



The Old Keegan Brothers Mill in 1928. Mill workers left to right: Unknown, Mr. and Mrs. Grover Miller, Avolt Bethke, Oscar Craig, Jim Keegan and Fred Jones. All photos Richland County History Room unless noted otherwise.

Keegan Mills Building – 279 West Court Street.

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Laying hens are paying hens—
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more, Larro is wholesome, effi-
cient and economical.



KEEGAN'S ELEVATOR
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Larro EGG MASH

The Keegans came from Bear Valley to establish important businesses in Richland Center. Jim Keegan, one of eight children, arrived on September 5, 1918, when he bought the feed mill from Edward Wiley. He operated the mill for three years in partnership with Oscar Monson but purchased Monson's interest in 1921. The mill was located at 279 West Court Street and had originally housed the Lord and McGiffin tobacco warehouse and still later was the Brimmer Woolen Mills.

Leo Keegan joined his brother as a partner in the business shortly after he bought out Monson. He had previously been the cheesemaker at Ithaca. The firm became known as Keegan Brothers. Leo Keegan



Above: The rebuilt upper mill at 279 West Court Street. Below right: The Good Friday fire of March 25, 1948.

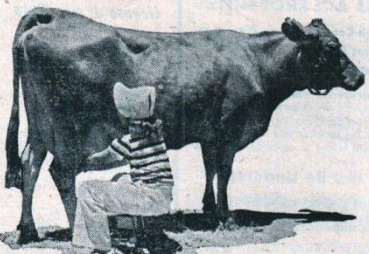
specialized in dairy equipment and when International Harvester came to Richland Center looking for someone to handle their farm equipment, they chose Leo Keegan. He built the Keegan Implement warehouse directly across the street from the mill in 1930.

A spectacular fire, that had the official stamp of spontaneous combustion, broke out on Good Friday March 25, 1948, and caused damages estimated at about \$115,000. Fortunately for Keegan Bros. and their many patrons, the facilities of the firm included

another modern grain elevator and feed grinding operation, the Farm Service Mill, at 395 West Court Street purchased in 1947, one block west of the main building that was destroyed. James Keegan, president of the firm, stated a new mill would be built to replace the one destroyed by the fire.

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We Can Make a Dairy Feed Priced Below the \$3 Mark
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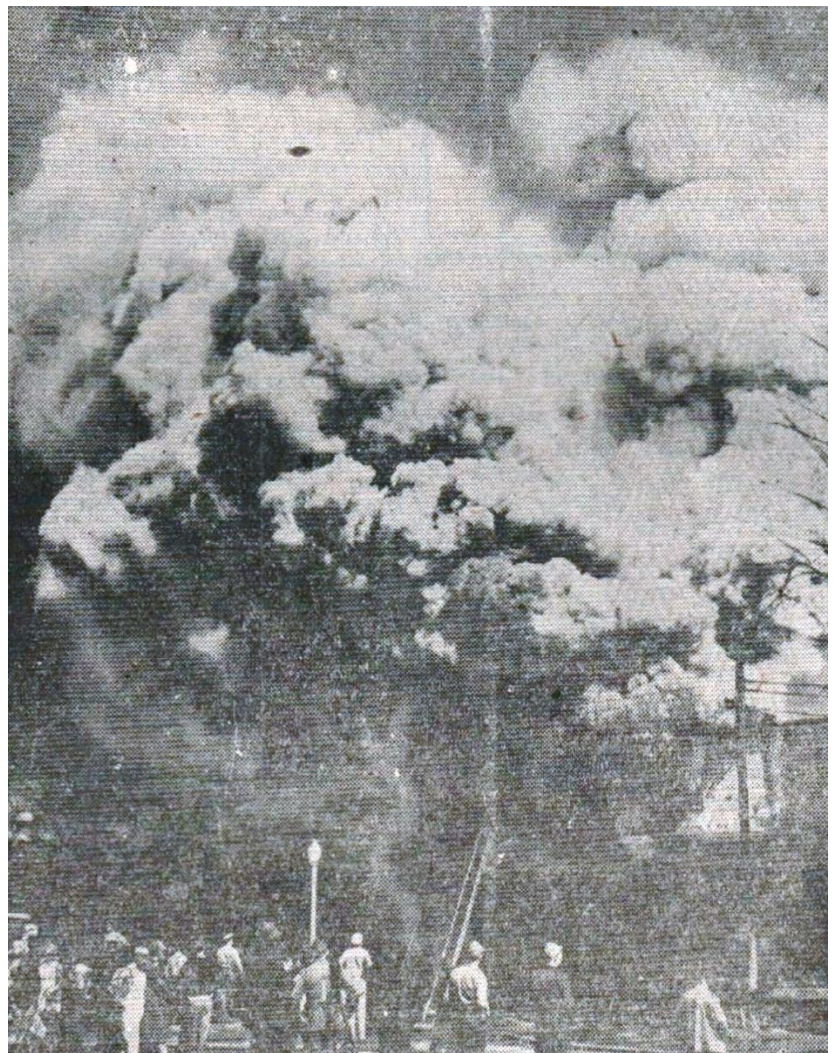
If you desire the very best results. It produces the milk and keeps your dairy herd in condition through the winter months that are ahead of us.

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KEEGAN MILLS





The former Farm Service Mill located at 395 West Court Street purchased by Keegan Bros. in 1947.

In March of 1974, a fire in the tower of the Keegan Mills elevator building on Orange Street (395 West Court) threatened the entire building and its contents until it was brought under control by the Richland Center Volunteer Fire Department. Because of the height of the tower, the fire department had a difficult time fighting the source of the flames. Jim Keegan said an elevator motor was the likely source of the fire which destroyed the elevator legs and two floors of the elevator. Damages were estimated in the \$20,000 range. This building is no longer extant.

Following a long illness, James Keegan, passed away on August 8, 1954, at the age of 63. He was born in Bear Valley December 13, 1890. Keegan had been a well-known businessman; was a director of the Richland County Bank, and the Richland Center Savings and Loan Association; and a member of the Richland Hospital executive board.

Leo Keegan, well-known farm implement dealer in Richland Center, died in Evansville, Ind. on April 8, 1957, at the age of 63. Like his brother James, he was born in Bear Valley and spent his youth on the family farm. James and Leo Keegan both married school teachers. Mrs. James Keegan was the former Cecelia Liddane of Tomah. Mrs. Leo Keegan was the former Isabella Sidow of Columbus.

The Keegan Mills building at 279 West Court Street is one of very few remnants of original manufacturing sites located in the old Pine River/Orange Street Commercial District.