

Oldcastle
Co-op

History of Oldcastle Co-op

In February 1920 a charter was granted to the Oldcastle Farmers Co-operative Association. Actual business started in May 1920 Albert Kavanagh was the first manager after a short period in office Walter Jessop took over as Manager. The first Board of Directors were Walter Jessop, John McAuliff, Loftor LePain, G.B. Collins & Robert Halford.

The original building was a frame building 20' X 40' Grocery Store & Office. This was built on the original Walker Road that by this time was called The Co-op Road The office was just a very small room at the back of the store, most say you walked in and backed out. Clarice LePain was the book keeper a position she held until the time of her death in 1969.

It was a typical country store the farmers came in grabbed a seat on the nail kegs, cracker barrels or what ever was handy and sat around the little heater shooting the breeze. Groceries were the big item. Farmers came in by horse and buggy to pick up supplies. There was a grist mill & elevator.

In the 1930's they had a mobile store from a door to door walk in truck.

The company bought grain from the farmers which was shipped out by rail. Cattle and hogs were also shipped out. Percy McKee was a big cattle farmer in the area and had many cattle shipped in and out from the cattle yards. Hugh J O'Neal was a big hog farmer and shipped many hogs from the Oldcastle yard.

Coal was shipped in by rail and unloaded in a coal shed or in a great pile. It was great in the middle of winter to try and pick coal out of a frozen pile. I imagine a few choice words were uttered. However the hot words never seemed to melt the pile any.

The first gasoline and coal oil was teamed in from Windsor over mud roads. The first load consisted of 11 drums on a wagon and was stuck in the mud for two

hours when it reached Oldcastle it was sold out by the gallon. No large storage tanks in those days.

The first year's business was approx. \$150,000 with about 80 members the company continued to grow and in 1952 did a business of \$700,000.

The land was leased from what was then the Pere Marquette Railway later Chesapeake & Ohio now The Chrysler Greenway.

In 1935 the Co. leased Property from New York Central Railway at Auld Ontario where they operated an elevator. This operation was later closed. There were no storage facilities as we know them today.

In 1935 the Co. erected a corn-crib 19' X 7' in the Oldcastle yard to store the corn purchased from farmers. In the following years up to 1938 these were extended to 107' in length. The same year the Co. leased property at the corner of #3 and Walker road from Al & Triffle Leveque.

There was a service station, 2 service pumps and a Mechanic. This was operated for several years. An underground tank was later installed on the Oldcastle property and from this there own trucks were serviced as well as the needs of customers. In 1956 a petroleum agreement was signed with U.C.O. United Co-Op.

In the 1950's Abe Jessop lived in an apartment over the canopy of the grain elevator and was the live in night watchman.

Manson Jessop took over as manager in 1956 until his death in 1970

The co-op continued to expand over the years in 1938 a concrete block warehouse 24" X 60' was erected at the north end of the property adjoining the store and this was also the site of the new office 22' X 24'.

In 1940 the Co. signed an agreement and becoming affiliated with Canada Packers in Shur-Gain feeds.

In 1936 the Co-op surrendered the original charter and became known as Oldcastle Farmers Co-op Co. Ltd, and in 1949 the charter was again surrendered

and became Oldcastle Co-op and became affiliated with United Co operatives of Ontario. A drive was made for new members.

The directors of the new Co, were Henry Hartley, Newton Holden, Ernest Holden, Fred Frith, Stephen Esping. President was Henry Hartley a position he held until 1961. Secretary Ernest Holden.

1950 New elevator

1951 Built and equipped feed mill.

1955 Seed cleaner built and equipped

1956 New storage bins erected.

1957 New hammer mill

1958 More storage and new Sheller installed.

1959 New warehouse

1960 Grain dryer

1963 New Elevator

1964 Agreement with C.I.L. Agro-mart Bulk Fertilizer- anhydrous ammonia.

1965 Purchase 1 acre new land from Fred Sylvester

Erected 2nd new dryer and storage facilities.

1974 A new store with office space and new warehouse was opened just south of the original building.

Kenneth Hartley was manager some of the employees were Don McCann, Eavert Geelen, Lois Knight, Earla Mancattie, Mary Jessop and Tuffy Vanderback

Some strange deals in the early years In 1937 the Co-op rescued one bay mare as she stands no guarantee as a down payment on a tractor. The deal fell through and the mare returned to the farmer.

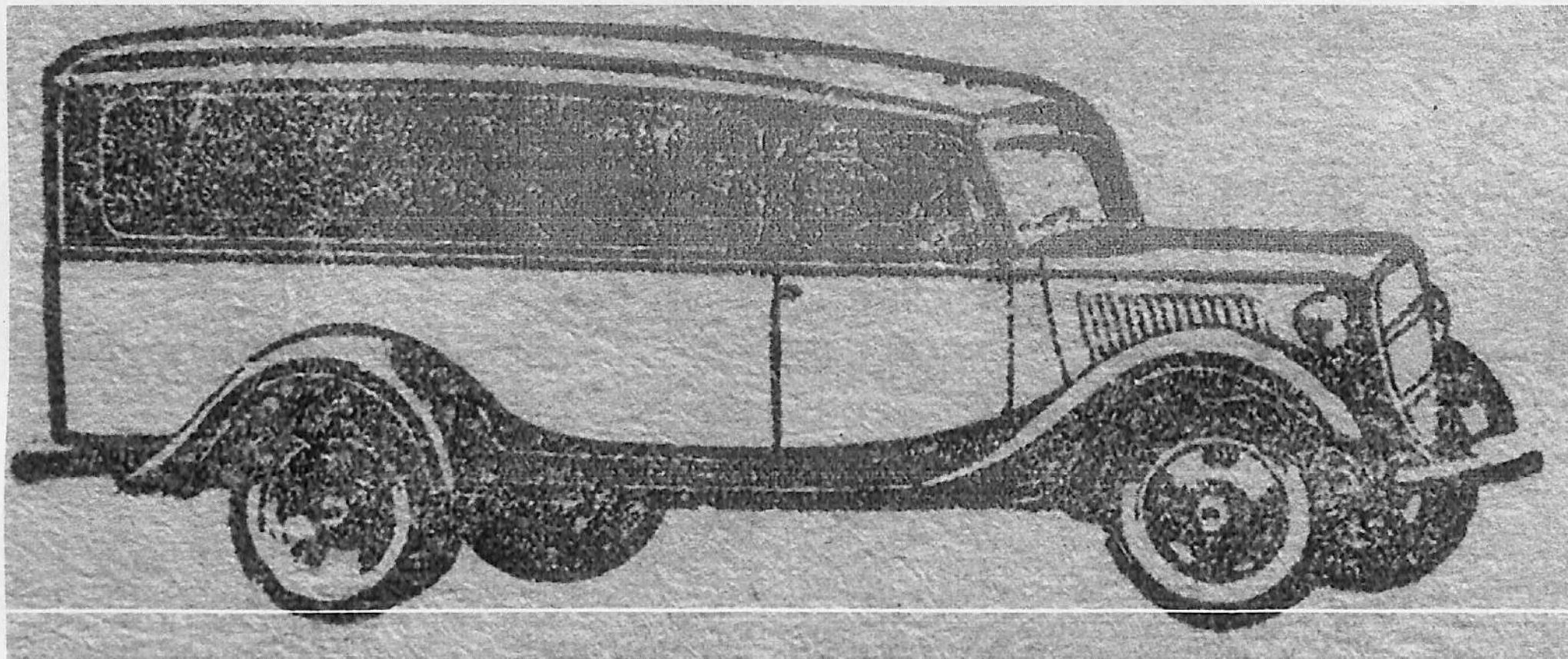
CO-OP - 50th ANNIVERSARY PHOTO 1970



Archive photo and historical information by Mary Jessop.

Walter Jessop was one of the original founders and the second manager of the Oldcastle CO-OP. This picture (taken in the late 1920s) shows him sitting on the step of the general store.

OLDCASTLE FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE CO.
GROCERY STORE TO DOOR FROM 1948 BILL



Co-Op Keeps Up to Times At Oldcastle

OLDCASTLE—The Oldcastle Co-operative is in step with the times.

The accent today is on speed and the co-operative has spent thousands of dollars this year ensuring that it can keep up with the rapid pace.

Thanks to the expenditures farmers will find their waiting time more than cut in half when they come to the mill with their crops. This was ensured when a new \$35,000 grain elevator went up this spring.

The elevator is designed to take more than 2,000 bushels an hour. It proved important time-wise when this year's fine wheat crop began rolling in by the truck and wagon load.

Marsh Builds New Cold Warehouse

Gordon T. Marsh, president of Marsh Frozen Foods Ltd., 2890 Tecumseh Rd. E., has confirmed that he is building a new 22,000-square-foot public refrigerated warehouse on Walker Rd., adjacent to the Highway 401 overpass.

The \$250,000 warehouse, which will be constructed of steel and aluminum and will be heavily insulated, is expected to be ready for occupancy in May.

To be known as Windsor Food Terminal, the building will provide facilities for Marsh Frozen Foods Ltd. The building will be equipped with fast-freezing machinery, and it will be freezing foods for home freezer service, as well as some other commercial freezing work.

The late Sydney Marsh established the family name in business here 45 years ago when he began making cement blocks. From the 1920's until 1945 the family business was confined to ice and coal, and in 1945 the company moved into the frozen food business, operating frozen food lockers for families for a number of years.

The company now employs a staff of 25 and is the distributor for Kraft foods for institutions, as well as frozen foods for wholesale and retail outlets in areas up to 100 miles from Windsor.

It operates five refrigerated trucks and picks up frozen orange juice in Florida for distribution in this area.

The new warehouse will provide extensive refrigerated facilities for cold storage warehousing to major food packers in this area.

See p. 4

Co-op Annual Meeting

During this time of the year members of the Oldcastle Co-Operative will be awaiting for the annual dividends paid by the Co-op. Close to 300 members from all parts of Essex County will share in the Co-op profits. Considering the unsteady prices of grain and unfavourable season, the Co-op came through with a fair year under their new management of Manson Jessop, son of the late Walter Jessop, who first organized the company in 1921. For some years only four directed its working but last year due to increased membership seven men were added to the Board. President, Henry Hartley, Vice-president, Steve Esping, secretary, John Bart, and four directors, Lloyd Fairbairn, Jim Weston, John Shuel and Leo Dufour comprise the present board. Members and directors will hold their annual meeting in the Sandwich South Townhall, Monday evening, March 11th, at 8 p.m. Report from auditor V. W. Jones, of Essex, election of directors for the coming year and other matters of importance will be on the agenda. Refreshments will also be served to those who attend. Oldcastle Co-op re-organized as a full Co-operative company in 1949 and has shown a rapid growth in its sales and members. Present company now is considered the most improved and up-to-date Co-Operative in Ontario. Facilities include a new feed mill, grain elevator, seed cleaner and now the petroleum business. Last year with diminishing coal sales the company entered the fuel business and has tripled its sales in just one years time. Farmers are more or less in the last few years shown more effort to organize to meet present day standards and find their own place in the world of business and finance. Unless farmers continue to become a tight organization of their own and continue to bargain they will revert back to the days of just becoming the familiar "hayseed" variety of citizen as he was once known. Continued effort of the tiller of the soil must be maintained and he has shown that his own business will thrive if he just works at it. Medical insurance, car insurance, fire insurance, life insurance, Credit Unions now are considered big business and farmers all battling towards more progress.

Farm Markets

Corn remained at \$1.15 per bush
Wheat held at \$1.54 and soya be

jumped to a new \$2.25 at this writing. Oats remained at 75c. Recent upping from 25c to 50c per ton on Western grain subsidy the past week may give a new outlook to farmers who use Western grain.

Many of Essex County's mill operators attended the annual Ontario Retail Feed Dealers' Association convention, held at Toronto the past week. Dr. S. A. Herodeh, chairman of the Industrial Accident Prevention Association; J. M. Appleton, president of Ontario Elevator Association, and Dr. L. A. Wilhelm, of the Quaker Oats Co., were the main speakers.

Members of the Shur-Gain Mills were to attend the banquet at the William Pitt Hotel, Chatham, Wednesday evening. G. A. Schell, executive vice-president of Canada Packers, was to speak to the local and Kent groups.

Manson Jessop, manager of the Oldcastle Co-op, and Steve Esping, company vice-president, left Sunday to attend the annual meeting of the United Co-ops. of Ontario, at Toronto. Oldcastle has the distinction of showing one of the best improvements of Ontario Co-ops. this past year.

1959 Annual Meeting March

Oldcastle Co-Op will hold its annual director and shareholders' meeting in the Sandwich South Town Hall at 8 p.m. Wednesday evening, March 18th.

Some three hundred members comprise the local Oldcastle Co-op at present and voting and election of officers will also be on the agenda.

Present board of directors of the Co-Operative include Manager Manson Jessop, President Henry Hartley, Vice-President Stephen Esping, Secretary John Bart, Directors, Leo Dufour, John Shuel, James Weston and Lloyd Fairbairn.

Dividends and interest checks no doubt are being mailed to its members all over Essex County within the next week.

OLDCASTLE HIGHLIGHTS

Co-Op Meets

Members and directors of the Oldcastle Co-Operative held their Annual meeting last Monday evening in the Sandwich South Townhall. Inclement weather with a heavy downpour of rain and bad driving conditions forced many Co-Op members to remain at home. Out of a possible three hundred members about twenty-five people turned out. Auditors report was read by V. W. Jones, who commented that the company had made great strides. Oldcastle Co-Operative was in a better position as the company was owned by its supporters. Mr. Jones commented "that he could see no great outlay of money as of 1957 and the company should be in good standing this year." Henry Hartley, president of the company informed the group, "that at least sixty per cent of the business was being done by its members which was a good sign." Director Leo Dufour from the River Canard area thanked those that elected him to the board, he said, "the company not only was doing a good business but also an honest business as well." Manager Manson Jessop hit out at the government for leaving the farmer in the lurch due to the high cost of living and unstable prices. Mr. Jessop claimed "farmers are only seventeen per cent of the population of Canada but it is no reason that they should be forgotten." We have members in this county and they should look into this situation and do something for the farmer." Lloyd Fairbairn, who was elected to the board last year and who also is a member of the Medical Co-Op, told of the success of the hospitalization plan. Mr. Fairbairn reported that subscribers to the Co-Op medical plan would receive a dividend this year. Manager James Cordery of the Imperial Bank at Essex commented that the company had made great strides. Mr. Cordery also warned those present that money was "tight" in Canada and that some "belt pulling" would have to be done. Mr. Cordery said recent loosening of some credit restrictions would help matters some, he hoped in another year. All members of last years board of the Oldcastle Co-Op were re-elected to office for another year. They are as follows. President, Henry Hartley; Vice-President, Steve Esping; Secretary, John Bart; Directors, James Weston, Leo Dufour, John Shuel and Lloyd Fairbairn.

Co-op Reports Record Year

Oldcastle Firm's Profit Hits Peak

2 Percent Dividend on Sales,
Purchases Declared in Statement

OLDCASTLE—Overcoming a bleak farm economic recession, Oldcastle Co-operative last year recorded its most profitable year since formation 37 years ago.

As profits of \$16,077 were reported, directors announced they would begin an \$8,000 expansion program. A new warehouse will be constructed for storage of fertilizer and building products.

In a prepared financial statement, the directors declared a two percent dividend to farmers on both sales and purchases. The previous high was in 1956 when one and one-half percent dividend was paid.

The overall financial picture of the Oldcastle co-operative is in direct contrast to practically all others in Essex County and dozens of similar organizations in Ontario.

Rain-drenched crops and declining prices cut most other co-operative profits to their lowest in several years. Credit problems caused nearly all co-operatives extensive concern.

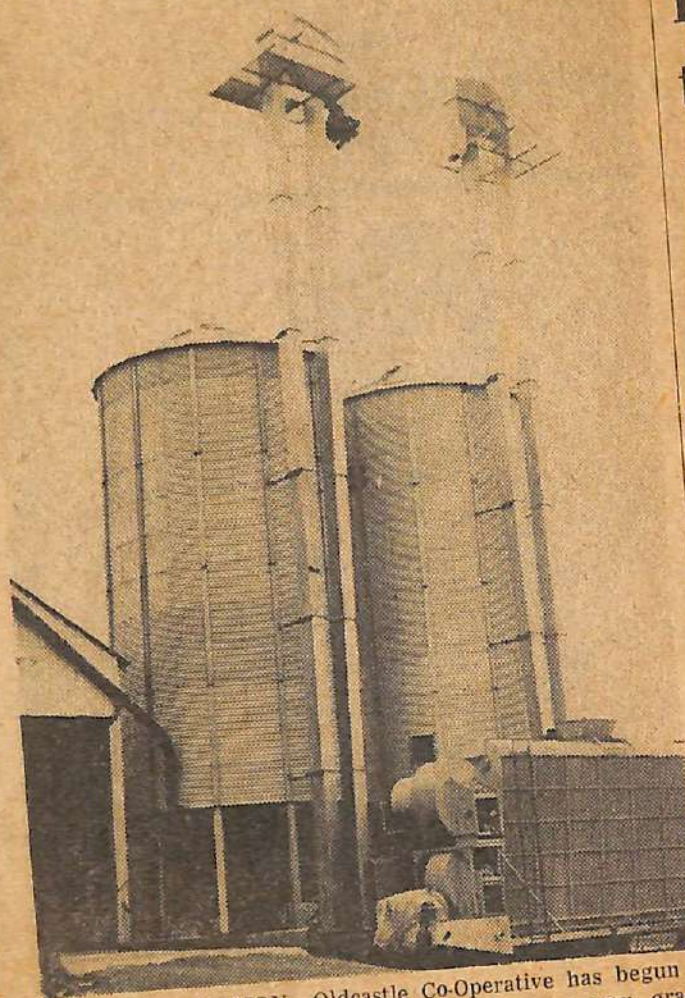
Officials said the sound financial situation in Oldcastle was due to the fact that the area was spared some of the excessive rains. Credit was held to a minimum," they explained.

The net profit of \$16,077 was nearly \$4,000 more than the previous high in 1956. The statement shows just under \$1,000,000 in sales.

Named to the directorate for 1958 were: Henry Hartley, John Bart, Stephen Esping, James Weston, Lloyd Fairbairn, John Shuel and Leo Dufour.

12—THE WINDSOR STAR, FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 1966

2 centres su



CO-OP EXPANSION—Oldcastle Co-Operative has begun a major expansion program. It is installing a new grain dryer, two new elevators and two new storage bins. These will more than double drying and storage capacity.

OLDCASTLE Mar 27-59 HIGHLIGHTS

By Carson Jessop

Co-op Annual Meeting

Oldcastle Co-operative held its tenth annual meeting since its organization as a full co-op in 1949. Actually the company was organized in 1921 but was then only Oldcastle Farmers Co-op Ltd. and it has been 38 years since the original business was established.

Out of a possible 400 members about 30 attended the annual meeting held in the Sandwich South Town Hall, Wednesday evening. One of fastest meeting was completed in about two hours time as the attending members finished up the 1958 business with a fairly successful year. Profits of the company were down some \$3,000 from the year before due to cut backs on margins of grain and the expansion of a new warehouse for more supplies. All told 400 members shared \$8,004.00 as compared to \$11,792.49 in 1957.

Shares in the Co-operative are \$50 but a person can become a member by investing \$10 and building his share up to \$50 by dividends from his year's business. Four per cent interest is paid on all money invested including the dividends paid to the member. Last year the company with an exceptional year paid 2 per cent on all purchases and sales but in 1958 the dividends were reduced to 1% on purchases and 1½% on sales to its members.

President Henry Hartley informed the group that at least 57% of the business was done by its members and showed the Company carried some loyal members and thanked the members as well as others who had done business with the Co-op.

Auditor V. W. Jones explained that the Oldcastle Co-op was among the large sales in the county with the sales over the million mark. Profits did not quite keep up to the sales because of grain competition and cuts in margin.

Bank manager James Cordery of the Imperial Bank of Canada at Essex also complimented the company and also informed members that credit would have to be watched in business within the next year.

Co-Operative members elected all of its board for the 1960 year and showed its faith in its directors.

Manager Manson Jessop thanked his board, employees and members for the co-operation in 1958. Mr. Jessop also explained in the very near future the company hopes to purchase another tank truck for the delivery of fuels to the Co-op customers.

Following the meeting the Oldcastle Women's Institute served the members coffee, cakes and sandwiches that was enjoyed by all. Some members also enjoyed a few games of cards following the meeting.

Canadian hockey fans and supporters of Toronto Maple Leafs were jubilant here Monday as the Leafs banged its way to 4th place.

Its some years since a hockey team has showed such spirit and come-back power when the chips were down.

From Mrs. Crowder's Typed Oldcastle History.

1953

Oldcastle Farmer's Co-operative

est. May 11, 1920

Manager - Walter Jessup

250 members

does \$700,000 business yearly

Has elevator for grain, feed mill, coal yard,
general store, seeds - seed potatoes, chicken feed,
gravel, sand, cement, fence posts

In summer high school boys are employed

Newcomer in 1953 is Frankie Mills

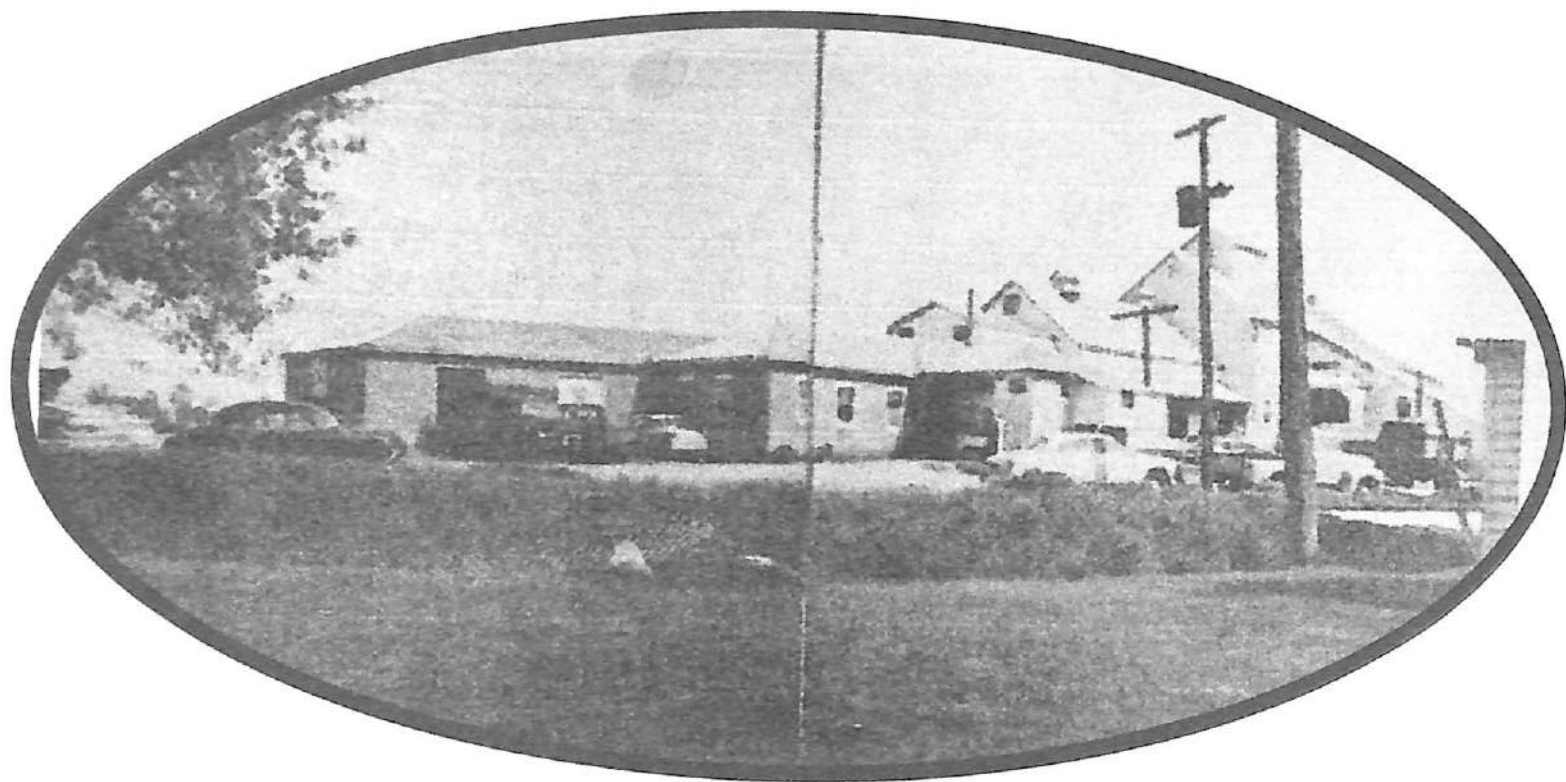
also employed are manager's 2 sons: Carson, Marion
who've worked there since High School days

Oldcastle is becoming now a
junction for the refuelling of
long distance diesel trucks.

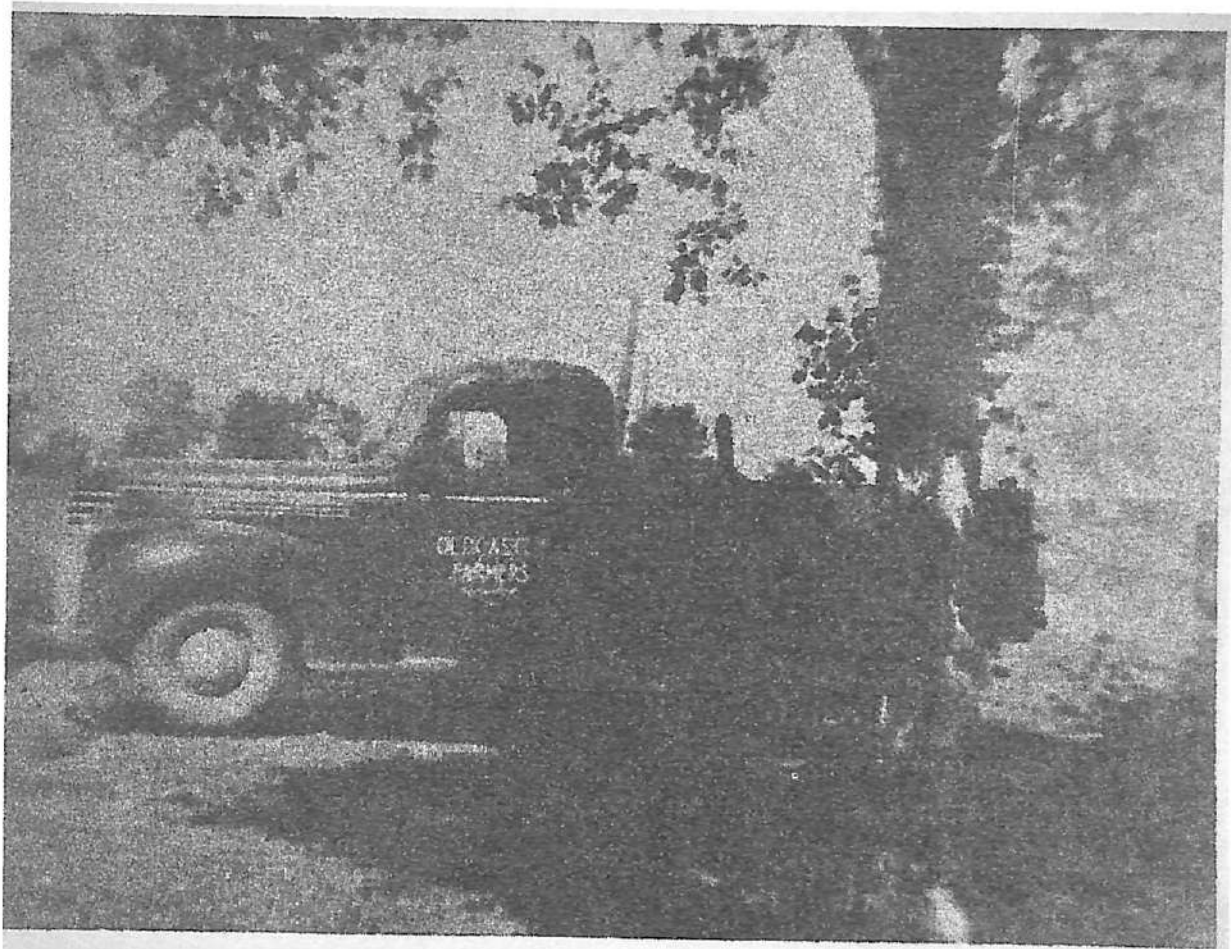
Trucks hauling salt for On-
tario highways during the win-
ter months are re-fuelling here
at the Oldcastle Co-op night and
day. Large tank trucks carry-
ing as high as 20 tons or more,
re-fuel here on their going and
coming to the salt plant in
South Windsor.

Jan. 23, 1959

Oldcastle Co-Op

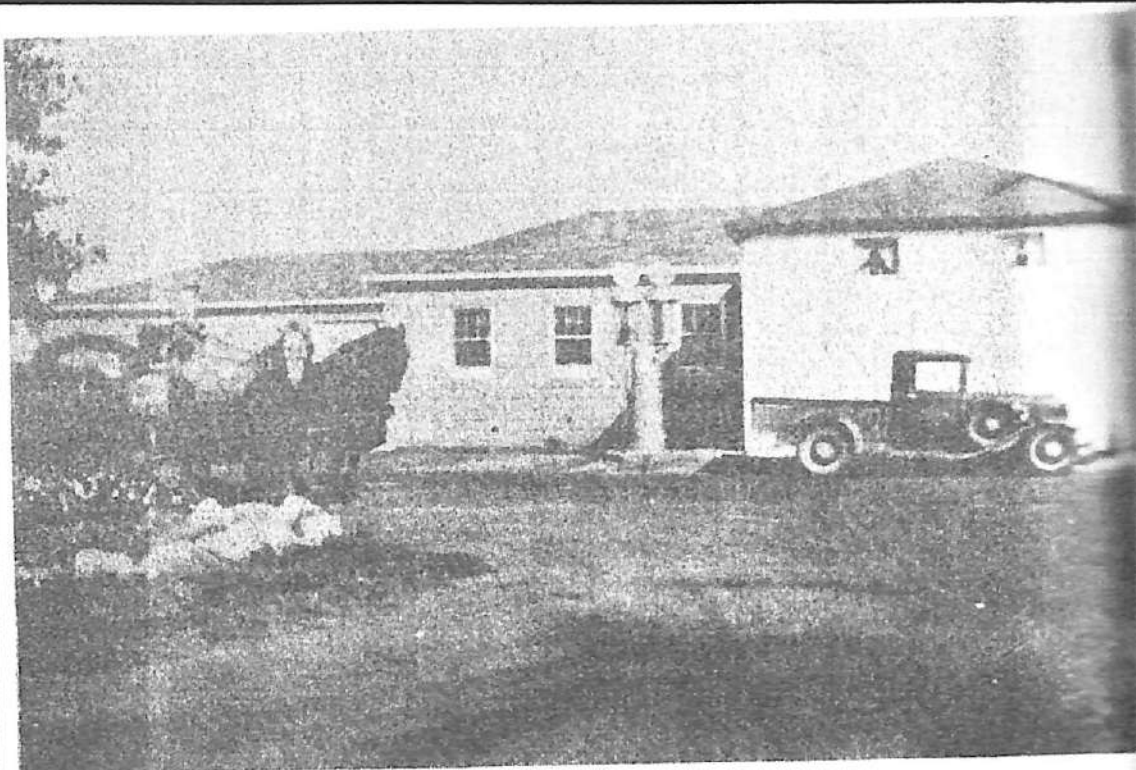


Mid 1950's



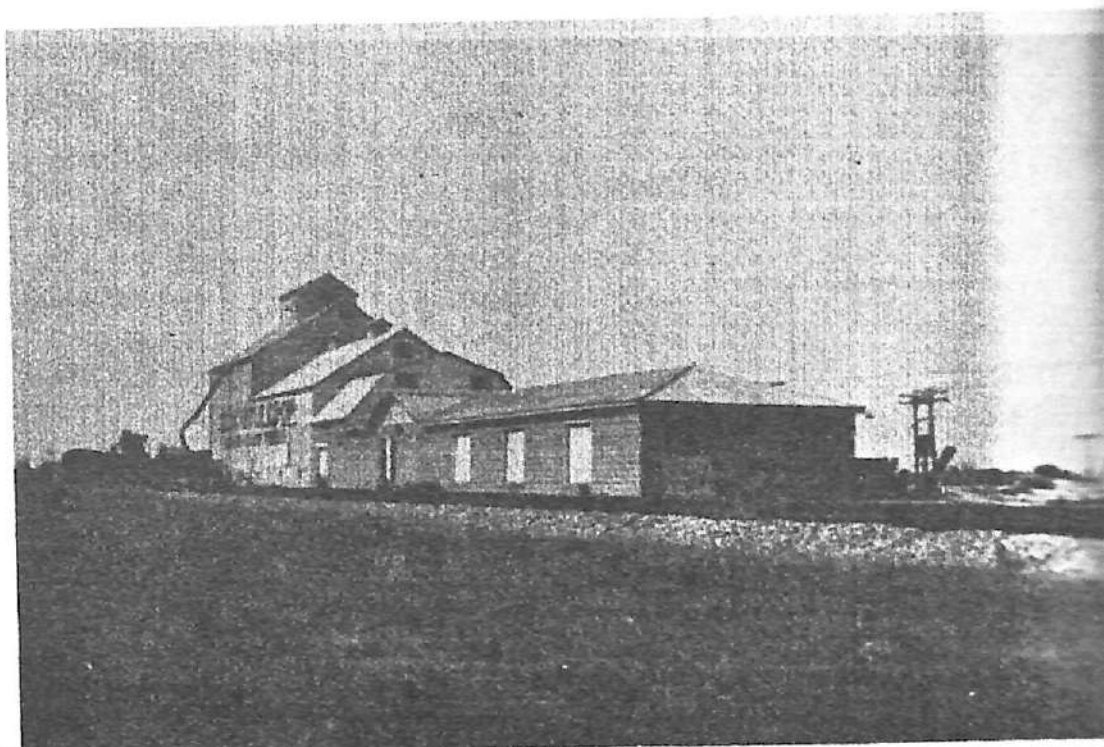
Oldcastle Farmer's Co-operative truck

Oldcastle Co-Op Truck



Local farm produce arriving at the Oldcastle co-op buildings.

The Oldcastle Farmer's Co-operative in the 1950's.



FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 1960

80% assessed, levied and collected as
tion aforesaid in each year for 10

Co-Op Meets

Oldcastle Co-Operative held its annual director and shareholders meetings in the Sandwich South Township Hall, last Thursday evening. Some forty members out of a possible four hundred turned out to review the 1959 business of the company. Attendance was cut down by inclement weather and also the annual Clark Canning Co. banquet for their growers being held at Harrow on the same night.

Profits of the company this year were down as were most farm organizations throughout the season. Weather dwindled many farm crops and was shown in financial statements of farm Co-ops in Essex County.

Oldcastle Co-Operative showed a profit of \$9,312.97 of which \$6,581.03 was retained in dividends to its members. Directors of the Co-Op declared a dividend to members of 1% on sale and purchases and also decided to refund the 1949 dividend to members in May of this year. Members would have to surrender their 1949 dividend certificates in order to collect the cash value.

Mr. V. W. Jones of Essex and company auditor for many years was again appointed as company auditor by the members.

James Cordery of the Imperial Bank, Essex, told the members that restrictions on loans were not as bad as appeared. People with good credit rating could still procure loans from the banks.

Lloyd Fairbairn told the group his six years of office in the Medical Co-Op had terminated and that he hoped a new representative would be elected.

Clyde O'Neil representing Co-Op insurance also told members of new auto and life insurance plans that could be procured through him as their representative here.

All members of the Co-Op board were re-elected to office and they include, Henry Hartley, president; Stephen Esping, vice-president; John Bart, secretary; directors, James Weston, John Shuel, Lloyd Fairbairn and Leo Dufour.

Following adjournment of the meeting members were served coffee, cakes and sandwiches by members of the Oldcastle Women's Institute.