



**SHOWS HIS WARES** — J. Howard Brown is shown above displaying a container of his milk last summer during a tour of the city plant by school children. Brown is turning over the business to Homestead Dairies of Massena. (Staff Photo)

## Brown's Dairy Saw Lifetime Of Changes

BY TERRY KOCH

The change from horse-drawn wagons to milk trucks was only the beginning. After that came refrigeration, pasteurization, and the advent of supermarkets, to name just a few.

When J. Howard Brown officially turns Brown's Dairy of Ogdensburg over to Homestead Dairies of Massena, he will be wrapping up a career that has seen every imaginable change in the milk processing and delivery business. Brown has overseen the family-sized, home-based dairy business most of his adult life, and worked in it even before then, when his father Daniel ran the firm.

Brown's Dairy will come to an end after 59 years of operation. The business began when Brown's father and his uncle Edgar took over a small dairy at Gates and Ford streets. Edgar ran the dairy in town at first, and Dan operated the farm that supplied the milk—75 quarts a day at first.

Eventually those roles were reversed, and J. Howard moved to town when he was 6 years old. He and his brother delivered milk by sleigh, wagon and sled, twice a day, and can still remember the dairy's horse, "George."

That horse once played a role in publicizing a movie, "The Masked Rider Rides Again," showing at Eli Rosenbaum's Hippodrome Theater. Rosenbaum's son borrowed the horse, Brown recalls, dressed up as the "masked rider," and galloped through the streets of Ogdensburg to advertise the film.

Electricity came to the rural areas, refrigeration was developed, and motorized milk delivery trucks took old George's job away.

J. Howard served in World War II and following his father's death he took over the management of the firm.

It expanded until it served not only Ogdensburg but Canton, Rensselaer Falls, Dekalb Junction, Heuvelton, Pope Mills, Edwardsville, Hammond, Chippewa Bay, Morristown and Lisbon.

Looking back, Brown believes one of the major changes in the business was pasteurization. The dairies, he remembers, resisted the mandatory move in the late 20s and early 30s, but finally agreed to make the move.

The firm sold pasteurized milk for one

week before telling its customers about it, Brown said. That first week, only "one or two" comments were received about the taste, and they were from farm-oriented people. After the announcement he said, the comments about the change of taste increased considerably.

At the same time, dairies were converting from the old glass bottles to the cardboard containers, which were lighter and made delivery easier. While the cardboard containers could not be chilled as quickly, they retained the cold for a longer time, Brown noted.

Among other changes were the conversion to homogenized milk, the addition of vitamins A and D to the product, and the addition of chocolate milk, solid dairy products and even fruit juices to the milkman's list of offerings.

But the biggest challenge, said Brown, was the advent of the supermarkets, which had the capacity to undersell their milk at times as "loss leaders." Still, said Brown, customers remained loyal to their milkman. "Part of it is tradition," he said, "and some of it is the customers' willingness to pay for the extra service."

Another challenge has been increased supervision and inspection. "I'd almost go so far as to call it the harassment we get from inspection agencies," said Brown, who noted that Brown's Dairy has always prided itself on healthy, high-quality milk. The proliferation of inspections and inspection agencies, he said, was one of the factors that led to his getting out of the business.

A change on the horizon now is constituted milk, which Brown believes will never become popular in this country, "because we have such good milk to begin with."

Brown's Dairy has operated out of a plant behind Brown's home at 907 Morris St., and until the change of hands began, employed 17 people. Most of them will be retained by Homestead, he said. While processing will not be done at the local plant, Homestead will use it for a refrigeration and distribution point. The Massena firm, he said, will also continue to buy its milk from local farmers, as Brown did.

Asked if he enjoyed working in the dairy business, Brown said "very much. It's been a daily challenge."

## Business In City Stable During Year

The business climate in Ogdensburg during 1979 appeared to be very productive for several establishments while others noted a slight decrease in sales during the past year.

People in the footwear business recorded a successful year in Ogdensburg during 1979.

Helen Ladouceur, local manager of the Triangle Shoe Store located in the Mall, said that "even though it was successful I don't believe business was as good as other years in the past." She said that "new shoes and lines of footwear are always coming in," adding that "dress and sport shoes seemed to be selling at an equal rate last year."

The Triangle Shoe Store moved into its present location in the Ogdensburg Mall on April 1, 1979 from a previous location in the Seaway Shopping Center.

Paddy Milia, manager of Milia's Shoes located in the Park Plaza, said that 1979 "was a successful year in terms of dollars and cents but we did not push out the number of units of shoes that we normally do because of the weather conditions." He said that people, especially women, are turning to more of a dress-type "because more women appear to be switching from slacks to skirts and their footwear is being seen more." He went on to say that "men don't seem to go for the dress shoe anymore, they appear to want a more casual look."

In looking ahead into the remainder of 1980 Mr. Milia said, "we expect it will be one of the best years that we've ever had."

### Good Year For Clothing Stores

Clothing stores in Ogdensburg also appeared to have a productive year in 1979 as several establishments that were contacted noted an increase in sales over the previous year.

The Inside Edge, located in the Ogdensburg Mall, was the first store to move into the Mall in November 1973 and business has been fine since then. Co-owner Pat Dooling said that "we had a productive year during 1979" adding that "every year we have increased our market scope and expanded with new material." She said that people appeared to be more interested in "anything that had a long-lasting appeal, including cottons and wools."

Cindy Lashomb, co-owner of Not Just Jeans located in the Seaway Shopping Center, said that business has been good since the store's opening in October of last year. Mrs. Lashomb said that during 1980 "we hope to be able to expand our children's line of clothing and we definitely will be expanding on our tee-shirt lettering and transfer." She said that at the present time "jeans, ladies' tops, and children's clothes appear to be selling the best."

The National Army Store, located in the Seaway Shopping Center, also experienced a productive year during 1979. Manager Floyd Mack said the store "did as well in 1979 as we did in 1978 if not a little better." He said that "we're hoping business does as well, if not better, in 1980 but that will depend on the economy." Mack said the store's biggest department is clothing, also featured are footwear and sporting equipment. "Two years ago we expanded our ladies' department on a limited basis," he said, "and we intend to expand it some more this year."

The J.R. Miller store, located in the Seaway Shopping Center, experienced "one of its better years in Ogdensburg during 1979," according to local

manager Roy Remington.

Remington said sales "were higher than ever before," adding that "jeans are the big items now, as are suits and sportcoats." He said the ladies' department will see some new lines of clothing during the current year, as the store attempts to meet the requests of its customers.

Cecil Ashley, Manager of Fisher's Mens Store on Ford Street, said that saleswise 1979 was an excellent year and a lot better than 1978 was. He said that the majority of his customers appeared "to be paying more and investing in a better quality range of clothing."

### Good, Solid Year

The Hackett True Value Hardware store, Congress Street, had a "good, solid year in 1979," according to co-owner Patrick Hackett. "We are very pleased with business in 1979 and we're having the best January that we've ever had," he said.

Hackett was "optimistic about the business climate in 1980," adding that "we are considering some type of expansion." Regarding new merchandise during 1980, Hackett said "we will be putting in a new line of Ross high quality bicycles this year." He noted that the Ross bikes will be in the \$250 price range.

The consumer also expressed a deep interest in stereo equipment during 1979, which accounted for an increase in business at the Radio Shack store in the Seaway Shopping Center. Local manager Dave Sickler said that "we have been moving a lot of stereo equipment since the beginning of 1979 and scanners also appear to be selling quite well." He said he anticipated that 1980 might be the year of "computerization," adding that "computers in the home are expected to be seen in

### Sholette's Grocery A City Landmark

In serving the public since the late 1800s, Sholette's Grocery at the corner of Ford and Hamilton Streets, has appeared in a variety of styles.

According to its present owner, Loren Sholette, many of the structures original fixtures can still be seen throughout the store.

The building was first owned by a city resident named Robillard. According to Sholette, Robillard sold the store to Floyd Reagan who converted the grocery store into a drugstore.

Reagan owned and operated the drugstore until 1929 when at that time he sold it to Banan Placido LaMacchia. The store reverted back to a grocery store upon its new ownership, Sholette said.

LaMacchia operated the store for 30 years and in 1959 sold the business to Peter Bouchey. Bouchey ran the grocery for six years, before selling to Sholette.

Sholette along with his wife Marie, and their four children, Loren, Carol, Brad, and Scott reside at 512 Greene St. "Sholette's Grocery Store is one of the oldest surviving businesses in the North Country," Sholette said, adding, "it's a pleasure to serve the fine people of Ogdensburg."

the very near future." "We are now ready at the retail level to sell high powered, business-type computer similar to IBM."

Sickler noted that overall in 1979 "business was good and was up over the year before."

Nate's Auto Parts, 1301 State St., also experienced a "successful year in 1979" according to owner Larry Sarkin. He said "being an auto parts store it is hard to say in what area the majority of sales came from." Sarkin said that the automotive machine shop was expanded in 1979 which allowed for more equipment to be rebuilt. "Each year," he said, "we try to add at least one new piece of equipment to our store."

### More People Eating Out

People in the area also appeared to be eating out more in 1979 as several restaurants noted an increase in business over the previous year.

Larry Sargent, who operates the Cozy Corner Restaurant on New York Avenue, said that his business was "excellent" in 1979, adding "every year business gets better." Sargent said that "because of our quality food we are starting to become well known around the county." In 1980, he said, "we will continue to add new things to our big and diversified menu."

The Abbe on the Mall Restaurant also noted an "excellent business year" in 1979 according to Tom Haines, proprietor. Haines said that his customer business "was above expectations." In 1979 a luncheon and dinner special was added to the menu, he said, with a turkey and ham buffet Sunday night which also proved to be successful.

Business at Sholette's Steak House at

Park Plaza was also up in 1979 when compared to the previous year. Greg Sholette said business "was very good last year," adding "we will be running more specials this year than last."

Barbara Mark, Manager of the Anchordown Motel and Restaurant, said business in 1979 "was very good" and "we would like to see an increase in business from the Lake Placid Olympics next month but that remains to be seen." She noted the restaurant "features a little bit of everything on the menu, with our specialty being an open steak sandwich and Italian Food."

The Gran-View Motel on Riverside Drive experienced a drop in its occupancy level during the early summer months of 1979 which manager Louis J. Williams Jr. attributed to "the energy crisis and the gasoline situation." He said the occupancy rate in June was lower than previously, and "the bulk of the loss of income came during that month and the first two weeks in July."

Williams pointed out, however, that the adjacent Gran-View Restaurant did "extremely well last year." Business in the first three months of 1979 was "way up" while during the summer months, with the low occupancy rate at the motel, business appeared to run "normal with the previous year." He went on to say that the last four months of 1979 were "excellent in terms of business."

The Gran-View, he said, will be offering a new, refined menu in the coming months ahead, "offering a few things unusual to the area." In his projections for 1980 he "is looking forward to a very good year as the community as a whole gets into an upward trend."

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## Bank Notes 'Year Of Small Saver'

The North Country Savings Bank ended the 70s on a note of strength and stability, posting record assets of \$76,893,842, deposits of \$70,271,655 and reserves of \$4,418,840; and enters the 80s with renewed enthusiasm that St. Lawrence County and the entire North Country is on the threshold of industrial expansion, increased employment and personal prosperity.

1979 may best be remembered as the year of the "small saver." Last year the popularity of the Six-Month Money Market Certificate resulted in substantial increases in this type of account at almost all banks. Beginning on Jan. 1 of this year a new account has been authorized, with a term of 2½ years and also paying higher rates.

While it is true that inflation demands a higher return for the "small saver," it must be remembered that it will be the "small borrower" who will pay, in the form of ever rising interest rates on all

types of loans.

With recent federal action preempting New York's present 10.25 percent Usury Ceiling until March 31, 1980, new mortgage borrowers are now faced with rates of 13 percent or more.

Borrowers Hurt  
In the past it has been argued that the saver subsidized the borrower by being forced to accept below market rates on their savings; now it can be argued that it is the borrower who is subsidizing the saver by being forced to pay interest rates which are, in many cases, double those of just a few years ago.

Ironically, often the saver and borrower end up being the same person. When they are doing their banking as a saver, they naturally want a high rate of return on their deposit. But, when they are doing their banking as a borrower, they are agast at the high rate they will be required to pay on their loan.

What is needed is a reasonable compromise. Savers must accept the fact there will be times when inflation will exceed the rate of interest they are earning on their savings deposits. This has been true at times in the past and will undoubtedly be true at times in the future. Borrowers, on the other hand, should not be held victim of current inflation for extended periods of time simply because they found it necessary to borrow at a time when interest rates were high.

If Congress were to phase-out interest rate control on loans over a pre-determined period of time, and if the state Legislature were to remove the artificial Usury Ceiling on loans in New York State and allow variable-rate mortgages, the result would be market rates on both savings and loans which the people could understand and accept, the bank said.

## Garns Supply Covers North

**WATERTOWN**—The Garns Supply Company, with its headquarters in Watertown, has been meeting the needs of North Country residents for more than two decades.

Garns Supply opened its first store in Watertown in 1959 on Main Street. The firm relocated to the corner of Breen and Cedar in 1972. The present manager of the Watertown Store is Greg Lafay.

The village of Potsdam was the second North Country community in which Garns Supply Store opened its doors for business.

Garns began operations in Potsdam in 1964 on Main Street and in 1971 moved to a larger building on Pine Street. Larry Robertson is the present manager of the Potsdam Garns Supply Store.

Gouverneur was the third community to have a Garns Supply Store, with the firm operating a branch there in 1966 on Main Street. In 1969, the firm moved to a new building on the Richville Road, just outside the village limits on Route 11. Janet Dusharm manages the Gouverneur Garns Supply Store.

And finally, Garns opened a fourth branch, in the city of Ogdensburg, in 1967 at the corner of Lake and Main Streets. In 1978 the firm expanded to 25 Main Street with Jim Boprey managing the store at the present time.

The owner and president of Garns Supply is Jerry Rice with Lucky Lutz acting as the firm's vice president.

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