

Trent Centre for Community Based Education Project  
Historic Agricultural Site Research (KHC)  
The Canadian Food System: A Community Development Approach

ERST/CAST 3340 H

# Historical Agricultural Site Research

The Canadian Food System: A Community  
Development Approach

By:

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To:

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### **Introduction:**

The focus of this project is to address heritage information challenges, specifically in regards to butchers, abattoirs, canning and cold storage facilities in the Peterborough and Victoria counties from the late 1800's to the mid 1900's. The main goal of this project is to compile a well-researched heritage table which lists these facilities and to make them available to the public. Information present on the heritage table will include; location of facility (township), street name and address, road type, the type of operation as well as the general size of the operation. This table will then be used by the Kawartha Heritage Conservancy for future educational purposes. In order to complete this table, much research had to be done in order to find the relevant information we were looking for. Many different and unique resources were utilised in order to gather information for the project. The majority of research took place at several locations including, Trent University Archives, Peterborough Public Library, Peterborough Museum and Archives and a one-on-one interview with Elwood Jones, co-writer of "Peterborough: The Electric City", which is basically a historic timeline of the City of Peterborough, just to name a few.

### **Methods:**

In order to do the research for this project, our group brainstormed a list of local heritage organizations, historians and publications. We came up with the following list, which we then divided up amongst ourselves:

- Trent University Library: Kollene
- Trent Valley Archives: Derek and Dan
- Contacting Present-Day Abattoirs: Jenna
- Peterborough Public Library: Kirsten
- Peterborough Museum and Archives: Kollene and Kirsten
- Interview with Elwood Jones: Dan
- Trent University Archives: Everyone

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As we began to research, we got ideas of what the food processing industry in Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes looked like, and what specific sources were most useful; we were able to look into certain people and businesses in more detail. We also did online and library research to try to glean more details about these people and businesses. Please see our research log (Pg.6-15) for a list of all the sources we looked at and for notes regarding their pertinence to our project's focus.

From all of this research, we compiled lists of any meat packers, meat exporters, cold storage companies, fruit shops and wholesalers, and butchers that we came across in our research. The lists include as many of the following pieces of information as we could find for each business: Name, owners, approximate years of operation, location, description of building, and any other specific details. The main meat packers, cold storage businesses, and wholesale produce businesses each got their own sheet, while the many butchers and retail fruit shops are all in the same list (refer to appendixes C-D), as we could not find very much detail on these smaller businesses.

In order to be clear on where we looked, what sources were useful, and what we discovered, so that future researches do not end up going over the same materials, we created a research log. We also recorded the numbers of hours the research took to give anyone continuing the research an idea of the time required. When we had completed our research, we wrote an introduction, an overview of our findings, this description of methods, and a list of challenges and recommendations to be included along with the lists, the individual work time sheets, and the research logs in our final report.

### **Overview:**

In our project we included all information pertaining to butchers, abattoirs, canning facilities and cold storage facilities in the Peterborough area that we felt necessary in order to give the reader or audience the best perception of how these processes took place at a certain time as well as how they have evolved over time since the 1800's. We tried to avoid utilising information that did not seem overly significant in regards to these industries. Through our

research, there were several trends that we discovered. For one, before the rail system had fully made it to this area, the majority of people produced their own food on-farm or shared with several farms in a close area. Most of the butchering of animals was also done on the farm. Due to the fact that there were no cold storage facilities, produce was stored in the basement or a shelter and most meat was eaten right away or stored in the snow come winter time. In the summer it was common for a cooperative of 14-24 families to take turns butchering a cow and to then divide it amongst themselves in order to avoid spoilage. Because meat, fruits and vegetables were not produced a large scale, but simply for personal consumption, it was essentially a sustainable way of farming. Everybody grew a wide variety of produce and did not depend on other people all that much for certain items. However, when the City of Peterborough's population began to grow rapidly in numbers; doubling nearly every 20 years; there were many people living in the urban areas that did not have the time or space to grow their own food. As a result, farmers began bringing food from their rural area farms to the city. The majority of the food distribution occurred at the Farmer's Market. The Peterborough farmer's market took place at market square. Butter, eggs and home baking were sold upstairs, under the town clock while the open market was out on the market square which is still the present day site of the Wednesday farmers market in the city. (Appendix A) The Farmer's Market was in essence the beginning of the exchange of meat and produce for money, in the area.

By the early 1860's a significant change occurred in Peterborough, when the railway was completed. Shortly after the rail system was established in the area, the importing and exporting of meats took off. Goods were now being shipped to Belleville, Ottawa and Toronto. From Toronto, a vast amount of meat was exported to Britain, specifically pork, due to the increased demand in Canadian bacon. Shipping meat long distances without spoiling was now possible following the introduction of freezer carts. These were essentially train carriages which carried large ice blocks to preserve meat throughout the duration of the travel. While freezer carts kept meat cold for long distance travel, the Peterborough Cold Storage was the main permanent freezer in town. Families could rent space in Cold Storage, while butchers hung carcasses of the aging and preserving of their meat. (Appendix A) Since cold storage at this time was scarce and costly for some local residents, most still relied on preserved meats from local shops. Smoking,

pickling and salting of meats were the other methods used by many local abattoirs to preserve meats in their shops.

With the opportunity for increased export, since the introduction of freezer carts, the demand for meat increased greatly in the Peterborough area. Farmers began producing more livestock due to the greater demand which in turn allowed for the expansion and amalgamation of previously established abattoirs. In 1927, Peterborough saw the amalgamation of several local abattoirs, in particular the Matthew's (Appendix A), the Kennedy's (Appendix A) and the Blackwell's, forming the Canada Packers, the biggest packing plant in Canada at the time.

The demand for local goods was rapidly diminishing it seemed, as the export market increased which in turn fuelled the import market. This is a trend that has continued well into the present day. While the local food market is beginning to re-establish itself, the vast majority of food consumed in the city of Peterborough and surrounding areas is imported. The once totally locally produced, processed, packaged and preserved meat industry is almost non-existent in the area today.

Massive grocery superstores owned by major companies have taken over the once prospering farmer's market and much of the meat and produce in Canada is now shipped in from locations all around the world. This trend has much to owe to the modern cold storage and preservatives which can keep food from spoiling for much longer periods of time. But, with the educations and programs we have today there seems to be an evident push back towards living sustainably but only time will tell. It is interesting to see how the City of Peterborough and its surrounding areas has developed for over 100 years and to see what characterized the changing nature of the food industry in the area; from sustainability to importability.

### **Challenges:**

While we were able to gather enough information to come up with a general overview, via the research logs, of how the meat industry started and progressed in the Peterborough region, we did, however, come across various challenges in certain aspects of our research. We were

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looking to gather information on the Peterborough and the City of Kawartha Lakes regions but were unable to come up with any findings for the City of Kawartha Lakes region. Most of the areas researched did not include exact geographical locations or site descriptions but focused rather mainly on the personal and business related histories of the abattoirs. This meant that we were unable to determine the type of structures, building materials and current site conditions as well as geographical coordinates of the site researched. Moreover, other major challenge we encountered while gathering information for the project was the vast array of possible research sources. With a limited time allowance for conducting research, we were forced to divide ourselves amongst the local archives and libraries. This created difficulties when bringing all the information together, meaning that by conducting separate research not everyone was knowledgeable in the entirety of the information gathered. Despite not coming up with certain specific site details as well as not being able to conduct research as a group we were still able to put together a general overview of the history of the regions abattoirs and butchers (Refer to appendixes A-D).

### **Recommendations:**

There are several possible sources of information on the topics of meat processing, cold storage, and fruit and vegetable processing that we did not get to during our research. We will provide some of our ideas here as these could be of value for anyone continuing with this Historic Site Research Project. Looking through the photograph collections of other local museums and archives could provide some useful information on the buildings where these businesses were housed. There is a local organization that does genealogical research; the Kawartha Ancestral Research Association, which is located here in Peterborough. We did not get the time to go and speak with them so that could be a direction for any future researchers to pursue. As we have only found approximate dates that many of these butcher shops and packing plants were open, a future challenge could be to look for specific dates. Perhaps some sort of business association or registry existed; this could be looked into.

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Contacting present day butcher shops and abattoirs, as well as whomever currently owns the sites where these businesses were located could possibly turn up quite a bit of information. Going along with that, conducting interviews with long-time residents of Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes could help to fill in details and reveal information that the archives possibly do not have recorded. As our research ended up focusing more on Peterborough County because of resource and time constraints, we believe that further research needs to be done in the Kawartha Lakes.

**Research Log:**

Resource	Source/Location	Researcher	Sections Read	Useful information?
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Gayle D. Nelson, ed. "Forest to Farm: Early Days in Otonabee", 1975.	Peterborough Public Library	Kirsten	Skimmed book, looked at indexes.	Lots about dairies, mills, etc. Nothing about abattoirs/canning.
Garth Duff, "Hazy Days in Dummer", 1991.	PPL	Kirsten	Skimmed whole book, looked at indexes	Some information on ice packing and sale, starting on page 65. Nothing in particular about abattoirs, canneries.
Harold R. Hunter, "Havelock Through the Years to Centennial", 1993.	PPL	Kirsten	Skimmed	Not really.
A Sketch of the Early Settlement of the Town of Peterborough	PPL	Kirsten	Skimmed	Beginning on pg. 101 there is information about Peterborough tanneries. Nothing about meat/vegetable processing.
City and County of Peterborough. Peterborough; land of shining waters; a centennial volume, 1967	PPL	Kirsten	Skimmed	Information about tanneries, mills, dairy processing.
Wilcox, Helen. Bridgenorth: The Centre of the Universe,	PPL	Kirsten	read most of	Information about the Joplin's butcher shop scattered throughout book.
"An Analysis of the Economic Transformation of Peterborough Ontario from Mill Town to Factory Town between 1860 and 1910"	PPL	Kirsten	read	Page 23 has information about Matthew-Blackwell Meat Packing Co, later absorbed into Canada Packers.

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Directory for the County of Peterborough, Haliburton, Victoria. Union Publishing Co.	One at Peterborough Public Library (1892), two other years worth (1916 and 1911) available online at www.archive.org. NOTE: Peterborough was spelled "Peterboro" at this point. Searches for relevant directories need to use the older spelling, or nothing comes up.	Kirsten	read the relevant sections.	Lists all butchers in the county during the years directories are available for. Very useful for anyone trying to track down the names of any businesses in the county at this time. Mills, tanneries, cheese makers and everything else imaginable are also listed. Street addresses are not given except occasionally in advertisements.
Peterborough Review. -April 30th, 1895. -June 2, 1910	Trent Microfiche Collection		read paper headlines, relevant articles	Was looking in paper for a few headlines cited on the Trent Valley Archives that looked like they pertained to butchering in the Kawarthas. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to locate many of them. -The April 30th paper has a short article about a plant expansion and extra power plant being built at the Matthews site.
Peterborough Examiner -Nov 2nd, 1882 -June 8th, 1892 -October 3rd, 1892 -July 29th, 1939.	Trent Microfiche Collection	Kirsten	read paper headlines and relevant articles.	Looking for articles mentioned on the Trent Valley website. -the 1892 paper has an ad for both George Matthews and JJ Howden. -the 1939 paper has an article with photos about changed hog rail grading practices, and another article (with photo, front page) about the widening of George Street to allow trucks to get in and out of the packing plant.
Poole, Dr T.W.	Bata Library	Kollene	skimmed	-no mention of meat or

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<i>The Early Settlement of Peterborough County. (1897)</i> <i>Peterborough: Office of the Peterborough Review.</i>				vegetable processing.
Borg, Ronald ed. <i>Peterborough: Land of Shining Waters (1967)</i> <i>Toronto: University of Toronto Press.</i>	Bata Library	Kollene	Skimmed	-no mention of meat or vegetable processing .
Directories of the United Counties of Peterborough and Victoria for 1858	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Skimmed through looking for butchers, packers or other food processors	Contains names of butchers
Fuller's Counties of Peterborough and Victoria Directory for 1865 and 1866	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Skimmed through looking for butchers, packers or other food processors	Contains names butchers and an advertisement for James Howden-Butcher
Business Directory and Book of Reference for the Town and County of Peterborough for 1883 -84	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through reference and business directory sections	Includes a paragraph about Mr. George Matthew's Packing plant in the Reference section. Has an advertisement for the Peterborough Packing House -no 'yellow pages' style business list in this directory
Union Publishing Co's Peterborough Directory, Including Ashburnham 1894	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through Business Directory section	Relevant Categories: butchers, wholesale fruit, packers.

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The Town of Peterborough Directory 1888-1889	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through Business Directory and Peterborough Historical and descriptive Section	Relevant business categories: butchers, packers, and fruits. Includes a paragraph on Matthew's Pork Packing Establishment in the Historical and Descriptive section.
Vernon's Peterborough and Ashburnham Street, Alphabetical, Business and Miscellaneous Directory for the Years 1895-97	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through business directory section	Relevant Business Categories: butchers, fruit and fish,
Union Publishing Co's Peterborough Directory including Ashburnham 1893	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Skimmed through	References two packers: Bond, Edward and Matthews-George
Vernon's City of Peterborough Street, alphabetical business and miscellaneous directory for the year 1914	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through business directory section	Relevant business categories: produce, pork packers, pork dealers, exporters, fruits, fancy beans and peas, butchers (wholesale), butchers (retail)
Union Publishing Co's Peterborough Directory including Ashburnham 1904 and 1905	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through business directory section	Relevant business categories: butchers (wholesale), butchers (retail), fancy peas, pork dealers, pork packers
Vernon's Peterborough	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through	There was no butcher category. Relevant

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Directory 1935			business directory section	Business Categories: meats (wholesale), meats (retail), and fruits (wholesale)
Vernon's Peterborough Directory 1945	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through business directory section	Relevant Business Categories: Butchers, Eggs and Poultry, Wholesale Fruits, Wholesale Meats
Vernon's Peterborough Directory 1955-56	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through business directory section	No butcher or meat packer category Relevant Business Categories: Fruits (Wholesale), Grocers
Vernon's Peterborough Directory 1965	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through business directory section	No butcher or meat packer category Relevant Business Categories: Wholesale Fruits, Department Stores, Grocery Stores,
Vernon's Peterborough Directory 1975	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through business directory section	No food processing related categories in business directory
Vernon's Peterborough Directory 1985 (this is the most recent directory in the archive's collection)	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Read through business directory section	No food processing related categories in business directory
1871 Census for Peterborough and Victoria Counties	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Looked through list of names, addresses and professions for anyone listed as a	Wrote down list of butchers

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			butcher or anything else relating to food processing	
"George Street Stories"	Trent Library	Kirsten Dan	read most of	Peterborough and George Street specific, but contains quite a bit of information scattered throughout about the Canada Packers plant. Interesting history of one street.
Biographical Sketches (Dobbin Index ca. 1912)	Peterborough Museum and Archives	Kollene	Searched for information on families involved in meat packing industry	-brief biography of T.F Matthews- See below for details
"Norwood then and now" Peterborough: Maxwell Review, 1977 - as a centennial book	Peterborough Public Library	Kollene	Skimmed	-useful segment on the J.L Squires Family and their pork packing plant in Norwood. Mentions the names of some butchers in Norwood as well. See below for details.
SYSCO central Ontario Website	<a href="http://www.syscocentralontario.com">www.syscocentralontario.com</a>	Kollene	Looked at connections with Peterborough business Strano Foodservices (listed as wholesale fruit sales in some directories)	-In 1966, SYSCO bought up Strand Foodservices of Peterborough to give them a presence in the Toronto area market. Strand Foodservice began as a produce wholesaler in 1919.
Wood, Ron (2008). Into the Value Zone: Gaining and Sustaining	Available online as an E-Book	Kollene	Read sections on SYSCO	Describes briefly how SYSCO bought out many companies, including Strand, a Peterborough

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Competitive Advantage. USA: University Press of America Inc.				wholesale fruits company
Oral Histories: Interviews with Peterborough Women-1974 (audio cassettes and transcripts collection)	Transcripts are online on the Trent University Archives website and Interviews are available in cassette and paper form at the Archives	Kollene	Skimmed to see if there is any mention of food processing	Found useful segments of interviews -e.g. stories about families who ran butcher shops, the Peterborough Farmers market, food scarcities during the depression, home canning and food storage.
Victoria County Biographies	<a href="http://www.ontariogeneology.com">www.ontariogeneology.com</a>	Kollene	skimmed sections on Victoria County biographies	found information on Matthew's family - see below
Kawartha Heritage: Proceedings of the Kawartha Conference 1981. 1981	Peterborough Public Library	Kollene	skimmed	Found anecdotes on early fruit and vegetable processing - stresses that processing was done at home not in industrial facilities -see below!
Maple Leaf corporate history	<a href="http://www.mapleleaf.com/en/corporate/company_info/our-rich-history/">www.mapleleaf.com/en/corporate/company_info/our-rich-history/</a>	Kollene	looked for connections to George Matthews	See below!
MacLennan, Ian (2002). Chill and Kill: The Restructuring of Canada's Beef Commodity Chain. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.	available online through Topcat (Bata Library)	Kollene	skimmed parts of this book for information on Peterborough and for history of abattoir regulations and changes	See below!
Peterborough: The Electric City	Trent Valley Archives	Derek	Skimmed though pictures	Somewhat useful. Gave a good idea of what life was like back in the

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			and small blurbs relating to butchers in the Peterborough area	1800's in Peterborough and how it has developed to near present day.
Peterborough Examiner: Courneya (1892-1913)	Trent Valley Archives	Derek Dan	Skimmed through pictures, articles and advertisements in search of any information pertaining to our research	Several ads found but most of the ads and articles were discovered around 1930 and on
Winners - 150 Years of the Peterborough Exhibition by: Elwood Jones.	Trent Valley Archives	Dan	Skimmed through information regarding the exhibition	Gave good information as to what was sold, for how much and who purchased them. (1860) There were also different classes Class D -Sheep Class E -Swine and large breed. Class H -Dairy and farm produce Class I -Fruit and garden vegetables.
Peterborough Interiors: A photographic History (Peterborough Illustrated #1 Trent Valley Archives) by: Elwood Jones	Trent Valley Archives	Dan	Skimmed through index and searched relevant information	Gave good pictures and descriptions of Matthew`s Blackwell Co. (pg 18) and on Kennedy`s Butcher shop (pg. 23)
Peterborough, The Electric City: An Illustrated history by: Elwood Jones and Bruce Dyer	Trent Valley Archives	Dan	Skimmed through book for information regarding commercialization	Found great information on the history of George Matthews (pg. 41)



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<p>A Canadian Millionaire by: Michael Bliss, The Life and Business Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart.</p>	<p>Trent Valley Archives</p>	<p>Dan</p>	<p>Skimmed through searching for information as to his involvement with Canada Packers</p>	<p>Found good informations as to how Flavelle was associated with Canada Packers. He basically started the amalgamation of Canada Packers within established abattoirs.</p>
<p>Elwood Jones</p>	<p>Trent Valley Archives</p>	<p>Dan</p>	<p>Interview</p>	<p>Gave good information as to time lines and specific events and common names.</p>

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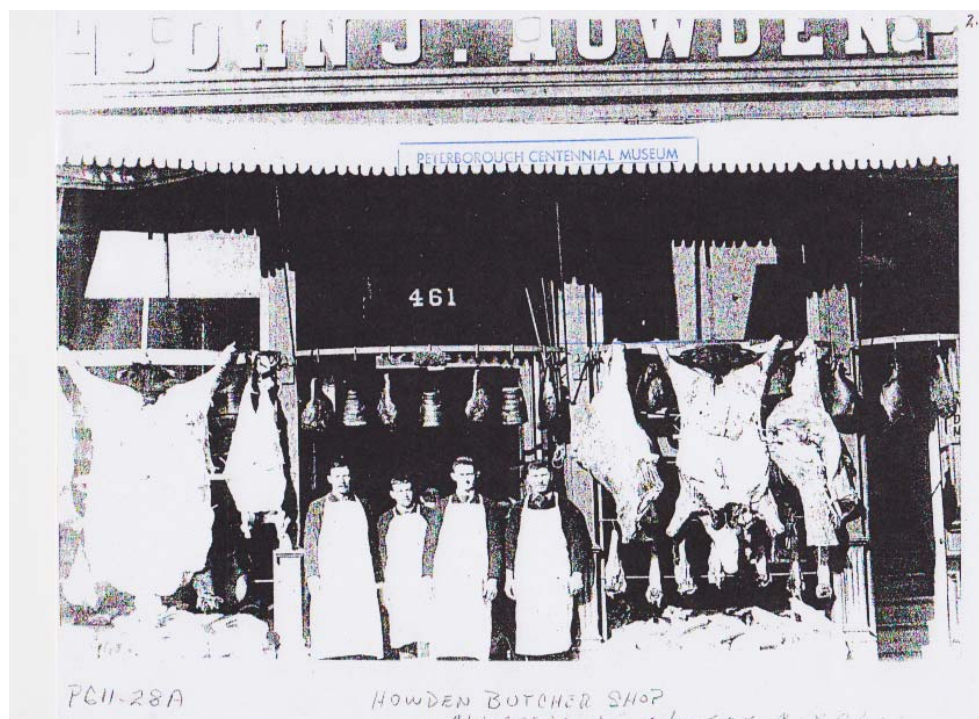
**Individual Research Hours:**

Name	Research Hours (please specify)	Other Hours (please specify)
Dan	3.5 hours Trent University Library 2.5 hours Trent University Archives 7 hours Trent Valley Archives 1.5 hours Online research Trent University Archives. 1.5 hours interview with Elwood Jones  Total: 16 hours	6 hours group meeting and presentation. 3.5 hours going over information and readings. 4 hours putting formatting project and putting it together Total : 13.5 hours
Derek	3 hours: Trent University Library 2 hours: Trent University Archives 5 hours: Trent Valley Archives 3 Hours: Online Research  Total: 13 hours	6 hours: Group meetings and presentation  3.5 hours: going over research and preparing for presentation  Total: 9.5 hours
Jenna	4 Hours: Online research 4 Hours: Contacting local abattoirs and gathering information 2 Hours: site visiting and locating Total: 10 hours	5 hours: group meetings and presentation  4.5 hours: looking through research and preparing for presentation Total: 9.5 hours
Kollene	1.5 hours: Peterborough Public Library 1.5 hours: Trent University Library 7.5 hours: Peterborough Museum and Archives 2 hours: Online Trent University Archives 4 hours: All other online research (includes reading e-books)  Total: 16.5	6 hours: group meetings and presentation preparation 7 hours: compiling, typing and formatting information Total: 13
Kirsten	6 hours: Peterborough Public Library 1.5 hours: Trent University Archives 2.5 hours: Peterborough Museum and Archives 5 hours: Online research/reading books and directories online  Total: 15	5 hours: writing project agreement 8 hours: group meetings, meetings with KHC/TTCBE/Paula 4 hours: compiling, typing, and formatting information. 6 hours: preparing presentation 3 hours: coordinating and contacting group members, KHC, Paula.  Total: 26

Photo # 1

## APPENDIX A

### JJ's Howden's



Run by John J. Howden, and produced and sold "Choice Beef, Mutton, Veal, Spring lamb, Fresh Pork, Spiced Roll, Sugar Cured Hams, Breakfast Bacon, Pickled Backs and Lard: also a full supply of Vegetables." (from newspaper add). Picture of four employees wearing butcher's aprons and standing beside a variety of curing meats can be found at the Peterborough Museum. Also, there is a possible family connection to a James Howden, listed in the 1866 directory as being a butcher who sold meat at the Peterborough Market in Market Hall.

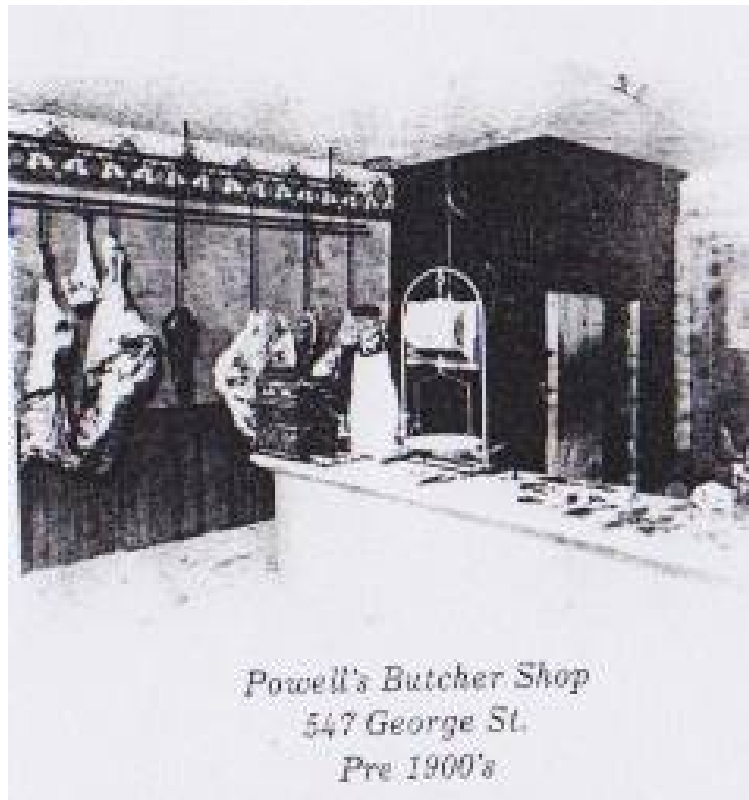
*Source:*

*Vernon's Peterborough Directories 1893-1905. Advertisement in June 8th 1892 Peterborough examiner. Photo PG11-28A at the Peterborough Centennial Museum.*

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Photo #2

### Powell's Butcher Shop



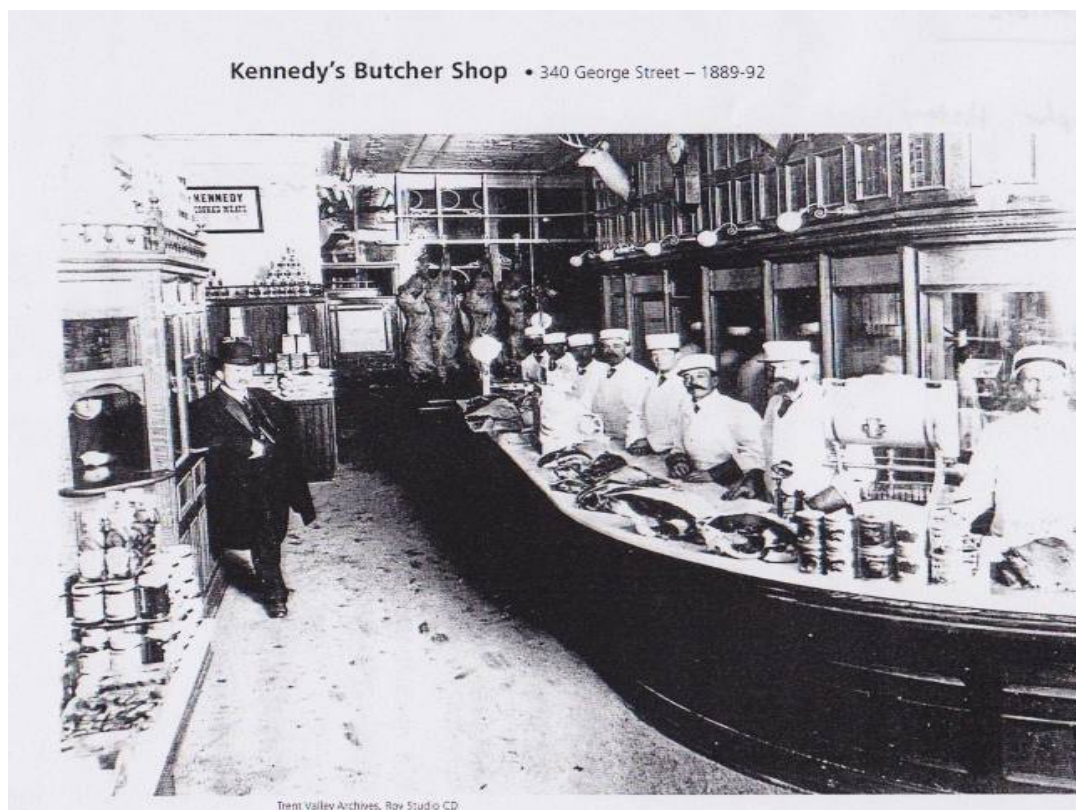
Small butcher shop; purchased locally killed animals; sold them at his butcher shop.

*Source:*

*Peterborough Scrap Book - A pictorial history of the City of Peterborough. 1825-1975. by Bill LaBranche*

Photo #3

### Kennedy's Butcher Shop



The 1897 Peterborough Directory had advertisements for Kennedy & Nelson, Meat and Provision Merchants, on nearly every odd-numbered page. They advertised fresh poultry, meats and game in season; butter and eggs; and hams, bacon and sausage. H. Percy Kennedy was still running a livestock business from this stall in 1913; William F. Nelson was a butcher. Kennedy's was taken over by Jopling's butchers, and Herbert Percy Kennedy (1870-1939) pursued a successful career as a livestock trader based in Peterborough and Toronto and as the founder of Union Stock Yards in Edmonton and Saskatoon.

*Source:*

*Electric City Collection, Trent Valley Archives*

Photo #4

### Matthew's Blackwell Co.

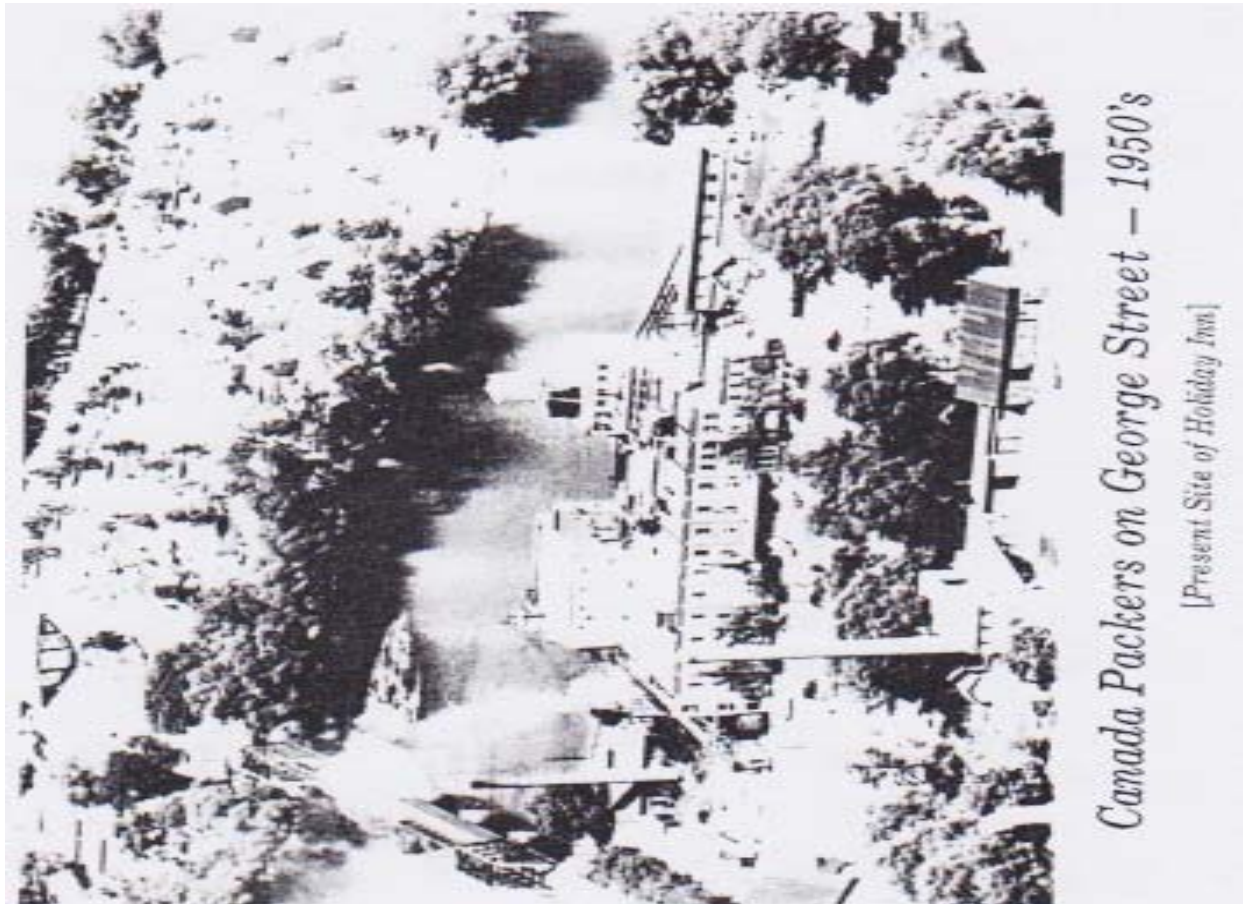


The Matthews family butcher shop expanded by 1913 to become Matthews Laing. Still later, the company would be part of the national Canada Packers. The impressive abattoir, built in 1882, was located on George Street and Little Lake. The company branched into retail stores by the turn of the century.

*Source:*

*Electric City Collection, Trent Valley Archives*

### Canada Packers



Canada Packers was part of an amalgamation of several local butchers, in particular the Matthew's, the Blackwell's and the Kennedy's. The Canada Packers Plant was located on the southern end of George St; which is now the present site of the Holiday Inn. Notice how close the plant was built to Little Lake; there were, and still are today many environmental impacts which persist within the lake due to certain practices of Canada Packers.

*Source:*

*History (Peterborough Illustrated #1 Trent Valley Archives) by: Elwood Jones*



### **Peterborough Cold Storage**



Peterborough Cold Storage was essentially a large cooler in its time. One could purchase or rent large locker type rooms which they would fill with items in which they wanted to preserve. Peterborough Cold Storage would harvest their ice from Little Lake. Ice harvest was seen as an event; large groups of people, family and friends, would get together and harvest the ice off the lake. Many local butchers would use this facility to hang their meat carcasses during the aging period of the meat, or simply to preserve their meat.

*Source:*

*Interview with Elwood Jones.*

*History (Peterborough Illustrated #1 Trent Valley Archives) by: Elwood Jones*

## APPENDIX B

### **From George street book:**

-Canada packers plant initially had refrigeration equal to 80 tons of ice/day. Homes didn't have refrigeration, so this was remarkable. The plant employed 128 men, three traveling salesman in three-story building (date not clear). It was run by three brothers: George of Lindsay, W.E. of Ottawa, and T.I. of Peterborough. Retail stores at Brock and George and Sherbrooke and park. When they later amalgamated with Canada packers, the Matthews moved into insurance.

Quotation, page 21

"Don Keating worked at Canada Packers from 1948-1950 and remembers terraced houses across the street from the plant where many of the butcher's families lived. 'Trucks full of pigs and cattle would be coming down George Street to get to the plant,' he recalls 'Tuesdays were 'pig kill day' and Thursdays 'cattle kill'. Hundreds of animals, including lamb and sheep, were killed.

...The whole city knew the schedule well. Residents could hear the animals' scream from 7 a.m. to noon each of those days. The animals were herded off the trucks, weighed, and chased into pens where the Holiday Inn's outside bar now fills the air with far different sounds and smells in the summer months. The animals were chased up a plank, one by one into the plant where an employee shot them in the head as they entered. Other workers gathered, hung, drained, and passed them on for skinning, cutting and storage before they were sent to stores."

George Keating "The blood just ran down a drain and into the river."

"George Keating had been hired with no experience and received no formal training. His first job was to use tiny tweezers to remove brain membranes for cancer research. His wife also worked there for a summer, peeling back tubes from wieners and "has never eaten another hot dog since."

-little was wasted: much was shipped to other companies to use for lard, margarine, pork and beans, bristle brushes.

-the blood and etc. in the river actually increased the population of snapping turtles, musky, carp... ate sewage in river/little lake.

### **Paragraph on Matthew's Pork Packing establishment from The Town of Peterborough Directory 1888 to 1889:**

"Matthew's Pork packing establishment established in Peterborough in 1882 -in Lindsay in 1877. Occupies five brick buildings, ice houses, slaughter house etc. 148 George Street. Manufactures fine mild cured meats. The factory cuts about 8000 hogs/year and its manufactured products find ready sale, occupying a high rank in the Canadian meat market. Offices and retail shop at 256

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George Street.

**Paragraph on George Matthews from the 1883-1884 Business Directory and Book of Reference for the county and town of Peterborough:**

"Mr George Matthews, of Peterborough and Lindsay, is among the enterprising men who have established themselves here lately. At the south end of George Street he has built a fine large brick building for the purpose of cutting up and curing pork. His brands have now established a reputation from Sarnia to St. John N.B and are eagerly sought after by dealers in all the principal cities and towns. The firm makes a specialty of Cumberland and white dried bacon, white cured and smoked hams, spiced bacon, rolls, sausages, etc. A large quantity of lard in tinnets, tubs, and crocks is shipped every season. Lately, extensive improvements and additions have been made, and more are in contemplation. The establishment is now one of the largest in the country, and the quality of the goods turned out, so good that the sales are increasing daily."

**Biographical Information on T.F Matthews**

"A man in that most desirable class, the useful citizen. Businessman, organizer, financier of public utilities, and all well done. Has the confidence of the community to a marked degree, which he has rightly earned. Native of Lindsay, son of George Matthews of the firm of that name. Educated at the public and high schools of his town. Spent two years with his father in business and came to the Peterborough branch in 1886. Manager of it in 1889. Now manager of the combined Matthews-Laing packing industries. Member of the Baptist Church and treasurer for the last ten years. President of Children's Aid Society 1910-12. President of Golf Club 1910-11. Charter member of Peterborough Club and president and director 1912-13. Interested in local athletics and sports and a liberal supporter of local institutions. Elected chairman of Peterborough Water Commission on the taking over of the works in 1902 and has been elected a member of the commission and chairman in successive years since. The success of this public utility is due to the work of him and fellow commissioners but he has brought to bear most excellent talents for organisation, financing and general directions of operations of maintenance, extension and construction. The city has profited by his services-the ideal citizen." (Dobbin Index, ca. 1911 p. 2)

**Notes from Norwood then and now (p. 40)**

-JL Squires and sons sold their grist mill in 1906 and started a new firm, J.L. Squire's Pork and Produce Warehouse. This was a small packing house on the north side of Peterborough Street in Norwood. They processed quite a lot of pork and other commodities and shipped a lot of their products overseas. They owned a large storage building across the street at the corner of Elm Street. This building is now apartments and the packing house was transformed many times including into a blacksmith shop and a chopping mill. It has since been torn down.

p. 41 - A 1913 Norwood business directory contains the names of William Rogers and son (meat), J.L Squire (Groceries and produce), and D. Foster (Butcher and baker).

### **Notes from SYSCO Central Ontario site and book by Ron Wood.**

- SYSCO (Systems and Services Company) founded in Texas in 1969 by John Bough who convinced eight other small food distribution companies to form a 'national food service distribution organisation.' The company kept on expanding and buying out more and more food service companies including Strano's Wholesale Foods, which they acquired in 1966. Strand began in 1919 as a produce wholesaler and was first located at 263 Simcoe Street, Peterborough. This gave SYSCO an entry point into the Toronto market. SYSCO currently is the largest marketer and distributor of food service products in North America with more than 160 distribution facilities across the continent. Ron Wood writes that, "SYSCO has achieved its consisted success by acquiring dozens of smaller distributors, a practice which has resulted in double-digit increases in sales and earnings every year." Wood also writes, "This organisation would be able to distribute any food regardless of regional availability." Today, SYSCO provides food and food related services to over 220 000 restaurants, schools, hotels, hospitals, nursing homes, businesses and other organizations and sells about 200 000 different products. SYSCO still has a Peterborough location, at 65 Elmsdale Road. It is the central location for its Central Ontario Branch.

### **Notes from Interviews with Peterborough Women Transcripts (1974):**

#### **Olive Howland**

"I've been here 34 years. It was a flat store first, but mother got sick and couldn't look after it herself so father built this house on top of it (Three story building). Before 1940 I lived on Burnham, 269. Right on top of the hill. We had a house. My father and I ran this store for 39 years. Dad died in [19]44. I was born in the house on Burnham Street, but I sold it.

[School] I went to King George. I finished [at] King George and went to South Central. I lived on Murray Street then. After school, I worked at Peterboro Milk first. They used to bring out the Barnardo boys, that's a long time ago. I worked in the store at Peterboro Milk. They made ice cream out back and the cheese upstairs. It was quite a growing concern. I worked for Peterboro Milk, and then I worked for Beatty's Transport and I worked ten years for Beatty's Transport and then my father started to build here [which is] why I quite and came here.

[Depression] My father ran a **butcher shop** on George Street during the depression and I was at home. We always had enough to eat but it was tough enough. He was on George Street where A and P is now, the corner of George and London. The Kaye Funeral Home was Dr. Yelland's house. Then there was an apartment building, then there was my fathers shop, then there was a Chinaman, and then the corner.

We used to have a city hall [Ashburnham City Hall] on Hunter Street where Beckers is, when this was Ashburnham. They were always going to build us a new city building because the men go down there and play cards in the winter and there'd no place now. So Ashburnham had its own City Hall. It had a stage in it and used to have plays there and everything – Ashburnham Hall.

**When we first came, Dad, he was meats and got everything going. Bought cooked meats from Canada Packers. This was a butcher store to start with and then we got groceries.** We had a walk in box at the back and we had pop in the bottom, it was cold. We had Nielson's ice cream for years. We didn't scoop ice cream, we sold those mellow rolls.

At Peterboro Milk I got \$7 a week, then when I went to the Exhibition for Crimco for Peterboro Milk I got \$12 a week. Just while the exhibition was on. I worked from about 9-5 or 9-6 for five days a week for seven dollars. I put a dollar in the bank every week because I had the insurance to pay. I always had money in the bank. I got twelve dollars a day at Beatty's Transport. This was during the depression."

**Mrs. Cadd [Extendicare]**

"The Stony Lake, the Geneva, and The Rainbow, picnic boats that used to go up and down the river. **On market days they used to pick up the farmers** along the river and bring them to market. That was before they had cars."

**Mrs. McFarlane [Extendicare]**

"I was born near Norwood, but I have lived in Otonabee, eleven miles from Peterborough, for forty years.

No I was strictly a farmer's wife, a farmer's daughter and a farmer's wife. I'd say I worked as hard as anybody that goes to work, maybe harder, longer hours.

But then it was enjoyable, I had a happy life.

Mixed farming, all sorts of animals and it used to be horses that did the work in those days and then it got to be mechanical.

**We canned, in the older days,** we canned all out food, we did not have freezers you see, the first freezers we had were three miles from home, we put all out meat in that, but that was all.

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But until about 1934 we did not have a freezer, after that we did not can very much. You had to go down to the cellar, you could have an Ice box but we [did not have] an icebox long before the hydro came through. And then it was during the war time, the depression came along then and everything was very hard to come by. Refrigerators were very hard to come by. We did not get a refrigerator until a long time after we had the hydro. We still had to go down to the cellar. But you had to keep your cellar dark and keep the flies out of it. Nowadays your cellar can be as open as the rest of the house. It makes the house very much nicer in the summertime. It does not gather the moisture that it did when your house was closed up. We were very fortunate in having a big stone house which was entirely open when you opened all the openings. It was like living outdoors. Hot nights like this it would be wide open. All the doors and windows screened.

I think that farming is one of the nicest ways of living that I know of. Now that we have all the improvements it's not hard work. But it used to be real hard work.

That's one thing farming is the biggest gamble that I know of, you are dependent on the weather for everything, your wheat may freeze in the winter time, then you have no crop.

They're more specialized now, in my day it was all just general farming."

### **Mr. and Mrs. Shield**

"Yes we lived on a farm. I was on the 3rd Concession of Smith (three miles north of here) until [19]26, and we were married and lived up where Wallis Drive is now. That was out farm out there. It was a dairy farm and grain farm. We milked cows up there."

[Do you remember the Depression?]

"It was a time when you got no prices whatever for produce from the farm. We had to learn for to do without a lot of things in the country, make our own entertainment.

You remember on the farms, there were mice around. They were going around with tears in their eyes."

### **[Could you sell any produce from the farm?]**

"Nobody had the money to buy anything. There was no money then. I remember selling eggs during the Depression for 15 cents a dozen and everything else was in accordance with that. The pasteurized milk was 9 cents a quart, that was the lowest it went, but you could get raw milk for a quart for 7 cents or maybe less than that. For a nickel maybe. I sold many a quart of mil for 5

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cents. Hundreds of quarts for 5 cents. **Thirty cents for a bag of potatoes.** A ninety pound bag. There were no packages then, there were bags, ninety pound bags and 30 cents a bag. Butter around 25 cents and you could hardly swell it. Butter off the farm would be around 20 cents.

I always remember selling cream to the Central Smith Dairy and getting \$60.00 a month, for the whole month and we thought that was a lot of money to get out of it at the farm."

[Did you go to **Farmers Markets** in Peterborough]

"Yes. I don't remember a great deal about it. **The farmers market was upstairs where they sold butter and eggs and home baking and so on, under the town clock. And then the open market was down out on the market square.** I remember the winding stairs to get upstairs. People used to carry baskets of butter, it used to be school boys, I do not know, they got a nickel or 10 cents to carry peoples butter or eggs upstairs to sell. We did not have conveniences the at all. Washes were all hand wash. Sometimes a tub and scrub board and we just did what we did when things were better. We had to be more economical. **But we always had our own meat and eggs and milk and vegetables.** Nobody had any money. Everything was done the hard way. But we did not have the wants that we have now because there just wasn't the money around. But people had more sociability. Oh yes! Neighbours were maybe [meant] more to each other, helped each other out in any way they could.

There were always agents [who] came and they always asked to stay if it were mealtime. I think that was typical of farm people, different from other people.

We all came from farms around Peterborough and it was the best place to be in those days. **We had enough to eat anyway, you did not go hungry. Lots of people in town were. Farmers did not go hungry.** They had their own produce. I remember, there was so much relief done in part of the city and we sold milk for 5 cents a quart. Two big cans, 8 gallon cans. We took them to a house in the south end of the city and people went there with pitchers and little pails and the had vouchers to get milk from the township and the went to this house and got milk. So there was a lot of hardship in the town.

**We cured all our own meat. We always say there nothing like home cured ham.**

That was another social affair, maybe two or three families, [would] get together and make ice cream in the summer time, have strawberries or cake and so on.

It was 1911 when we got a telephone, I can remember that because my grandfather never could get used to the telephone ringing.

We used to have a dog churn for the butter, a dog would walk around in a circle and run the

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churn.

We never thought of not using cream whenever we wanted it for anything, I remember when my mother made tea biscuits, she would use cream.

On wash day they would get the big boiler on top of the stove and heat the water, they used to pound the clothes, and then in the winter time they hung them out on the line and they were frozen stiff. [You] just got them hung up before your fingers [would] freeze. The clothes all had to be boiled before they were washed or you thought they were not done. After that they had to be washed and rinsed and rinsed again.

**We preserved all our own fruit, never thought of buying anything like that, we made a lot of syrup and had a lot of that."**

**From: <http://www.ontariogenealogy.com/Victoria/history/victoriacountybiography2>**

Matthews, George (1834-1914). - Born Birmingham, Eng. 1851 came to Canada and farmed in Peterborough County. 1859, married Ann Smithson. Six sons, four daughters. 1860, settled in Lindsay, where after a time he founded a pork-packing business, later "The George Matthews Co. Ltd.", with headquarters at Peterboro and plants at Hull, Peterboro and Brantford. Took great interest in Baptist denominational work.

Matthews, George Sands (1867). - Son of G.M. Born in Lindsay. 1895, married Frances Ratcliff. Three sons, one daughter. Director of Matthews-Blackwell Ltd. Vice-Pres., Brantford Roofing Co. Treasurer, Niagara Silk Co. Vice-Pres., Brantford Industrial Realty Co. 1911, President, Brantford Board of Trade. Baptist. Conservative.

### **Notes from Kawartha Heritage: Proceedings of the Kawartha Conference 1981**

P. 170: Native plants of the Kawartha district: their value as food, yesterday and today by Blanche Pownall Garrett.

-a record of the native plants consumed by early settlers and their early methods of fruit and vegetable preservation- done at home not in processing facilities: first drying, then crocks, then jars –very abundant harvest of wild fruit in the Kawartha:

“by and large, the men and women who settled this county were adventurous, adaptable, able not only to make do with next to nothing but to lose no time in improving their lot. True, the first seasons were hard but it was not many years before there were mills to grind flour, carefully tended garden plots from which to stock the snug root-houses, maple vinegar for the winter’s pickled vegetables, maple sugar and wild honey for the winter’s store of preserves, They took great pride in the orchards and gardens planted in the wilderness with unbelievable discomfort



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and toil, But even after the wild fruit harvest ceased to be a stark necessity, they would hoard for a special occasion the bottle of wild raspberry vinegar, the sealer of wild plums in brandy, the glass of amber-coloured mayapple jelly.”

### **Maple Leaf Corporate History**

Canada Packers -formed 1927 in Toronto: amalgamation of the Harris Abattoir Company, Gunns Limited, and the William Davies Company (Canada’s oldest meat packing company founded in 1861s -located in Toronto at the old St. Lawrence Market)

1991- Maple Leaf Mills and Canada Packers Inc merge to form Maple Leaf Foods, Canada's largest food processor-controlled by Hillsdown Holdings

1995- bought by McCain Capital Association and the Ontario Teacher's Pension Plan Board.

### **Notes Kill and Chill**

-the five storoket for small-scale pork packers such as Laing Packing and Provision co. of Montreal, William Davies and Donald Gunn of Toronto, FW Fearman of Hamilton, and George Matthews of Peterborough.

-Turn of century: butchers would receive farm-killed hogs, some animals killed in separate slaughterhouses.

-1896: first provincial legislation to provide inspections for meat processing facilities in urban areas

-Meat packing was industrialized in the late 19th century

-1896: Meat and Canned Foods Act: passed in 1907- a meat inspection service began as part of the Department of Agriculture

\*\*interesting: in 1900, over 75% of the beef consumed in Toronto was slaughtered in local small scale plants but by 1920, 95% of the beef being consumed in Toronto was slaughtered and processed in large scale plants

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### **Excerpt: Peterborough, The Electric City: An illustration history by Elwood Jones and Bruce Dyer**

pg 41

" George Matthews, of Lindsay expanded to Peterborough in 1882. In 1892, Matthews was one of only 4 Canada Packers killing its own hogs; the company was well positioned when the British export market opened in the 1890's. The company with the advantage of six sons with management ambitions, also went into retailing stores in Peterborough and Ottawa where its two packing plants were located. The company known as Matthew's Blackwell after 1912, prospered during WWI and expanded into American markets. Local Peterborough plant becomes known as Canada Packers in 1927. The meat packing plant dominated Little Lake until the 1960's."

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## APPENDIX F



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