large wall-to-wall style carpeting at this time. The Monadnock Carpet Co. instead focused on narrow width carpets and small carpets of the Axminster style. These were products in great demand in New York City and their hotels were large consumers of this product. The narrow width carpets were largely used in hallways and stairs. By June of 1940, the company's 20 employees were putting out 5,000 yards per week on large spools that were shipped via truck and train to distributors in New York, Chicago, and all over the country.

In January of 1944, Edward Goldenberg, head of Vernon Rug Mills of New York City purchased the Monadnock Carpet business and Milford plant from Arthur Dunn. It looks like the Vernon Rug Mills Co. was attempting to enlarge their business as they already had a plant that manufactured similar narrow rugs in Philadelphia, PA.

New York Men Buy Monadnock Carpet Factory

Purchase Clinton St. Plant January 1.
A. E. Dunn Has Operated Successful Rug and Carpet Mill Since 1939. New Owners Have Mills in Philadelphia and Taunton

Figure 12 - Milford Cabinet December 30, 1943

The Monadnock Carpet Company continued to do well and manufacture thousands of yards of carpet in their Milford factory for many years. When they purchased the building, they also purchased the building just West that was the original McLane Storeroom that was moved to this location 32 year earlier. Their plan was to utilize both buildings for their manufacturing processes. In 1946, the company offered free life and health insurance as well as a week of paid vacation time. In January of 1947, they raised all employee's wages by 15%.

It appears however that prosperity for the workers of the Monadnock Carpet company was short lived. In 1948 business slowed down drastically and at times, workers were sent home due to lack of work. It appears the buildings on Clinton Street were sold in October of 1949.

The Williams & Hussey tool company got its start in Milford on the road to Wilton in 1939 as a machine shop with a garage and service station. In October of 1949, Williams & Hussey purchased

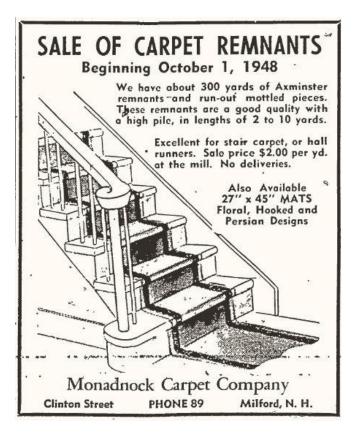
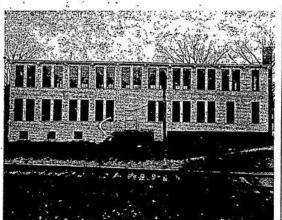


Figure 13 - Milford Cabinet September 30, 1948

the O.K. Tool Company out of Shelton, CT. O.K. Tool had been in operation at that time for 50 years and was the world's largest manufacturer of inserted blade metal cutting tools. In January of 1950, the decision was made to

WILLIAMS & HUSSEY EXPANDING TO CLINTON STREET BUILDING IN MILFORD



This is the building on Clinton street, Milford, which the Williams & Hussey Machine company will occupy. Another smaller building is not shown in this picture.

Fifty Jobs Saved, May Hire More As Result of Move

Because its Elm-street plant a much too small for its expanding machine tool operations, the Williams and Hussey Machine company has leased, on a long term basis, the industrial property or Clinton street, Milford, known as the Monadnock Carpet factory.

the Monadnock Carpet factory.
With some 16,000 square feet of floor space, the three story main building and an adjoining two-story storage building will house the company's special machinery business, contract gear work, long run sub-assemblies and miscellaneous tool work. The Star Brass and Gauge Tester division will also be in the newly acquired building.

ing.
The O. K. Tool company, which williams and Hussey purchased in Shelton, Conn., last winter and moved here, now is filling to capacity both big buildings on the wilton road.

"We either had to give up some work, or find additional space," move the operation of the O.K.

Tool Company to Milford. With the addition of the OK Tool division to their buildings on the Wilton Road, Williams & Hussey soon outgrew their space and in October of 1950, they leased the Monadnock Carpet building on Clinton St. and the smaller former storehouse building to the West to expand their operations. The main building on Clinton St. served both the operations of Williams & Hussey and OK Took companies for 11 vears. In November of 1961 in an attempt to consolidate some of their operations, Williams & Hussey decided to abandon the former carpet mill and move all of the

Figure 14 - Milford Cabinet October 26, 1950.

operations from this building into the smaller former storehouse building to the West. They planned to either lease or sell the larger factory building.

In July of 1962, Hitchiner Manufacturing of West Milford moved some of their tool & die operations temporarily into the Clinton St. building until their new building is completed.

1967 shows the building still owned by the OK Tool Company. One of their affiliated companies, the American Ceramic Tool Company of Hingham MA., was moved to the Clinton St. plant in 1967.

In April of 1969, the A. F. Walker and Son woodworking company of New Ipswich purchased the Clinton St. building from Williams & Hussey, ending their 19-year ownership of the building. The Walker company planned to open up shop by July of 1969 to complement their operations in New Ipswich.

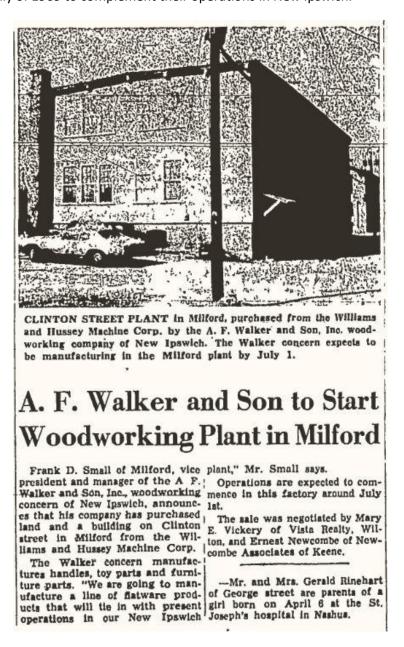


Figure 15 - Milford Cabinet April 17, 1969

In March of 1972, the A.F. Walker & Son company sold the building to Wesley H. Durant of Osterville, MA. It was in 1972 that the building on Clinton St which was now 60 years old returned to some of its early roots with the manufacture of clothing. The Clinton Manufacturing Company called the building home from 1972 until 1987. The ownership of the building during these 15 years started with Wesley Durant, then "Michael Jaye Sportswear" in 1975, then "Cape Cod – Cricket Lane Casuals" in 1984. Through the different company names that owned the building, it appears that the local business remained the Clinton Manufacturing Company straight through to 1987.



Figure 16 - Milford Cabinet March 1, 1979.

Women's Slack Manufacturer needs

Merrow Machine Operators

General Help • Pressers

7:00-3:30 Excellent Benefits

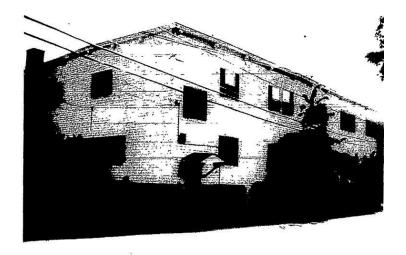
Apply at:

CLINTON MANUFACTURING

Clinton Street, Milford

673-8358

Figure 17 - Milford Cabinet - November 13, 1985.



THE HOME of the Clinton Manufacturing Company on Clinton Street in Milford for the last 15 years is now a warehouse for Electronic Surplus Service, Inc. Clinton Manufacturing Company made women's slacks for Cape

Cod-Cricket Lane, Inc. A company spokesman said reorganization, consolidation and technological changes led to the closing of the Milford factory. Joan Ferrari photo

Clinton Manufacturing Co. closes and sells building

Figure 18- Milford Cabinet June 3, 1987

With the Clinton Manufacturing Co. out of business after 15 years, the building was then purchased by Bam Tulley, Marc DeMontigny, and George Desmaris for their business, "Electronics Surplus Warehouse". They used the building as a warehouse for their electronic components.

In July of 1989, Electronics Surplus sold the building to "C Street Realty". From July of 1989 until July of 1999, the building was owned by C Street Realty and Moadnock Forest Products. In 1989 and 1990, the building hosted "The Milford White Elephant & Antique Co-op.

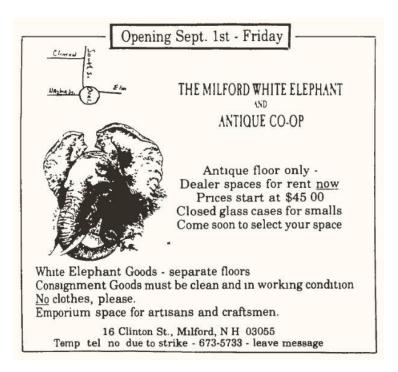


Figure 16 - Milford Cabinet August 16, 1989.



Figure 17 - Milford Cabinet - March 21, 1990.

There does not appear to be a lot of evidence of the operations here in this building between 1992 and 1999 when it was owned by Monadnock Forest Products.

For a number of years and as early as 1993, Gerald T. Williams owned and operated D.A.D.S., which stood for Discount Archers Depot Supply at the Granite Town plaza on Elm Street in Milford. In July of 1999, Williams purchased the building at what was now 22 Clinton Street. (For the building's entire history, it had been known as 16 Clinton St. The town of Milford renumbered buildings in 1990 to make it easier for emergency responders to find homes and buildings in Milford related to the new 911 systems). Williams moved his D.A.D.S. business into the building a few years later in the early 2000's and operated there for a number of years.

The building was purchased in July of 2018 by its current owner, Cindy Rutledge of Milford Market LLC. Cindy operates The Milford Market – Antiques and Vintage Decor as of this writing in June of 2020.

The Milford Historical Society published a Facebook post in June of 2020 inquiring about people's memories of the building. Here are some of the posts:





If the walls at 22 Clinton St. could talk, a more detailed picture of the many workers that came here to work every day and the products that were manufactured by the many businesses that called it home.





Information compiled by Milford NH Historical Society, June 2020. References used:

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- Town of Milford, NH Vision online database http://gis.vgsi.com/MilfordNH/Search.asp