

The Strongsville Sentinel
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OLD MILL DESTROYED BY FIRE

It was just six years ago that the Sentinel carried an article written by H. A. Sanderson paying homage to the "Old East Mill" later called "Roy's Mill." Mr. Sanderson, whose first name is Harlan, lives above Shady's store as he did when he wrote his article about the mill. This mill, operated by Joseph Harwood and owned by the Roy family was built in 1822 by J. S. Strong.

On Thursday, May 27th, children playing with matches started the fire which spelled the end of this old landmark. A 1939 car owned by Charles Corwin was also destroyed. By the time the fire department was called, it was too late to save the mill. However, there was still plenty of work as the fire was burning the hose leading to a gasoline tank containing some 200 gallons of gasoline.

The firemen are loud in their praise of a group of men who reached the scene ahead of them and were invaluable in saving that which was possible. People shudder but do not speculate as to the possible results had the tank "blown."

Construction men of the Geo. Rutherford Co. working near the scene of the fire arrived with Mr. J. Clifton, caretaker at Camp Cheerful. As the contracting company was being paid by the hour for these construction men, they willingly followed the directions of Mr. Clifton, who in turn cooperated with the fire department. Clifton states that he was so close to the fire his shirt was scorched. His men were ten feet closer without shirts, training their hoses on the gasoline pump and hose. Their names are Phil Zinni, Bill Zinni, Dick Fischer, E. Hall, Tom Rodis, L. Papp, R. Jacobson, J. Point and W. Cleveland. When all of the firemen had arrive, they relieved the men from Camp Cheerful. Firemen worked in shifts from the open area to protect the gasoline tank while others worked in and out of the barn which was only 20 feet from the burning mill. The barn was burning when the firemen arrived. The barn was saved and the danger too Mrs. Roy's home was averted. According to Alfred Graves, the lack of any adverse wind made it possible to save the barn.

Roy Finley told your editor about how much the fire department appreciated the help which came from Camp Cheerful. Curious to know more about this place and what manner of men lived in this secluded, somewhat mystic place, my wife and I drove down. Roy's Mill is located just off Rt. 82 across from the end of Howe Rd. Camp Cheerful lies of Roy's Mill on the opposite side of the run which formerly operated the old mill.

We were greeted by a very congenial gentleman who introduced himself as Mr. Clifton, just the man we wanted to see. As we strolled about the grounds he talked of the camp, their plans for this year and next and of the fire.

The camp is now under construction by the Geo. Rutherford Co. with funds provided by the Cleveland Rotary Club. Wm. Townsend is the Director of the Society for crippled children which organization will finance and manage the operation of this camp. The Rotary Club furnished \$60,000 for the new buildings and improvements.

Five cabins are now under construction with more to be added next year. The foundation has been laid for a large 16-side wash house. A very large administration building is planned along with a mess hall, handcraft shop and a new home for the caretaker and his wife.

Preparing the present mess hall for the first group of children was Mrs. Clifton, likewise a very congenial person.

The conveniences, play things and other forms of entertainment make it a true paradise for crippled children.

The camp will open on July 1st and 40 children will enjoy its facilities for each two weeks until August 21. Next year 360 children will be made happy during the same season.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifton will reside at the camp the year around.

We left with the feeling that we had met some very fine people and that the Easter Seals do a lot of good.