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THE CANNING INDUSTRY  
IN  
WEBER COUNTY



NICOLAS APPERT  
1750-1841

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## Introduction

The problem of preserving foods in the regions of the earth where there are limited growing seasons has been of great importance for thousands of years. Grains were easily stored, but fruits, vegetables and meats presented their own problems.

Early preservation methods included drying, smoking, salting and storing in cellars or caves. When travel between the west (Europe) and the east (Asia) was established after Marco Polo, another dimension was added, spices. Each of these methods greatly changed the taste and the quality of the food. Also, foods could not be stored for a great length of time either.

As the towns grew into cities the problem of proper nutrition became apparent. This was further emphasized in the feeding of armies. Consumers were removed from the source of origin of the things they ate. Transportation of edibles became a great concern.

It was not until the time of the Napoleonic Wars that a concentrated effort was made to find a way in which foods could be preserved in a considerable quantity. Napoleon discovered that more of his soldiers were dying from poor diet or spoiled food than in battle. The emperor had already organized the Society for the Encouragement of New Inventions. This society now offered 12,000 francs for a satisfactory and simple method of preserving foods.

One of the contestants for the prize was a French candy maker named Nicolas Appert. Appert worked on this problem for a number of years during which time he decided that air caused food to spoil. If food could be kept away from air it would remain eatable for a long time.

It is interesting to note that he first cooked the food and then sealed it in tightly corked bottles. He then placed the bottles in boiling water and cook the food once more then sealed the bottles with wax. At first he had no idea how long the food needed re cooking.

Repeated experiments taught him that different foods needed different amounts of re cooking. By this trial and error method Appert was able to work out a fairly correct cooking chart.



After some 15 years of experimenting Appert presented his findings to the Society and the government awarded him the 12,000 franc prize on January 10, 1810.

The Appert method of pre-cooking is still the basic method used in the canning industry today - blanching and exhausting. To exhaust means to draw out excessive air from a product such as tomatoes which product is preserved in its own liquid medium as compared to peas which are recooked in an entirely different liquid.

While Appert was working with glass containers in France, Peter Durand was experimenting with metal containers in England. He called these containers "cannisters" a word the English used for containers for tea and coffee. The word was soon shortened to "can".

Durand had a number of problems with the cans, they would burst during the cooking stage. To stop this he left a hole in the top of the can during the cook, which hole was soldered shut after the cook.

It wasn't until A. K. Shriver invented the pressure cooker in 1874 that this problem was really solved. His pressure cooker was later enlarged to hold a number of crates of cans and received the name of retort.

At first cans were hand made. The body blanks were cut by hand, rolled into cylinders and soldered. Bottoms and 'hole and cap' lids were also soldered to the cylinder. This hand made process was slow and expensive.

In 1847 another invention gave a new impetus to a struggling industry, the stamp can method.

The stamping method is described in these words "a flat sheet of tin-plate is fed into a machine which cuts to the proper size smaller pieces called body blanks and lids and bottoms." A worker called a body-maker rolled and bent these blanks into cylinder form and hooked them together by hooks already bent on the edges. Flux was added and the seams locked together, pressed tight and soldered by hand. The bottoms and lids were then soldered into place.

The hole in the lid was large enough to permit the can to be filled. After the can was filled a cap was soldered over the hole. However there was a small opening in the cap through which air could escape while

the can and contents were being heating for sterilization. The small hole was then soldered shut and the product was ready for the market.

The small 'hole in the cap' style of can is still used in the canning of condensed milk. You can see a small 'drop' of solder on the lid where it was soldered after sterilization but this is now done by machine.

I have in my possession at the time of this writing one of the cans made by the stamp method. Let me describe it. The cylinder is 4 inches in diameter and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches tall. The cylinder was hand soldered. The bottom and the "hole in cap" lid were also both hand soldered to the cylinder. In the top is a 3 inch hole (see picture) which permitted the can to be filled, hand packed, without cutting the product into rather small pieces.

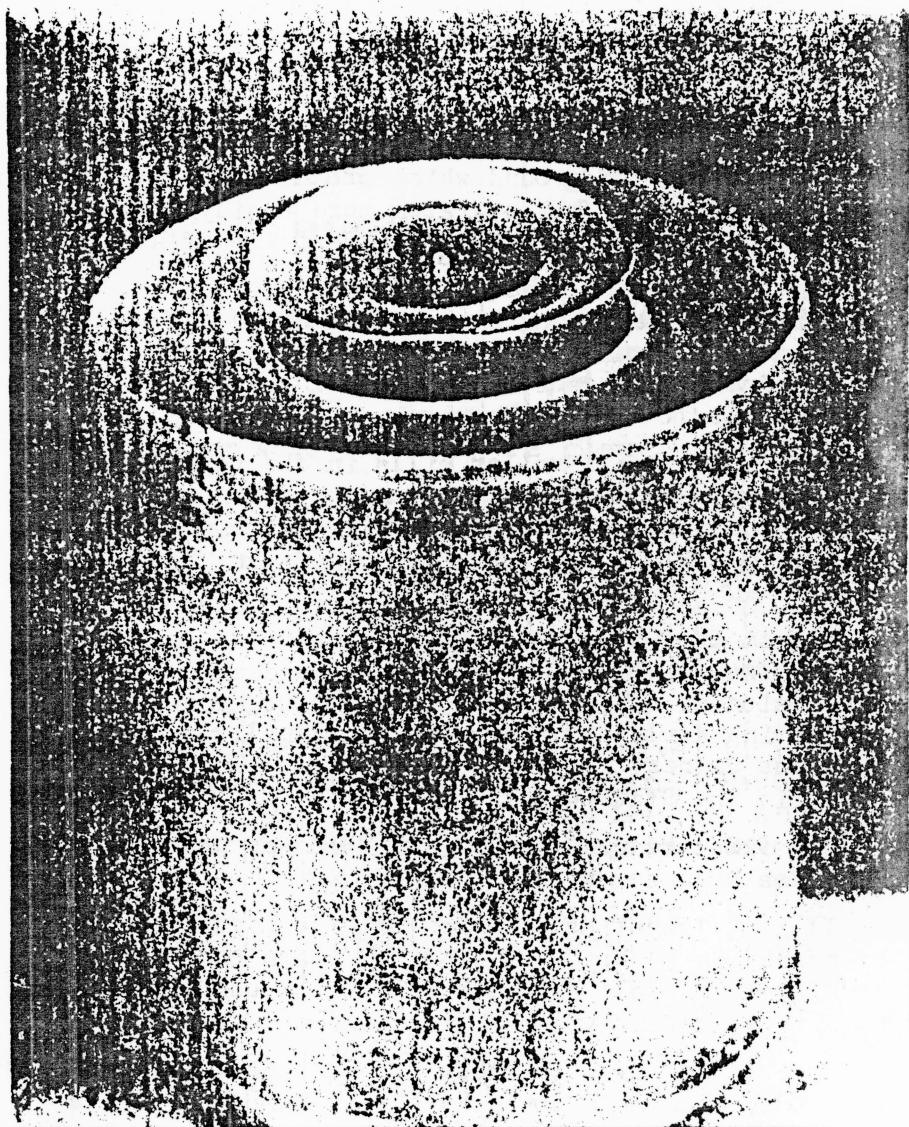
This style of can was used in the early days of the canning industry in Utah.

Near the end of the 1890s, another innovation came into the canning business, the "bouble-seamer" method of attaching the lids was invented.. A thin film of rubber compound was put in the curl of the lids which lids were crimped onto the cans after the cans had been filled. This film and the tight crimping process reduced the spoilage in the canned product almost to nil.

Let us now look back and see what had been happening to the preservation of foods in bottles. In 1858 John L. Mason invented a method of making glass jars with threads on the top, which made it easy to screw on a metal cap and the jar became air tight. It was not until about 1870 that this inovation was produced and put on the market in much volume.

It had also been found that lids made with ferrous metal would rust too soon, so they turned to zinc to solve this problem.

# HOLE AND CAP CAN



## CANNING IN WEBER COUNTY

The 1880s brought to the state of Utah, among other things, two innovations in food processing which would change the eating habits of the area in keeping with what was already happening in the rest of the country.

These two industries have had greater impact on the city of Ogden, Utah than any other community in the Great Basin.

The first of these two industries to arrive was the roller method of making flour from grains. Wheat could now be crushed not ground which process made it possible for the product to be separated more easily into different sizes, from fine flour or the germ of the wheat to the outer husks called bran.

Prior to this time grains were cracked and ground between mill stones, a slow and cumbersome method. One can read about gristmills in another pamphlet in this series.

From a few small roller mills in the beginning of this industry in Ogden, this town grew to become the largest center of the milling industry in the area.

The other industry was the canning of vegetables and fruits. Of the two industries canning had a much more difficult time to get started, reached its peak soon after the end of World War I, struggled through the depression of the thirties, had a resurgence of vitality during World War II and then gradually dwindled to just one cannery in Weber County in the 1980s and only three in the State of Utah.

The first canning factory in Utah was located in Ogden as will be explained later.

It is interesting to note that the first produce to be canned in Weber County and the State of Utah was tomatoes. The sole survivor of this industry in Weber County in the early 1980s processes only tomato juice.

With the arrival of these two methods of processing of foods, consumers could have on a moments notice and easily obtainable such items as many grades of flour, which led to the establishment of the baking industry later on, and canned fruits and vegetables could be heated when necessary and placed on the table. Seasonal vegetables and fruits such as peas, beans, tomatoes,

corn, peaches, pears etc. were now enjoyed the year round.

In order to understand the impact that these two industries would have on Ogden let us take a quick look at the make-up of this city and its surroundings at the time of their arrival.

Ogden was a small agricultural community. Four main ditches and canals irrigated gardens and farms south of Ogden River to the neighborhood of 34th street on the south, from Quincy Avenue on the bench to the Weber River on the west.

The main concentration of the population was in this area. There were small clusters of homes north of the Ogden but these were not regarded as more than suburbs of the 'city' because we read in the Ogden City directories of the 1880s that the addresses of those people who lived south of Ogden River were listed by street numbers and street names, while those on the north side of the river were "north of the river".

We will first direct our attention to the populated area of Ogden near the Weber River because it was there that the first canneries were located. As already stated the first cannery in the state was established in Ogden.

The area now occupied by the OUR&D (Ogden Union Railroad and Depot company) was a fertile and productive farming area.

When the early Mormon settlers arrived in Utah they were encouraged to establish small farms where each family would grow enough for themselves and have a moderate surplus to use in bartering for other goods and services. These small farms helped establish the canning industry in Utah, but ironically they were one of the two main factors which eventually brought about the demise of the industry in our area.

In the 1880s there were four railroads doing business in Ogden, The Union Pacific, the Central Pacific and two narrow gauge lines the Utah Northern and the Denver and Rio Grande Western.

When the Union Pacific Railway arrived in Ogden in 1868-69 and continued on to Promontory Mountain it was constructed through many of the fertile farms west of 'town', and about one block west of Wall at 29th street.

By 1886 the railroad 'yards' consisted of no more than three tracks, not the great number as of today. The remainder of this area remained as farms.

Home preservation and storage of foods was in cellars or pantries or in glass jars which were sealed tight with wire bails on glass stoppers or by drying.

The raising of vegetables for processing on a commercial scale began in Utah in the year 1886. Mrs. A. C. McKinney, widow of one of the two men who established the first cannery gave us an account of the events of that year and the first factory in an interview with Maurice Howe which was published in the Ogden Standard-Examiner the 17th February 1929. Mrs McKinney tells us that her husband Alexander C. McKinney and Robert Lundy came to Ogden from Denver in May 1886.

By August McKinney and Lundy had leased a piece of property from Fred J. Kiesel on the west side of the Union Pacific Railroad on 9th street (29th). There had been a pickle works there prior to the lease by the canning people. McKinney and Lundy called their cannery the Colorado-Utah Canning Company.

Quoting Mrs. Lundy, "We operated the factory from August 28 until sometime in October that first year and our entire output amounted to 1800 cases." According to Dr. Alvin Carpenter of the Utah State Agricultural College in a publication of September 1956, "the first few years of the industry, tomatoes constituted the only vegetables packed."

Where the cans were made for the first few years of the industry in Utah we were not able to determine.

The choice of the location for the cannery on the west side of the railroad was because of its close proximity to the many small farms just west of the "tracks" in those days. There were only three or four sets of tracks running through the 'yards' at that time, not the great number as of the 1980s.

In the interview Mrs. McKinney told of some of the problems the new enterprise had to face. One of the first, "It was nearly impossible to get any farmers to raise canning crops for us. We were strangers and the growers said they had been deceived before, so few of them would agree to put in any tomatoes for us".



"It was Tim Malan, an Ogden business man, who finally got the farmers to grow crops we could can. Mr. Malan went around to the country districts where he was well known and said to the farmers, 'I will guarantee that Mr. McKinney will buy all your tomatoes and if you will plant them I even guarantee to pay you for any he does not take'."

Mrs. McKinney further reported that they paid the farmers \$6 a ton for their tomatoes and the peelers 4¢ a bucket 'for removing the skins'. "As I remember we sold them for \$1.85 per case," 24 cans.

"In later years we increased our output until we were shipping carloads of canned goods to the east, where we found a ready market for all we could pack. The demand was always good for Utah fruits and vegetables.

The original company was dissolved in 1887. That year the McKinneys built a factory a little over a block north of the original plant and still on the west side of the railroad tracks. Mr. Lundy remained in business at the initial location. The McKinneys named their company The Ogden Canning Factory, Lundy retained the name of the Utah Canning.

The Ogden City directory for the year 1890 lists the factory and residence of A. C. McKinney as "on Pacific Ave. between 27th and 28th". The McKinney company remained at this location until the harvest of 1899 at which time it was moved to the "north side of 21st street west of Wall" with the residence of the McKinneys at the same address.

By changing to this area of town Mr. McKinney hoped to attract growers along the Shupe-Middleton ditch which irrigated farms on the south side of Ogden River all the way to the Weber River as well as attract some of the farmers north of the Ogden on the Dinsdale Ditch and maybe from the community of Marriottsville, as it was listed in the 1900 city directory.

In October 1902, Alexander McKinney died at the early age of 55. The untimely death of this pioneer canner brought to an end the Ogden Canning Company, which, during its 15 years had canned tomatoes, plums, peas, apples, corn, pears, catsup, berries, pumpkins, string beans and peaches, according to Mrs. McKinney.

As already stated the McKinney operations, along with the Lundy factory at the original location, produced quality canned vegetables and fruits which were shipped all over the country . These products established a reputation for quality products throughout the nation, which reputation was closely guarded by later processors.

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In the 1888 edition of the Utah Gazeteer and Directory for the entire State of Utah, we learn that the Utah Canning Company was owned and operated by Robert Lundy and was located 'on the Union Pacific Railway west on 9th', which was listed as the residence of Mr. Lundy.

1889 - It was that year that Isaac N. Pierce appeared on the Ogden scene according to the Ogden City directory, at which time he was listed as a Real Estate dealer, place of business 336-25th, with residence on 27th street between Adams and Washington.

The following year, 1890, the Ogden City directory listed the Utah Canning Co. with Robert Lundy as president and Isaac N. Pierce as secretary and treasurer.

According to H. L. Herrington, who became president of the Utah Canning in 1918, the company had the following results in the first year of operations, 1888, "The first cases of goods packed were approximately 4,000 cases of tomatoes which were grown on thirty-five acres."

In the directories for 1892-1893-1894 the company's name appeared as the Colorado and Utah Canning Company. In 1895 the name appeared once more as the Utah Canning Company with Robert Lundy as president and I.N. Pierce as secretary and treasurer.

In the early 1890s soon after Mr. Pierce joined the company they started to process Pierce's Pork and Beans a well known brand to the 1980s. It has been a favorite of campers, hikers, sheep herders, hunters and house wives all those years. The original design on the labels has not been changed in over 90 years, the original recipe is essentially the same.

The mid 1890s saw the entire country caught in a deep depression which reached its deepest point in what became known as the "panic of '96". It is not clear as to exactly what happened to the Utah Canning Company during that period. We do know that Mr. McKinney's company weathered the storm, his company processed foods with out interruption.

We learn from the 1895 and 1896 directories that Mr. Lundy changed his residence from the canning factory to the 'south east corner of Robinson and Fillmore' and was a Real Estate agent. In 1896 Lundy moved his residence to the 'east side of Gibson 4th house south of 17th street.'

I. N. Pierce was employed, 1895 through 1898, by the George A. Lowe hardware Co, hardware dealers for many years in Ogden.

What took place at the old cannery, 29th and Pacific, is not clear. We suspect that it was operated on a limited basis. Fortunately, during that time, a group of progressive business men of Ogden realized that the canning industry would be of benefit to the community and that by proper business practices and management that the Utah Canning Co. could be made into a good financial venture.

The first stock holders included such men as Thomas D. Dee, who was associated with a number of successful businesses, David Eccles, the founder of the early Eccles' businesses, George H. Matson, E. W. Mattson and James Taylor. For a reported sum of \$12,000 they gained control of the cannery.

In 1897 the name of the Utah Canning again appeared in the Ogden directory, having been omitted for two years. Thomas D. Dee was listed as president with E. W. Matson as secretary, with offices at 24th and Washington in the Utah Loan and Trust Bldg.

The year 1899 saw the name of I. N. Pierce again affiliated with the Utah Canning. He assumed a prominent position in the organization in the area of productions. Under his keen insight a number of innovations were introduced into the company.

At the turn of the century there <sup>were</sup> a number of new canneries established in Utah and Weber County. Competition became keen for the farmers crops, the labor market and consumer acception.

From 1898 through 1905 the leadership of the Utah Canning remained unchanged. During that time many of the policies of the company were formed which became the bases for the long life of this concern. The Utah Canning Company remained in the canning field longer than any other company in Weber County and possibly in the entire state of Utah.

One of these innovations was the utilization of the canning plant not only during season of late summer and fall but the entire year.

To the processing of Pork and Beans, which was done in the off-season, they added such items as hominy, pumkins, maple syrup and other things to their list.

Concentrated maple syrup came from New England, from far away Asia came beans just the right size for their pork and beans (they were smaller than those used today), from South America came many of the spices to flavor the products. All these contributed to the fame of their canned goods which opened even further the markets of the east for Utah canned goods, the markets into which Messrs McKinney and Lundy had entered with such initial success. The good name of quality canned foods from Utah built up in those early years helped other canners who were to come in their wake.

On July 9, 1905, Mr. Dee died at the early age of 60, at which time Isaac N. Pierce became the president of the company, the office which he held until he retired in 1917.

During the time that Isaac Pierce was president of the Utah Can there were a number of factors which arose which called for shrewd leadership and good insight into the future of canneries in general in order to survive. Many attempts were made by newly formed companies and different individuals to enter the canning game, making competition for the farmers products rather keen.

The farmers organized so that they could receive better prices for their crops, especially when they raised quality produce. The railroad yards near the Utah Canning factory were expanding, the OU&RD (Ogden Union Railway & Depot Company) was gobbling up the farms adjacent to the cannery.

Until the beginning of the First World War farmers delivered their vegetables and fruits to the canneries by horses and wagons. With the small acreage left near the west 29th street cannery this would ordinarily mean the end to a successful cannery in that location. A fortunate turn of events took place in the entire country, Trucks were being put on the market for hauling merchandise.

Mr. Pierce was one of the first to bring in some of these trucks with their hard rubber tires to deliver peas from stationary viners a few miles from the plant, as well as tomatoes and other vegetables from the collector stations conveniently located close to the outlying farms.

The Utah Canning Company survived.

In 1918 H. L. Herrington became president, secretary and general manager of the company. After one year as "all three" Joseph F. Barker became secretary of the company. These two gentlemen guided the destiny of the company until the year 1933 at which time the name of Dee once more appeared in the leadership of the concern.

Laurence T. Dee became president with Joseph F. Barker as general manager. Five years later Mr. Barker became president and Lawrence Dee vice-president and treasurer. In 1957 the name of Thomas D. Dee appeared for the first time as an officer of the company. He replaced Lawrence T. as treasurer.

By 1960 the Utah Canning Company had expanded outside of Weber County and the State of Utah, having plants in the north west. That year Joseph F. Barker became chairman of the board and L. T. Dee was named president with T. D. Dee vice-president and general manager.

Another reorganization took place in 1963 and the name of the company was changed to The Utah Packers with Herbert D. Landis as president, L. T. Dee became v. pres. of the Mountain States Implement and Thomas D. Dee went into the investment business. Joseph Barker became affiliated with his son Thomas who had entered the food brokerage business several years earlier.

In 1972 the old Utah Canning Company, now the Utah Packers, like so many other canneries of the area, deemed it a financially sound move to bring to an end a highly successful canning business in Weber County. From 1886 through 1972 a period of 86 years, this pioneer cannery in the state of Utah, located at 29th and Pacific all this time, which had been an innovator of many practices in the canning game as well as a great leader in this industry in Utah, closed its operations in Utah.

Over the years the employees of this company numbered into many thousands, the total amount of money distributed to the growers of the area cannot be estimated. When the

Utah Canning Company faded from the scene there was only one processing cannery left in Weber County. This cannery will be treated later.

Some of the reasons for the demise of the canning industry will be discussed near the end of this treatise.

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The first mention of cans' being manufactured in Ogden was in the 1890-1891 Ogden City directory, The Utah Stamping Company, located on Third Street between Washington and Grant avenues.

The name 'stamping company' tells us that the cans were machine made, and or at least were cut out by machine and hand formed and soldered.

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In the Ogden City directory, 1897, we find that a cannery by the name of "The Salt Lake Valley Canning Company" had been built at "360 Walnut Street (between 3rd and 4th streets). This location was a convenient spot close to a source of cans as well as a fairly large number of small farms in the area. In the same directory William Craig is mentioned as living at 364 Walnut and as "president of a canning company".

In a small publication called, THE JUNCTION CITY, no date given but we suspect that it was published circa 1912 we find what amounts to a number of written articles praising the merits of different types of businesses in Ogden. Concerning the Salt Lake Valley Canning we read:

Wm W. Craig, president and manager - No locality in the intermountain states equals the Great Salt Lake Valley Canning Company in the production and canning of choice fruits and vegetables. And this plant established by Wm W. Craig is one of the earliest and one of the best established canneries..... When you have seen the system and neatness with which the produce from the long train of farm wagons is received, prepared and packed, you will always ask for the "pure foods" from the Salt Lake Valley Canning Company".

The name of the company was changed to the Craig Canning Company in 1917 and was listed on Hudson Ave. (now Kiesel) near 3rd street. This same year Craig opened a branch factory in Roy, Undoubtedly influenced by the great demand for canned foods during World War I.



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The Roy branch operated until after the 1930 canning season, the Five Points plant closed at the end of the 1934 campaign.

The listing of the names of the officers of the W. W. Craig Canning Company from 1920 will give us an insight into the struggle that so many canneries had in order to remain in business. Changes were made in hopes that the changes might be the solution to the problems which beset the industry in general.

In 1921 all of the officers of the company were members of the Craig family. In 1922 Henry D. Olson became v-president and treasurer. (We will watch Mr. Olson from time to time). In 1924 George W. Goddard became president with H. D. Olson as v-president and Wm Varney as treasurer. (Watch for the names of Goddard and Varney later on). H. Dobson was listed in the Ogden directory as principal owner and general manager in 1930. 1933 J. Ellis became the manager. In 1934 the Craig Canning Company closed its doors.

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In the Bicentennial History of Hooper we read that Nephi Hardy "raised good gardens and had a good orchard, so he built a family canning factory, This was a succesful project, so he and Lars Johnson built a larger canning factory. At first they did their canning in five gallon cans, and sealed them with red sealing wax. Later they used one gallon cans and soldered them shut. This Hooper factory burned down and so Nephi built a factroy by the railroad in Roy.

Soon thereafter Nephi Hardy joined with Lars Johnson, Joseph Fowers, Joseph Manning, William Wadsworth and W. J. 'Jake' Parker and built a cannery on the south side of Hooper Slough.

We are not given the date of the construction of this cannery but it was in operation as of October 1897 because as of that date Nellie Wood brought suit in the courts for \$15.60 for unpaid wages. She won and received her wages plus court costs of \$2.60.

The people of Hooper were proud of the quality of the tomatoes which were grown there. In Mr. Belnap's book we read, "The soil in Hooper section being a little alkaline, counteract some of the acid in tomatoes, thus giving them a good flavor."

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We will treat the third cannery in Hooper later as we are attempting to list the companies in the chronological order of their beginning.

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We now quote from the book BENEATH BEN LOMOND'S PEAK, "Just before the close of the 19th century, Nephi Hardy built the first canning factory in Roy. Having been operated by different owners, it had a good outlet for the farmers' produce".

From FOOTPRINTS OF ROY we learn the following, "In 1898, Nephi Hardy built the first canning factory in Roy..... It became the backbone of Roy in providing an outlet for farmers' crops and employment. Third in Utah -2

It is reported that this factory canned 10,000 cases of vegetables the first year and was able to pay all expenses. In 1900 they also canned 10,000 cases from which they cleared \$3,000. The Hardy family raised most of the vegetables which they processed except for a few tomatoes grown by their neighbors.

The Hardy factory in Roy later became the Wm Craig Canning Company mentioned above, and after that it became the Robins Canning Company until the late 50s.

The people of Roy, like those of Hooper and Plain City, claimed that their tomatoes were the best for canning because of the peculiarities of the soil there. FOOTPRINTS OF ROY tell us that "The alkali in the soil reduced the acid in the tomatoes, making them especially edible".

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On December 24, 1900 the Articles of Incorporation of the North Ogden Canning Company were properly filed. The original incorporators and directors were as follows: James Enoch Randall, President and director, James Ward vice-president and director, James Storey, sec and treasurer, Alexander Brewer, treasurer and director, with the following as the rest of the directors: Henry Barker, Newman Barker and Lyman Barker.

The canning factory was built at 2000 north Washington. James Randall managed the operations for the first year then David E. Randall was appointed superindendant, in which capacity he served until 1946. We now list the presidents of the company over the years:

James E. Randall 1900-1946

Earl A. Randall 1946-1962

Leroy Randall 1962 until his death May 20, 1970

Leslie Randall 1970 at which time the plant was sold to Lloyd Searle and the corporation was dissolved.

The North Ogden Canning marketed its products under the label "Utah's Pride".

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In 1900 the Adams Nursery and Tin Can Manufacturers Company opened for business on "west 24th street near County Road". with W. J. Menzies as president. Mr. Menzies guided this company through its formative years. The extension of 24th street to the south-west and now called Pennsylvania was County Road.

The Adams company constructed a brick building, which is still extant, in which they not only made tin cans, but they also installed canning equipment after a year or two.

In 1903, the company was reorganized and took the name of Wasatch Gardens and Orchard Canning Company, with Menzies still as president and William Van Alen as general manager. The reorganization did not affect the operations as cans were still made there as well as the canning of vegetables and fruits. As the name implies, they canned both fruits and vegetables, in fact, this plant was the first cannery in the county as a processor of fruits.

We will see more of this plant and its future owners later, but first we must set the stage for this.

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After the second cannery in Hooper was destroyed by fire, a third factory was constructed at 5680 west and 5500 south. At first this cannery was farmer owned, a sort of cooperative. It was not too long after the start of this enterprise that William J. "Jake" Parker, one of these farmers, gradually became the leading factor in this undertaking. Jake eventually took over the venture and expanded it into a flourishing business.

In 1912 Mr. Parker enlarged the operations by building a small plant in West Weber at what is now 1250 south and 4250 west. Jake's brother Arnold ran this factory until Mr. Parker sold his entire canning business to the Utah Packing Corporation.

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In Mr. Belnap's book on Hooper we find the first mention of viners in WEber County. Viners were used to shell peas for the canneries and will be described and pictured later.

We should keep in mind that we were still in the horse and buggy days, gasoline powered trucks were just arriving on the scene at the beginning of World War I

About the time that Mr. Parker entered the canning business in full control of the Hooper cannery, in the early 1900s, there was a cannery built in Riverdale, on the east side of the Union Pacific railroad tracks just north of the old Riverdale Road's crossing of the Weber River.

N. O. Bybee was president, J. A. Child vice-president, secretary and treasurer with J. T. Bybee as manager. As you can see by the names of the officers that this was an attempt by some of the residents of Riverdale, South Weber and Uintah to bring into their communities an outlet for their farm products. They called their factory the Riverdale Canning Company.

In 1910 Jake Parker bought the controlling interest in the Riverdale Canning Co, The three plants owned by MR. Parker canned vegetables under the label "Great Salt Lake Brand".

Before the beginning of the First World War another canning company was started in Roy and was located about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile south of 6000 south and on the west side of the Union Pacific tracks, the Star Canning Company. Ere long this factory also came into the hands of Jake Parker. In 1914 Mr. Parker gained control of the Wasatch Orchard Company in west Ogden. He then controlled five canning plants in Weber County.

During the expansion period through which the Parker enterprises went, Jake Parker gathered about him men who became key personel in the later development of the company which succeeded Parker. Interestingly enough nearly all of theses men came from Jake's home town, Hooper. Among them were future plant managers superindendents, expert field men and office personel.

Among them was Ronald E. Wadsworth who, in time, became the key man in the California Packing Corporation's Mountain States Division holdings.

1917 was the last year in which Wm J. "Jake" Parker operated his five canning plants. Ronald E. Wadsworth

had become head bookkeeper and business manager for Mr. Parker. That same year, 1917, there was in Ogden an unrelated business to that of canning, a successful cereal company. Lucien Ray was the manager.

The following year, 1918, there was organized in Ogden a subsidiary of the California Packing Corporation with its offices in the Eccles Building and was called the Utah Packing Corporation. Lucien Ray became president of the Utah Packing - at the same time he was listed in the Ogden City directory as food broker for Ray and Whittier Company and still president of the Utah Cereal.

The California Packing Corporation brought to Ogden , from California, A. J. Hall to help organize the company according to the policies of the head office. Mr. Hall was named vice-president and manager.

Ronald E. Wadsworth, who knew the operations of the Parker firm from field to marketing, became the office manager.

A. J. Hall died unexpectedly in 1919 at the early age of 42. Mr. Ray and Mr. Wadsworth carried on the business of "Calpak" until another representative of the company could be sent to Ogden.

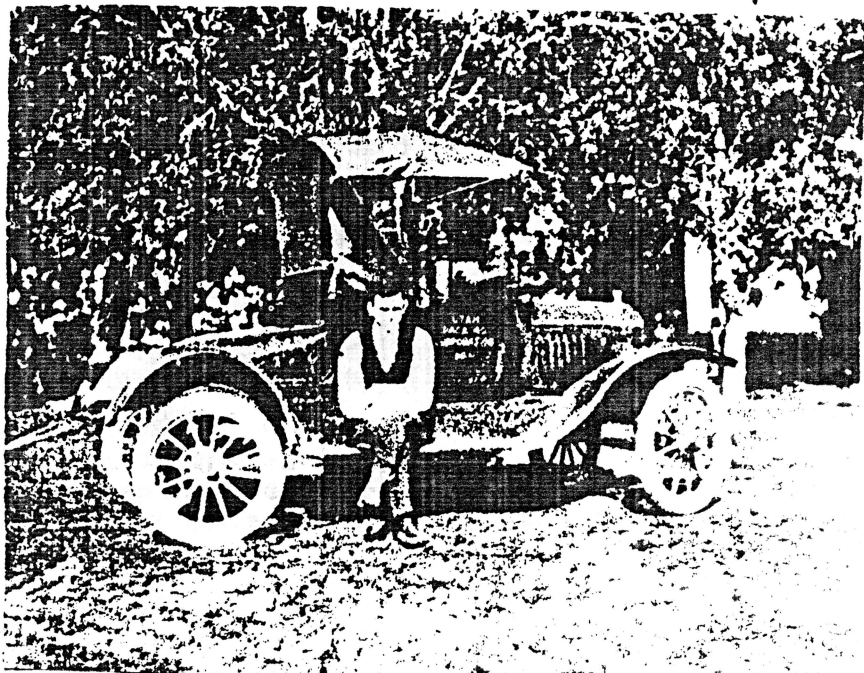
This time the California Company sent a 'part time' president to direct the operations, T. B. Dawson, general manager of productions for the entire company. Mr. Dawson was listed in the Ogden City directory as having his residence in San Francisco. Ronald Wadsworth became vice-president and manager. Mr. Dawson would appear upon the Utah scene for a short period of time each year, usually during the canning campaign, at which time he would brief the local gentry on any innovations in company policies.

From an article which appeared in the Ogden Standard-Examiner 19 February 1924 we learn:

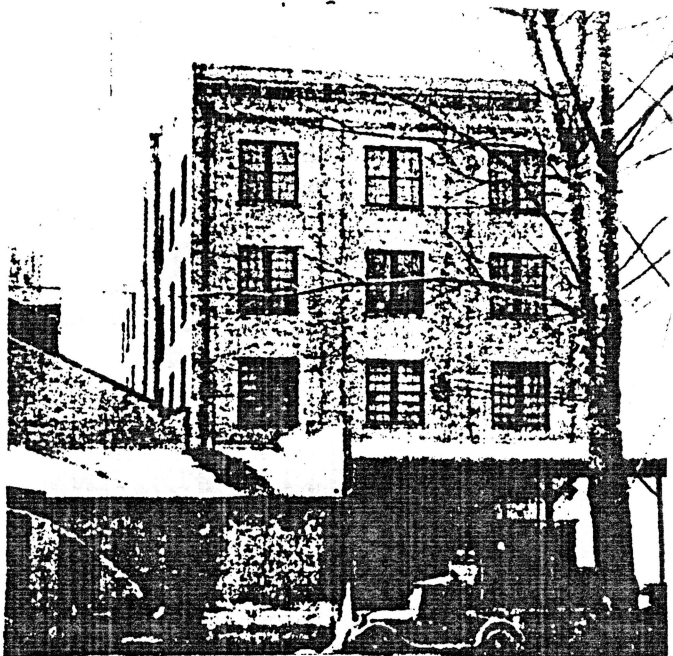
UTAH PACKING HAS FIVE PLANTS

Del Monte and Sunkist Brands in Weber County

Owning and operating five canneries in the Ogden district, the Utah Packing Corporation has one of the most important industries in Utah. From these plants come two of the famous brands of canned foods - Del Monte and Sunkist .....



Eddie Russell one of the early fieldmen for the Utah Packing Corp. and company car.



Wasatch Plant of California Packing Corp. in west Ogden. Partially shown on the left the original building of the Adams Nursery & Tin Can manufacturers.



The general offices of the Utah Packing Corporation are located in the Wasatch plant, Ronald Wadsworth being general manager. He is state chairman for the National Canned Foods week.

Pea vining stations are operating in agricultural districts far from the canneries of the company come from the high lands in Ogden Valley. At these vineries the peas are threshed and with all the fodder removed the green peas are transported by trucks to the canning plants.

In 1926, John Russell, a long time associate of Jake Parker, who had remained with Ronald Wadsworth and others in the Utah Packing, was named vice-president and Mr. Wadsworth retained the important role of manager. In 1929, F. J. Kyle, also a resident of San Francisco became president and Messrs Russell and Wadsworth remain in their positions.

In the mean time there was a small independent cannery in Morgan, Utah which had established for itself a highly regarded reputation for the production of excellent canned peas which they called "Those good Peas". This small company had constructed in Smithfield north of Logan, the first cannery in the entire country in which more canned peas could be processed in a 24 hour period than any other.

By 1930 the California Packing had acquired control of the factory at Morgan and the one at Smithfield, as well as a small green bean cannery in Hyrum and a plant at Spanish Fork.

The parent company appointed H. E. Sanborn, who was manager of productions for the California company, as vice-president and elevated Ronald E. Wadsworth to president. Although all this time the Utah operations were called the California Packing by all who were acquainted with the company, the name of the West Ogden based headquarters for Utah was not officially recognized in the Ogden City Directory by that name until the year 1936.

That year (1936) the Mountain States Division of the Calpak was organized with the following officers: Ronald E. Wadsworth, John Russell and R. E. Sanborn.

In 1968 the company changed its name to the Del Monte Corporation after the leading brand label over the years.

That same year this giant of the canning industry in Weber County and in the entire state of Utah closed its doors in West Ogden after four different canneries had processed foods at the West Ogden location for nearly 70 years.

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Two years after the Ogden Canning Company of A. C. McKinney terminated its operations in 1902, the Banner Canning Company was organized and opened for business in the old building "on 21st street opposite Reeves Ave." Wm Van Alen, who had been associated with the Wasatch Orchard and Canning Co. in West Ogden, was president of this new company. The following year Thomas Leslie was named secretary and treasurer.

Early in the year 1918 the name of the company was changed to the Van Alen Canning Company. Ironically, Mr. Van Alen died suddenly on July 16 of that year at the age of 54. His widow became president and Thomas Leslie was retained as manager.

Four years later, there was a fire in the cannery which led to Mrs. Van Alen's relinquishing her position and Gage Rodman filled that vacancy. Leslie was retained as secretary and treasurer. Let's look once more at the Standard-Examiner for 1924:

#### VAN ALLEN CO. REBUILDS UNIT

Building a modern unit, with the very latest equipment to take the place of a section destroyed by fire.... the company has been able to increase its efficiency. (Then speaking of Mr. Rodman and Mr. Leslie the article goes on to say): They are both expert cannery men and have worked not only toward the extension of markets for Van Alen products but also for the betterment of cannery products.

The improvements mentioned above did not have a long lasting effect on the survival of the company as it was listed for only two more years as a processor of foods.

In 1927 Messrs Rodman and Leslie became coal dealers at the address on west 21st street. In 1928 Gage Rodman once more made an attempt to revive the old plant for cannery purposes and gave this attempt the name of The Rocky Mountain Packing Corporation.

By this time the depression of the late 1920s and the 1930s had already set in which brought rapid changes for this and other canneries of the era. Thomas Leslie became the manager of this cannery in 1932. In 1935 Leslie moved to Salt Lake City and Waldo Draney became the superintendent which position he held until the factory finally closed its doors for the final time for any cannery at that address after the close of the 1938 season. Four different canning companies had operated at this location.

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Rocky Mtn.

In 1905 Orson Field build himself a small canning plant on his farm in west Roy. He installed a 2½ horse power boiler to aid him in canning food for his own family. Attached to the boiler was a steam hose which he put into some tubs of water to scald the tomatoes for peeling. After the tomatoes had been properly peeled and cored they were placed in cans and caps soldered on the cans. This is the only reference to soldered lids we could find.

We suspect that Mr. Field procured one of the abandoned soldering outfits from an earlier factory which had turned to the more advanced double-seamer machines which eliminated the handling of each can separately. The double-seamer not only placed the lid on the can in the proper place but it crimped the lid to the flange already provided on the can.

The first year was a noticable success for Mr. Field and the next year Mr. Field's neighbors joined him in the undertaking. Among them was Oscar T. Jones, his brother-in-law, who later became a commercial canner.

This group built a plant at 5855 south and 3100 west on Oscar Jones's property in which they canned as many as 2000 cans a day all with hand-soldered lids. At first they built a bowery under which they started their canning operations until a more permanent building could be constructed.

We have been unable to learn at what date this cannery changed from the soldered lids to the double-seamers, but it may have been about the time that Henry Dalton, a brother-in-law of Oscar's, joined him in 1906 or 1907. These two men launched into the commercial canning field at that time. They canned produce under the J & D brand.

This was a family related enterprise from the very start. In January 1912 Henry Dalton sold his interests to Arthur Jones, Oscar's brother. The Jones brothers continued to operate the plant on 3100 west until 1920 at which time Arthur sold his interest in the company to Oscar,

During the time that Oscar and Henry Dalton were in the business together they found that competition in the labor market in the sparsely populated area around Roy to be a major problem, so they conceived the idea of bringing workers from outlying communities to work in their cannery. This company became the first on record to import workers which they did from as far away as Malad, Idaho. These were mainly women who were needed to peel tomatoes.

The company provided living quarters for these employees which consisted of a wooden barrack type of building with a wooden floor and sides of canvas with canvas stretched over the top.

1914  
In the meantime in 1912 Joseph Wright and Horace Wittier had built a cannery on the east side of Roy on the main highway of the time from Ogden to Salt Lake City, which is now Utah State highway 126. They operated this plant for two years at that location after which time they constructed a plant at 33rd and Pacific Ave. in Ogden where they continued in the canning business until 1923.

When the Wright-Wittier company moved to Ogden it left the Roy building vacant for a few years. When the combination of the two Jones brothers was dissolved Oscar moved his operations to the abandoned building on the highway. Oscar Jones called his cannery at this location the Hillcrest Canning Company. *operated until end of 1928 season*

Oscar T. Jones left the canning industry during the depression and attempted several undertakings none of which were successful, so it is not surprising to see him once more enter the canning game as the depression was winding down and the market for canned goods strengthened.

In 1940, Oscar T. Jones again became a canner, this time at 820 west 25th in West Ogden where he canned tomatoes and apricots. World War II brought boom times for canneries, but soon after the end of the war the market for canned goods became glutted. This glutted

market along with consumer changes in eating habits meant that the future for the canning industry was bleak.

In 1950 Mr. Jones changed the name of his company to the Vel-Donna Canning Company, named after two of his granddaughters Velma Jones and Donna Dutson.

By 1951 Mr. Jones had developed health problems so he decided to discontinue his connections with the canning industry. He sold his equipment to a polygamist colony in Short Creek, Arizona on the edge of the Kaibab Forest just north of Grand Canyon.

Oscar T. Jones was associated with the canning industry in an administrative position for a total of over 36 years one of the longest careers in Weber County, surpassed by Ronald E. Wadsworth who had 60 years and James E. Randall with 46. There may have been others with long associations with the industry but they have not been brought to my attention.

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The first canning factory built in Plain City was constructed near 1900 north on 4700 west according to The HISTORY OF PLAIN CITY. No name or date was given for this plant which apparently had a short life.

In 1908 another cannery was constructed in Plain City, this one was built by the North Ogden Canning and was located at 1975 north and 4650 west which plant was given the name of the Chief Canning Company. Later the name was changed to the Plain City Canning. The old building is still extant as of the 1980s.

During the early days of this plant cans were hauled from Ogden in wagons, an all day trip for one outfit to deliver one load of cans. In the HISTORY OF PLAIN CITY we learn that the ladies received 5¢ a pan ( a

*(nothing missing on this side)*

large dish pan) for peeling tomatoes, then after a year or two this was raised to 8¢ and finally to 10¢. A good worker could peel about 60 pans a day.

Like the people of Roy and Hooper, those of Plain City praised the quality of their tomatoes, The Sandy soil of Plain City seemed ideal for the tomatoes to grow and helped to give them the flavor, quality and yield that can rarely be equaled".

The early days of the depression of the 1930s saw the machinery of this cannery stop never to go again.

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In 1906 the G. A. Craig Company made its entrance into the canning business at 2230 Wall Ave. with a one year stand. This company occupied a small corner in the Ogden Ice Company at that address.

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The Uintah Canning Company (1906-1913), with its business and food brokerage services in the Eccles Building in Ogden, had its plant on the south side of the west bound tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad about one mile west of the present day highway 89 in Uintah.

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We do not always know the background of all the men who entered the canning business in Weber County but in the case of one of them we do. We are including some information concerning this man because of his importance to the community where he settled and of his impact on this area.

Edwin G. McGriff moved from Des Moines, Iowa to North Ogden in 1897. He purchased more than 80 acres of bench land to the north of town and there planted peach, cherry and pear trees as well as a grape vineyard.

By 1901, Mr. McGriff's orchards were producing so



This building was destroyed by fire in 1912 and never rebuilt.

In 1910 the McGriff enterprises organized a canning company and sold stock to the amount of \$225,000 with headquarters in Salt Lake City. E. G. McGriff was president, H. M. Wells vice-president and treasurer, Thomas H. Cutler Jr. secretary, L. S. Hardy manager and as directors: Thomas R. Cutler Sr. John Dern, Jas. E. Ballantyne, L. A. Hancock and Alma Eldredge. The make up of the officers of the company, mainly financiers from Salt Lake City, indicates to us that the fame of the canning business in Weber County was well noted by individuals outside of Ogden. They built their cannery on Ben Lomond Drive. The building is still standing.

In the publication OGDEN, THE JUNCTION CITY we read about the McGriff enterprises. It spoke about the orchards and the fruits it produced, "Whether sold in crates of preserved at the model canning factory under the "Sanitary" or "Idlewild" brands McGriff's fruit always commands the highest price. The cannery located on a spur of the Oregon Short Line, has a capacity of 40,000 cases. Bottling of grape juice is about to be undertaken on a large scale."

In 1912 McGriff sold all his interests in North Ogden and left the community. A. P. Biglow of the Ogden State Bank and others organized the Ben Lomond Orchard Company which included the canning plant. John T. Hall was appointed general manager of the company a position he held until 1945 at which time he retired.

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In 1911 another company took the name of Ogden Canning. It operated for three years at 139 Spencer Street, west from Lincoln avenue between 20th and 21st.

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1912 - Joseph Wright and Horace Wittier built a factory in Roy on the main highway of that time from Ogden to Salt Lake City, which is now Utah State Highway 126. They operated this plant for two years after which time they constructed a cannery at 33rd and Pacific in Ogden where they continued in the canning business until 1923. Both of these buildings were later occupied by other companies.

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1912 - The National Packing Corporation opened for business at 2005 Lincoln avenue. After two years this concern was succeeded at that location by the George W. Goddard Pickle Factory which in itself lasted there for eight years. \*\*\*\*\*

You might have noticed an interesting game of musical chairs or should we have said canneries and their operators which has been taking place in this industry. Companies changed locations thinking to better their chance for survival or higher financial gains. Abandoned buildings were reoccupied sometimes by new companies at other times by older companies or even as branch plants.

Many men felt that they could improve their situation by starting canneries of their own.

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In 1912 George W. Goddard was vice president of the Rose Preserving Company in Salt Lake City. The following year he moved to the Marion Hotel at 25th and Lincoln in Ogden and became the manager of the Goddard Pickling and Preserves with a plant at 2454 Wall avenue, not too far from the hotel.

When the National Packing abandoned their building at 20th and Lincoln the Goddard company took over the plant there.

The name of the company was changed in 1918 to the Goddard Packing Corporation - "manufacturers of pickles, vinegar, fancy canned specialties, mince meat and condiments."

In the early twenties Mr. Goddard became involved in supplying factories and mills with such items as belts, pulleys, bearings, shafts etc. from his place of business at 2410 Wall avenue where he was listed as "manufacturers agent". The pickle works was soon faded out. The present Thessco Inc. is the successor of the original Goddard company at that address.

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The Everfresh Food Company on Wall avenue "between 20th and 21st"(1916-1919) had as its founders an interesting combination: A. P. Biglow, financier and president of the Ogden State Bank, was president,(we saw him earlier in the Ben Lomond Orchard Co.) W. H. Wattis an international industrialist, a builder of railroads in the U.S.A and Mexico and other important construction projects was vice-president, Frederick G. Taylor of the Amalgamated Sugar Company, secretary and treasurer.

In 1917 they brought into their organization Wm J. "Jake" Parker, whom we have already met, as manager. Mr. Parker remained with the Everfresh Co. until it folded in 1919.

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The same year that the Everfresh closed its doors, Jake Parker and Frank Jugler organized the Utah Fish Canning Company with headquarter at 2400 Washington avenue. Their canning plant was located on the shores of Utah Lake. This undertaking apparently met with success as it operated until 1931 at which time the plant was destroyed by fire.

The volume of business did not warrant the rebuilding of the cannery.

At the same time of Mr. Parker's involvement in the Utah Fish he returned to the vegetable canning business. In the Ogden Standard-Examiner of 29 February 1924 we find this:

ROY HAS BIG FOOD CANNERY  
Fine Canning Plant in Center of Tomato  
Growing Districts

Two of Utah's most prominent canners are officially identified with the management of the Roy Packing Company, operating a large cannery at Roy, Utah on the main line of the Union Pacific railroad system. They are W. J. Parker who is president and Gage Rodman, vice president. President Parker is also president of the Utah Canners' Association, having been elected for the third consecutive term in January."

In 1928 Gage Rodman became the president and Thomas Leslie secretary-treasurer with their business office at their old location, 148 west 9th. The Roy plant survived only one more year.

In 1933 Mr. Parker became president of the American Packing and Provision Company, a meat processor on the east side of the Weber River across from the west Ogden stockyards. Jake tried them all: vegetables, fruits, fish and finally meat.

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1926- The Superior Canning Company opened for business at 3180 Pacific Ave and canned products for three years.

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The history of the Royal Canning Corporation of 175-31st traces the ups and downs of the economics of the period and the impact upon the canning industry.

This corporation was organized in 1927 with H. D. Olson as manager which position he held until the beginning of the depression. In 1930 there was a re-structuring of the organization and George Blake became president with A. S. Daggett as manager. In 1934 E. R. Blackinton moved into the position of president and H. D. Olson was listed as boiler man.

Another change took place in 1937 at which time no one held the title of president, Blackinton was manager. The following year H. D. Olson started his own cannery which we will treat later.

In 1940 D. B. Stringham became manager and E. R. Blackinton went into the canning business on his own.

World War II brought new life to the canning industry which had had such a rough time during the depression. However there was another change which was appearing upon the horizon which would eventually have an adverse effect upon the canning business. The eating habits of the American consumers was undergoing a change. Food packaging for instant use was appearing upon the scene. Frozen foods were becoming more in demand which meant that the market baskets of the housewife took on a different look at the checkout counter.

The demand for canned products by the armed forces saved the canning industry as a whole for a time but it eventually ended and proved to be only a bandaid for a time. The glory days of a multiple of canneries was to gradually wind down.

Mr. Stringham put in a line of frozen foods to go along with the canned fruits and vegetables. The future for this factory looked good, but, unfortunately there was a fire in the plant at a time when the market for canned foods was depressed. The factory was never rebuilt.

The last three entries in the Ogden City Directories tell the story of the last days of this cannery. The Royal Canning Corporation was listed at 2529 Polk Ave. the home of Del Stringham, the years 1959-1960-1961.

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The building left vacant by the Wright-Wittier Canning Company at 33rd and Pacific was vacant for one year at which time it was re-occupied by the Weber Packing Corporation (1924), with Fred M. Nye as president. After eight seasons it too closed its doors.

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1927 - The Pacific Coast Cannery opened for business in the former Goddard pickle factory at Lincoln and 20th with W. F. Rudger as president and general manager. Mr. Rudger moved to Provo in 1932 when this company, like a number of others, became the victim of the depression.

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On the south east corner of 23rd and Wall avenue the wholesale establishment of Scowcrofts was located. This company was the jobbers for other companies in foods and wearing apparel. They also manufactured many dry goods on their own. Their best known item of the time was their Never Rip brand of overalls.

To these other departments Scowcrofts added a canning factory which processed principally tomatoes and peas with a line of pickles. The canning adventure covered the years 1930-1939.

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The year 1931 saw the entry of the Varney Canning Company upon the scene. Wm Varney had earlier been associated with the Craig Canning Company in Ogden which company had a branch factory in Roy in the earlier location of Jones and Jones.

The Varney canning was located on the location of the Oscar and Arthur Jones cannery which we encountered earlier and which was located at 5855 south and 3100 west. Duration 1931-1942.

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As already noted, H. D. Olson was first affiliated with the Craig Canning on 3rd street and then with the Royal Canning on 31st. After being reduced to boiler-man for that company he left them to form his own cannery at his home, 1601 Grant Ave. This small operation did not have any retorts for pressure cooking, but used the open kettle method to process their canned goods. This of course meant that they were limited to the canning of such items as fruits and tomatoes.

Olson's main pack was apricots. A lady who was employed by the Olson Company described the packing of whole apricots in the cans. All stem ends of the apricots were placed downward toward the bottom of the cans. When a can was opened one could see only the firm rounded cots, which of course had eye appeal.

After two years at his home location Olson moved to the vacant plant at 3320 Pacific avenue, the former location of the Wright-Wittier and the Weber Packing Company. Time there 1940-1942.

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A company by the name of Associated Cannery Incorporated is listed in the Ogden City directory as being located in the same building as the Olson Canning on Pacific avenue for the years 1941-1942.

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James Storey, manager of a Safeway grocery store on the south side of 24th east of Kiesel, decided that he would be much better off and happier if he opened a 'pickle works'. In 1938 he raised several acres of cucumbers on a farm in North Ogden which constituted his pack for that year.

32  
wooden

Jim pickled his cucumbers in 50 gallon barrels in a small building on Kiesel avenue near 22nd street. The next year the compiler of this account contracted  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of 'cukes' to the Storey Food Products.

In 1940 the Storey Foods Products moved to 2916 Pacific avenue where they specialized in pickles and other condiments. Their most popular product was their Sweet Memory Pickles, a patent which the family still controls. a 150 savorkrant

Other companies still use this formula even though the Storey Foods closed their doors as so many had done before, The year 1952.

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The Robins Canning Company in Roy, 1941-1943, joined the merry-go-round for three years with J. E. Firth as manager. Place of business, the old W. W. Craig plant in Roy.

\*\*\*\*\*

As already mentioned, E. R. Blackinton was manager of the Royal Canning on 31st for the years 1937-1939. In 1941 the Blackinton Canning Company was listed at Mr. Blackinton's home, 512 Lincoln avenue. The following year the company was in full production at 127-7th street where it had constructed a new factory. This company remained in business at this address for thirty years. 1942 - 1972

The company operated under conditions which were not the best at this location. The plant was not in a fruit growing area but in spite of this they processed a good pack of fruit each year.

The agriculture area had moved from that part of the city which necessitated the trucking of farm products from outlying communities. The factory was not on a railroad which was a great asset in the marketing of processed foods.

The management of the company was able, over the span of 30 years, to analyze the future demands of the consumers, and thereby planned their packs accordingly. This enabled the company to remain solvent for quite some time.

Gradually the demand for canned foods became depressed and the Blackinton Canning was forced to join the exit parade, 1971.



The Ogden Ice Company, which had been in the ice business at 2230 Wall avenue since the turn of the century, furnishing ice to homes, cafes, soft drink parlors etc., took on another dimension in 1940. This company had also iced refrigerator cars (called reefers) for the D&RG Railroad for a number of years.

Many of the reefers iced at the Ogden Ice were used to ship peaches and other fruits from North Ogden and Pleasant View at the time of Mr. McGriff.

In 1940 they added a frozen foods packaging department along with a small cannery, with J. E. Firth as superintendant. We saw him above connected with the Robins Canning. These two additions had short lives. Mr. Firth turned his attention to the Robins cannery and he in turn moved to the Pringle & Co, a frozen foods specialist attached to the Pacific Fruit Express plant on the west side of the Ogden railroad yards at about 26th st.

In 1946 O. O. Richins was listed as superintendant of the Ogden Ice cannery which turned out to be its last year.

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South Ogden Products. We find in the directory for 1946 that Karl Jugler was in the candy business in the 1100 block on 40th street. Two years later he changed his operations from candy to food products which continued in business until 1967.

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One of the last entries into the canning game in Weber County is the only survivor as of 1983.

Angus Stevens, who had been with the Clearfield Canning Company for several years felt that he could become a successful canner so he rented the old Wright-Wittier plant on Pacific avenue at 33rd. Four other companies had previously tried their luck there.

After operating for one year Mr. Stevens wondered if he wanted to continue in the canning business, but Frank Jugler, the owner of the building encouraged Stevens to give it more than a one year try.

This was the turning point in the life of Mr. Stevens. From that time on the Stevens Canning became very successful, especially is it commendable at a time when so many canneries were folding.

9-1

When Angus Stevens entered the canning business there were 36 operating canneries in Utah. When Mr. Stevens died in 1977 there were only 14 such companies remaining. The Stevens Canning at that time was the largest packer of tomato juice in the entire state of Utah. Their brand "The Heart of Utah". Utah tomatoes had remained famous since the time of McKinney and Lundy.

One of the factors which helped prolong the life of this company came in 1960 after Robert E. Stevens, a brother of Angus, joined the firm in 1955. Robert persuaded his brother to acquire the old Varney factory in Roy. There they would be closer to the source of tomatoes. This was the third cannery to occupy this building.

Don Stevens, a son of the founder of the firm, is at the present time the president of the company. He sees a bright future ahead for his company in the area in which they have been so successful over the years, tomato juice. Tomato juice cannot be frozen and be readily available in that form, neither can it be in a convenience package, it has to be canned. It is a very popular part of our dining and as such it keeps the Stevens Canning in business.

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Up to this point in our discussion we have dealt with the canneries. Let us now look at the industry.

Throughout the years the canning of peas and tomatoes made up the main packs of this industry in Weber County. We will now consider some of the problems connected with each of these vegetables as well as other situations which were faced over the years.

Peas were not shelled by hand but were actually threshed in what were called stationary viners. These viners were not movable from farm to farm as were the thresher machinings for grains. The harvesting of peas during that time was a rather tedious job. Let us follow such a harvest.

Peas were and still are drilled not planted in rows maybe a foot and a half apart as in family gardens. The pea vines cover the ground entirely. As the peas approached the time when they would be at their peak for flavor, texture, size, tenderness and color, a field man, employed by the cannery, would watch each field closely. In hot weather the peak period for quality peas usually lasted a day or two.

Because of the un-evenness of the irrigation process when done by flooding, before the advent of sprinklers, a field of peas would not ripen evenly. The field man would "order" those peas which were ready to be delivered to a designated viner station at a certain hour so as not to have a long string of wagons waiting at the station at one time if possible.

At the peak of the harvest it was not unusual for loads to be ordered in for 1 AM.

With the same mowing machine with which he would cut his hay the farmer would go into the pea patch. First he would cut a swath in the area to be harvested. Some one would follow with a pitch fork and move the cut vines to the side so that during the next swath the horses and mowing machine would not run over and mash the peas.

When enough peas had been cut and moved to the side to make a load the farmer then loaded them onto a hay rack and drove to the viner station.

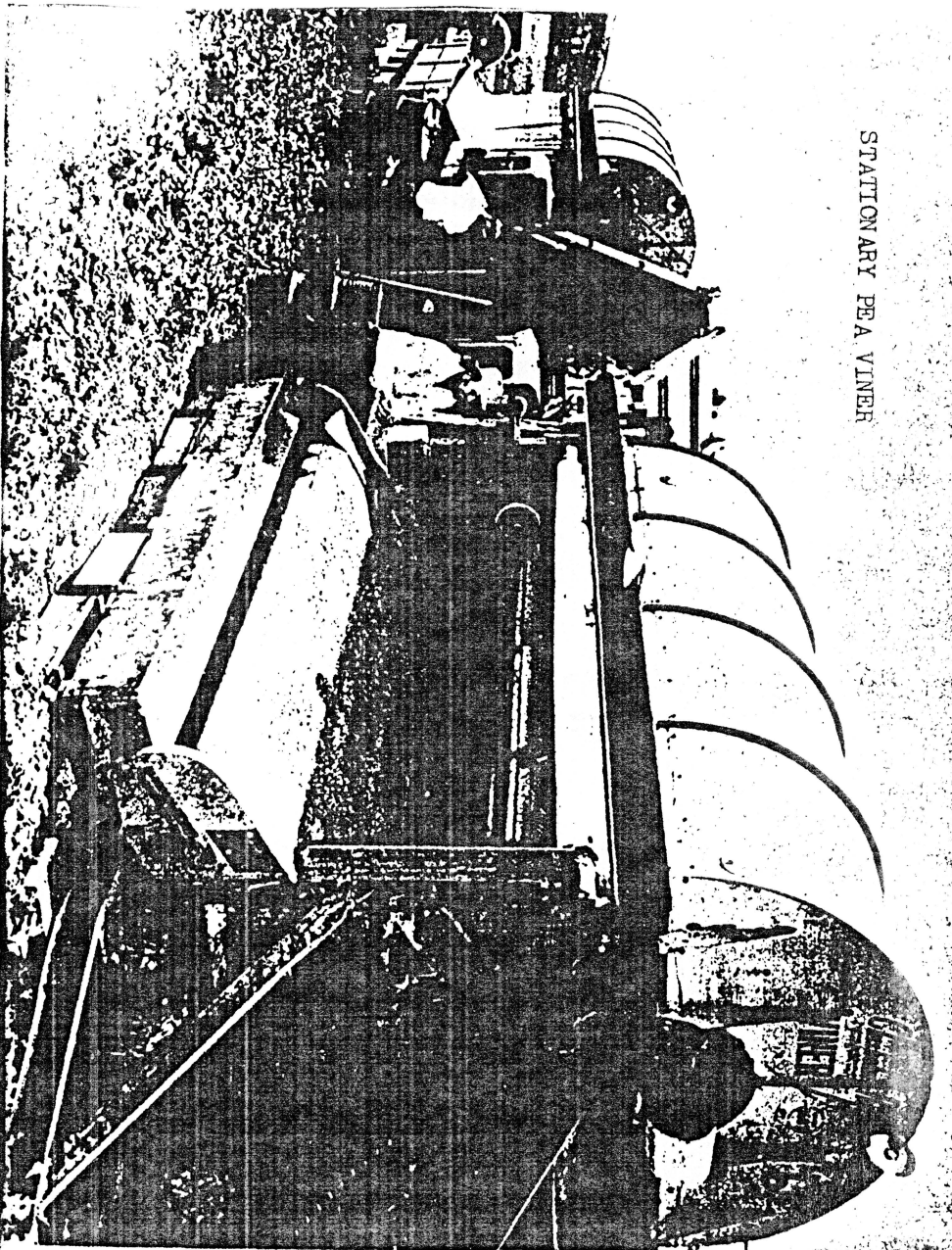
At the shed the vines were fed into a large revolving cylinder about five feet in diameter and perhaps twelve feet long, lying on its side with a slight slope downward from the feeder end. Holes  $3/4$  of an inch in diameter were punched all over the cylinder which cylinder would revolve during the threshing

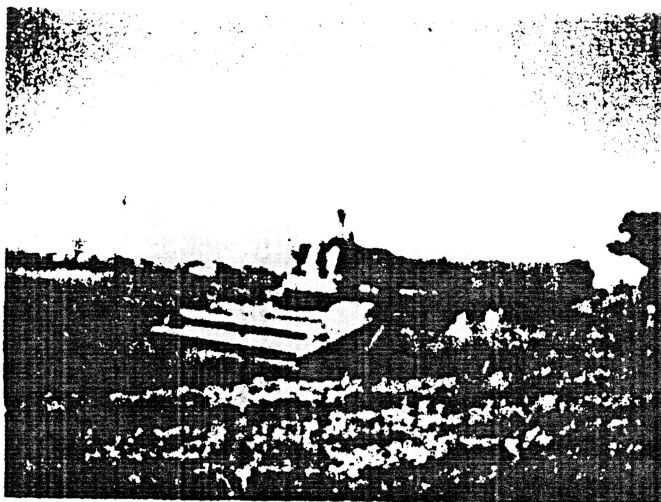
Inside the cylinder were beater blades which revolved in the opposite direction. This interaction would strike and open the pods and surprisingly enough would not crack the peas. The loosened peas would fall through the holes and roll into some cups on an endless belt at the bottom of an 'apron' and were conveyed into pea lugs. The boxes were loaded into trucks and hauled to the canneries.

The earliest trucks to haul peas to the factories in Weber County had hard rubber tires as pneumatic tires had not as of that time been developed for heavy automobiles.

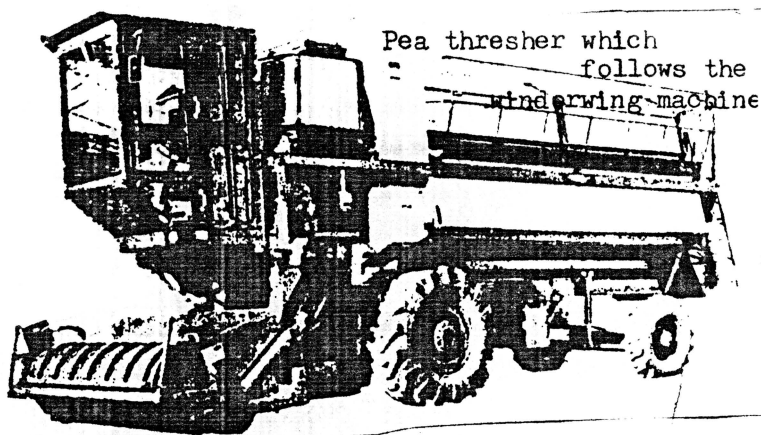
In all the state of Utah the canning company to utilize the greatest number of viner sheds was the California Packing Company which had canneries in Spanish Fork, Smithfield as well as West Ogden.

STATIONARY PEAVINEH





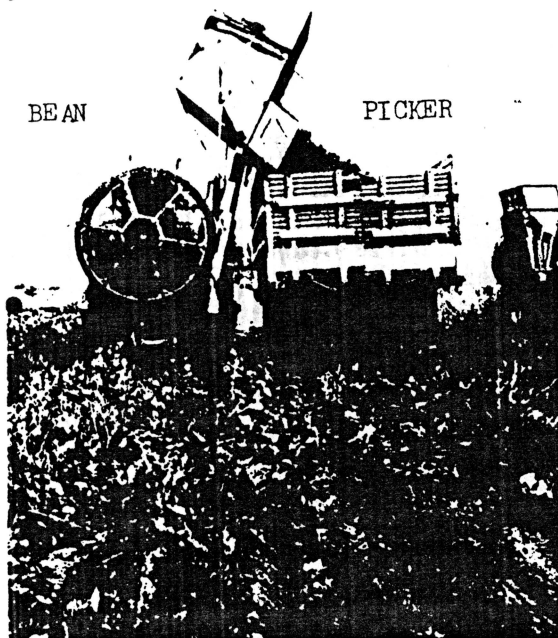
Windrowing machine for pea harvest



Pea thresher which follows the windrowing machine

six pea threshers following each other





A quality control man testing  
peas for flavor, texture, color  
tenderness, uniformity of size



Here is a list of the locations and names of the viner sheds for this company at its largest expansion for the Ogden based plant:

Wasatch at the factory on west 24th, Kendall in South Weber, Riverdale, Star in Roy, Hooper, Plain City Taylor, Farr West, Slaterville, Pleasant View, Eden, Liberty, Huntsville and Middleton, with the following in Morgan County, Milton, Richville, Cottonwood and Morgan. In Davis County: Layton and Clinton and in Box Elder County: Nerva at Willard and the Willard station.

At one time the Calpak hauled peas from Malad and Burley to see if peas could be profitably hauled such a long distance and stay fresh without icing or refrigeration. The experiment was a success and long hauls are still the basis of the survival of many canneries to this date.

At the peak of the pea run, which lasted for about six or seven weeks, the Calpak would process about 150 to 160 tons of shelled peas in one day, with some rare occasions when the tonnage actually reached 200 tons for a day or two.

Besides the factory related problems in the processing of peas and tomatoes there naturally arose farmer problems.

In 1917 the farmers organized and were able to get certain concessions from the canneries: improvement of unloading facilities for tomatoes, better field service for boxes for the tomato picking, more prompt payments as the farmers felt that they were financing the operations by their monies being held back, better locations of the pea viner station (one viner for each 50 acres of peas) and a future possibility of profit-sharing contracts.

The above conditions were followed in 1919 by grade tasting accompanied by a price scale.

Until 1919 peas in Utah were purchased on the basis of two grades only, early peas and late ones. The early peas were of the Perfection and Surprise varieties. Late peas went under the name of Late Perfection. Farmers were oftentimes heard to remark that it was surprising how little yield they would get from the Surprise variety.



In the grading of peas, the industry first used the "thumb and finger" method in which the "grader" judged the grade on how hard or soft the peas seemed when squeezed between the thumb and finger, a method which was not always totally objective.

Next came the Eddington Juice Press, a measured volume of peas was put under a measured pressure and the amount of juice extracted would determine the 'quality' of the peas.

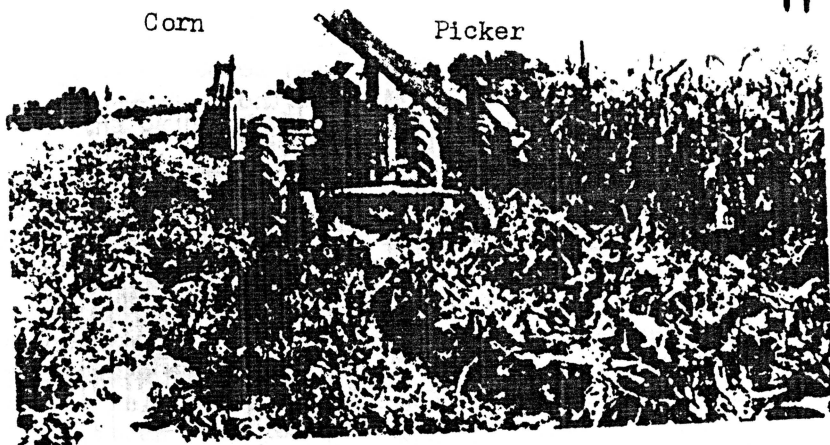
Next on the scene came the tenderometer, a machine which could measure the tenderness of a certain quantity of peas when measured by the resistance to a shearing process. The principle of this type of grading is that the more tender and tasty peas shear the easier, giving a lower shearing reading. These reading were graduated on a scale from 88 to 136.

To illustrate the benefits gained by the farmers for their products because of their negotiations the following price scale is provided by Dr. Carpenter of the Utah State University for a number of years giving the prices paid for tons of peas and tomatoes:

	Peas	Tomatoes
1915	\$42.00	\$9.00
1919	58.74	15.00
1920	65.99	15.00 highest prices paid until during World War II
1925	56.05	11.98
1928	60.00	11.00
1933	41.50	9.20
1940	48.20	9.90
1944	78.60	24.30
1951	93.50	27.60

As the age of mechanization of the harvesting of many farm crops was gradually developing, the small pea patches became impractical. Machines which cut and windrowed the vines as well as the mobile threshers which followed the windrowing machines needed more room in which to maneuver. A pea patch in the neighborhood of at least 200 yards in length is desirable as well as more acreage. *at least 10 acres?*

Weber County did not provide a sufficient number of larger fields to warrant the continuation of canning of peas in this locality. Another factor which had its effect upon the destiny of the canning industry in the entire country was the changes in the eating habits of the American consumers as already mentioned



During World War I, 1916-1918, some of the canners leased land from the farmers and encouraged groups of Japanese farmers to come to our area and grow canning crops, especially tomatoes.

While the war raged in Europe there was a great demand for canned foods. Canners were in a good economic position. Following the war the market became depressed as large inventories were maintained by most of the canneries.

Dr. Carpenter tells us further that the pack of fruits and vegetables in Utah by 1920 was 1,335,641 cases and since that time has increased to a total of more than 5,438,000 cases by 1951. Until 1916 annually approximately 4,000 acres of tomatoes for canning, about 3,000 acres of peas, 150 acres of snap beans and from 300 to 500 acres of other processing vegetables.

In 1925 the total had increased to 10,750 acres of peas, 6850 acres of tomatoes, 450 acres of snap beans and 1000 acres of other vegetables.

The greatest concentration of processing plants during all the history of this industry, was in the vicinity of Ogden and was confined pretty much to Weber County, with Davis, Utah and Box Elser counties close behind.

Here is the number of canneries operating each decade in Weber County since the beginning in 1886:

1886-1890	3
1891-1900	5
1901-1910	11

1911-1920	20
1921-1930	22
1931-1940	12
1941-1950	10
1951-1960	6
1961-1970	5
1971-1980	3
1981	1

42

As already indicated, tomatoes were the first vegetables canned in Ogden. We will now follow tomatoes from the time of planting to the harvest.

A few weeks before the danger of a late spring frost had passed in Weber County tomato seeds were planted in hot beds in the area or were contracted with growers in such places as Moapa Valley in Nevada. In Nevada the seeds were planted in open fields as there was little likelihood of any frost in that locality.

The started plants in Moapa Valley were shipped to Ogden via the Union Pacific railroad ~~or~~ by trucks. The varieties of tomatoes grown in the early period of canning would ripen gradually. This meant that they had to be picked every two weeks from the 20th of August until frost.

In the early days of contracting of tomatoes it was a family project, and the picking was done generally by the members of the family. For larger acreages, which came later, the growers ~~had~~ to rely on hired help, most of whom in those days were local people. As the number of factories grew and the need for more tomatoes increased many of the local gentry opted to work in the canneries rather than in the fields. This meant that the growers had to look outside of the county for farm labor.

For a time, migrant workers filled this gap but as the fields in such places as California afforded a longer period of time in which such workers could labor per year these workers shunned the fields of Utah. The local young people would not do this work even though they had the time.

Many years ago the canning industry started efforts to solve this problem, they could see down the road a need for a different type of tomato. Their goal was to develop a tomato which would ripen on the vine all at once, have a uniform size, be of good color and flavor and firm enough to withstand rougher handling than when picked or peeled by hand.

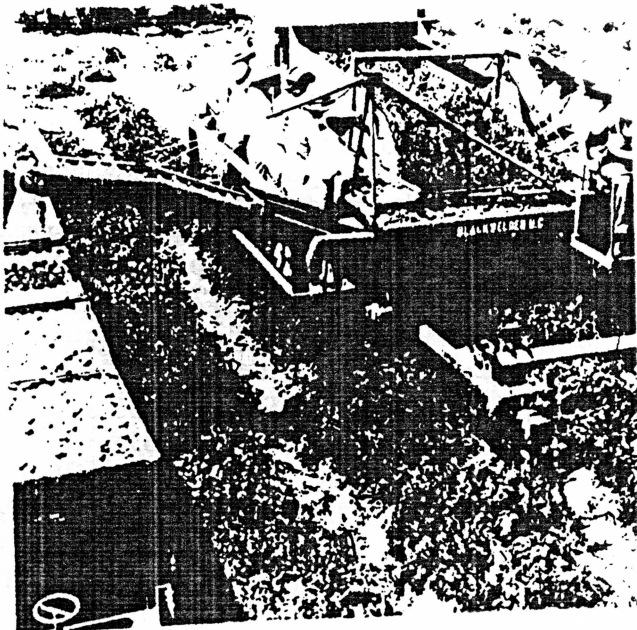
This goal has now been achieved. ~~The machine to pick tomatoes was developed quite some time before this~~ variety of tomato was finally perfected.

Prior to 1930 canners of Utah paid for their tomatoes on a flat basis rate per ton. This practice tended to discriminate against those growers who produced a higher quality product. About that time a grading system for tomatoes was agreed upon. Two grades were established, United States standards, tomatoes judged good enough for peeling tomatoes and others which would be used in such items as catsup, tomato juice, tomato sauce etc.

It is interesting to note that most of the tomatoes grown in Utah were and have been graded as qualifying for peeling tomatoes.

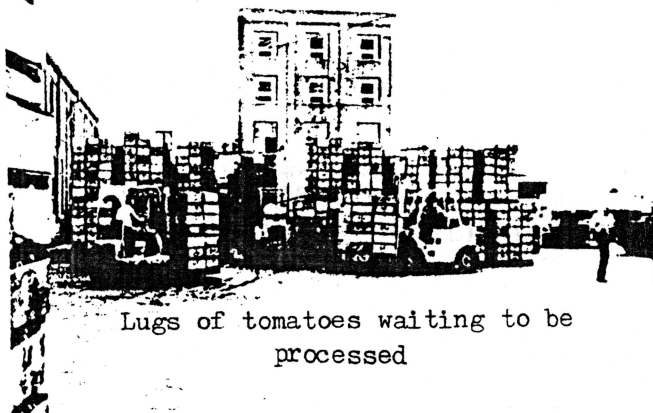
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Tomato picker. There are four women sorters on side

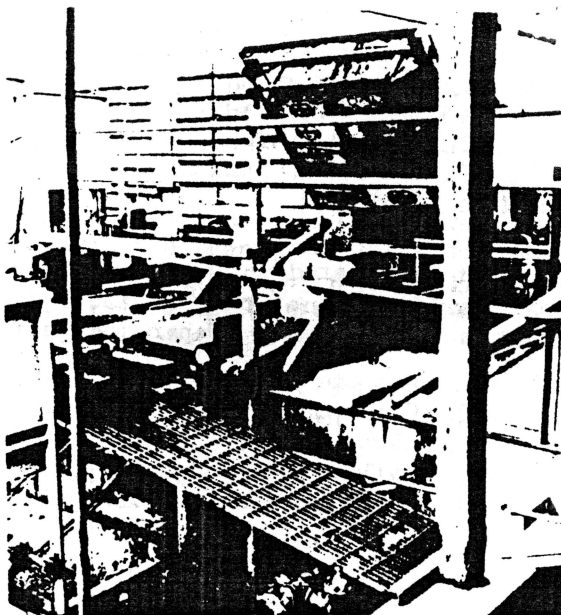


#7

Wasatch Plant - California  
Packing Corporation- West Ogden



Lugs of tomatoes waiting to be  
processed



Automatic bulk tomato lug dumper with  
empty lug washer.

The first cans manufactured in Ogden, as far as being listed in the city directory, (1890-1891), were made by the Utah Stamping Company with the plant located on 3rd street between Washington and Grant. The word stamping in the name of the company tells us that the material for the body cylinders were cut out by machine. The bodies were still hand soldered, the lids hand soldered and the discs soldered over the hole through which the produce was filled into the cans.

The Utah Stamping Company was followed by the Adams Nursery and Can Manufacturing as we have already seen.

In 1914 the American Can Company acquired the property on the south east corner of 20th and Lincoln, the location of an old electric generating plant. There they constructed a building of considerable size and started the making of cans in 1915.

The American Can became the chief supplier of cans to canners in Utah until 1979 at which time they ceased to make cans in Utah.

Not only in the harvesting of the canning crops were things improved and done faster but in the cannery there were also changes. During the 1920s a double-seamer closing machine could crimp the lids on 35 to 40 cans per minute. By the time of World War II there were seamers which could handle around 150 cans per minute. By the late fifties this had been increased to 300 cans per minute. In the 1980s seamers were putting lids on 500 cans each minute.

We have not considered in this treatise the number of products which did not require too much acreage for the amount of the packs in comparison to the big two.

We will mention one however in our summary of the rise and fall of the canning industry in Utah. But before turning to this let us first glance at a list of the different and goodly number of items canned in Utah as compiled by the Utah Canners Association.

TOMATOES	STRAWBERRIES	BRETS
PEAS	RASPBERRIES	RHUBARB
APPLES	PICKLES	PEANUT BUTTER
GREEN BEANS	CHOW-CHOW	ASPERGUS
WAX BEANS	SYRUPS	PRESERVES
PORK AND BEANS	MOLASSES	CHILI SAUCE
PUMKIN	BLACKBERRIES	WORCHESHIRE SAUCE
SQUASH	DEWBERRIES	MINCEMEAT
HOMINY	APRICOTS	APPLE BUTTER
LIMA BEANS	CURRANTS	FIGS
SAUERKRAUT	GRAPES	JAMS
BEEFSTEAK	GRAPE JUICE	ORANGE MARMALADE
SAUSAGE	HONEY	ORANGE DRINK
PEARS	SPAGHETTI	PINEAPPLE JUICE
CHERRIES	SOUPS	GRAPEFRUIT JUICE
PRUNES	MILK	PINEAPPLE-GRAPEFRUIT
PLUMS	OLIVES	JUICE
		HAWAIIAN DRINK

The locations of the canneries in which these were canned were not told in connection with the list.

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In the beginning the canning companies had more of a personal touch, a closer acquaintance with each of the small growers. This personal touch was well exemplified in the close relationship of the grower and the canner in the raising of green beans.

Most of the early variety of green beans grown for the canneries were pole beans. Willow poles had to be provided upon which the plants could climb. The canners and the growers would work together scouring river bottoms, canal banks and ditch banks for suitable sand bar willows for these poles.

I can personally recall a goodly number of very small plots of beans raised by widows and housewives struggling to have a few extra dollars. Some of these "contracts" were for as few as two rows of beans.



Company men would help these ladies place the poles and string heavy cords upon them for the beans to climb. Twice a week during the picking season a company truck would pick up as few as one or two seamless sacks of beans for some growers. On the following trip the grower would receive a weigh slip which also indicated the grade.

The early variety of canning beans were known as string beans. A fibrous membrane ran the length of the bean, which had to be removed bean by bean.

Eventually another variety of beans was developed which was called "snap beans". These beans could be processed whole or cut into desired lengths. Another advantage of this type of bean was that it was a bush bean which could be picked by a machine, the development of which did not take too long in coming.

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#### Summary

When the Mormon Pioneers first settled in Utah survival was their great concern. Families located on small farms wherever water for irrigation was available. The canning industry found this pattern of small garden plots well fitted for their type of operations at the time, they neither needed nor wanted large acreages.

The western fringe of the Wasatch Mountain range which stretches from Mt. Nebo south of Provo to the Utah-Idaho border, the area in which Weber County is located, is not very wide, 20 miles at the most from the foothills to the marginal lands on the salt grass and greasewood flats next to the Great Salt Lake.

It was in this area and also in Weber County that the first canning adventure in Utah took place.

As the urban population in and near Ogden grew these fertile farms where the early canneries were located were absorbed into housing areas. This urbanization along with the expansion of the Ogden railroad yards took their toll on the area in which the first vegetables were grown for canning purposes in Weber County.

As this trend continued suitable lands for crops for canning purposes became scarce, so scarce that canneries were not able to contract enough acreage to maintain operations.

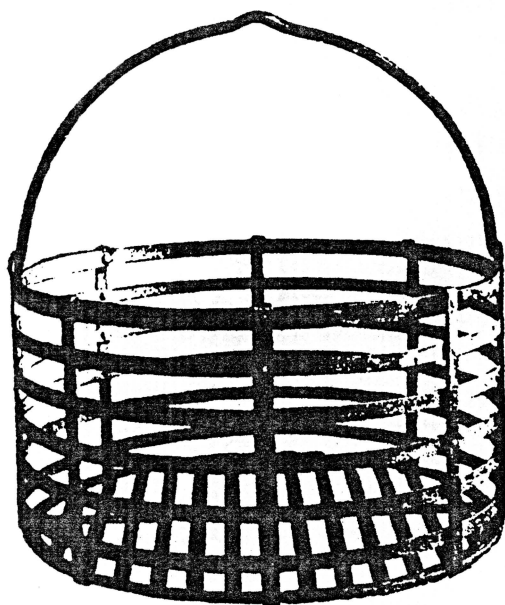
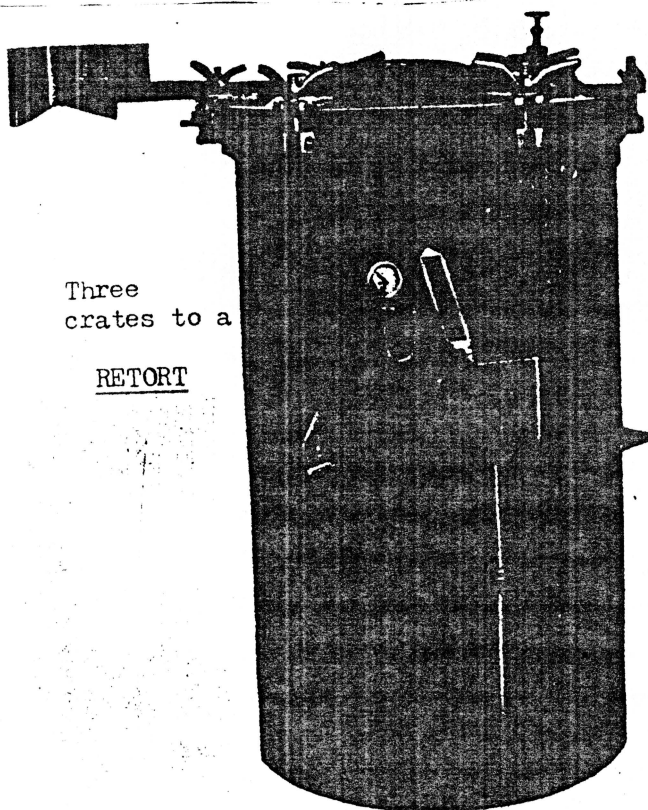
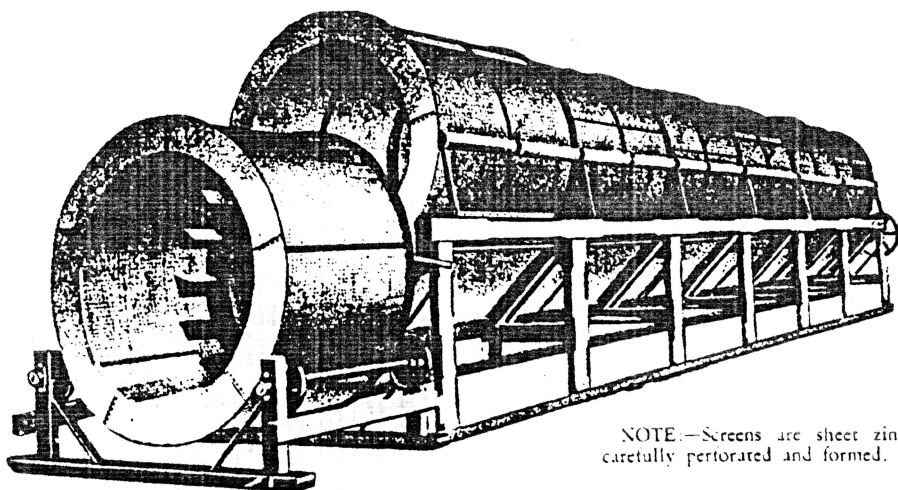


Fig. 470—Standard Crate



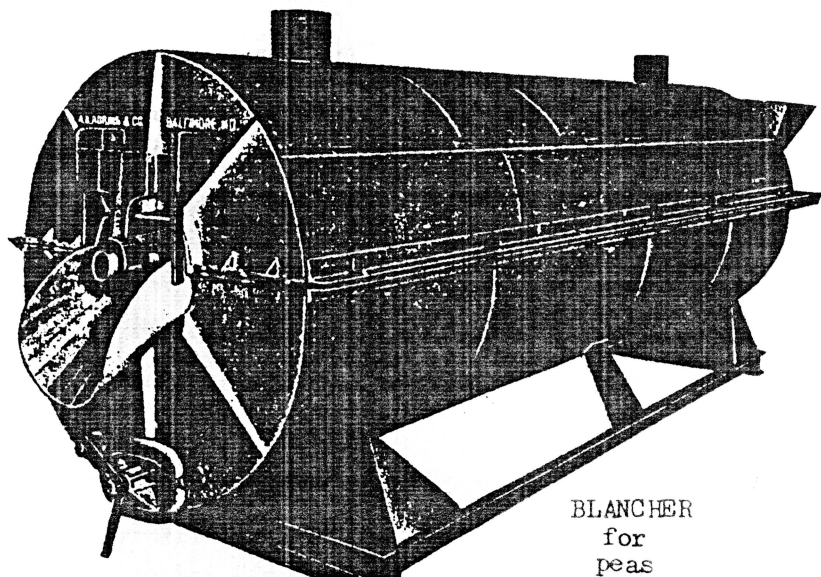
Three  
crates to a

RETORT

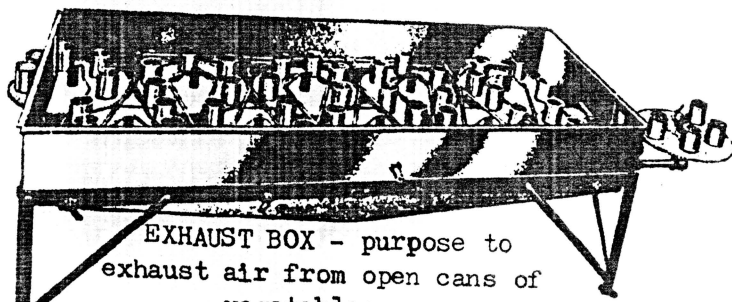


NOTE:—Screens are sheet zinc carefully perforated and formed.

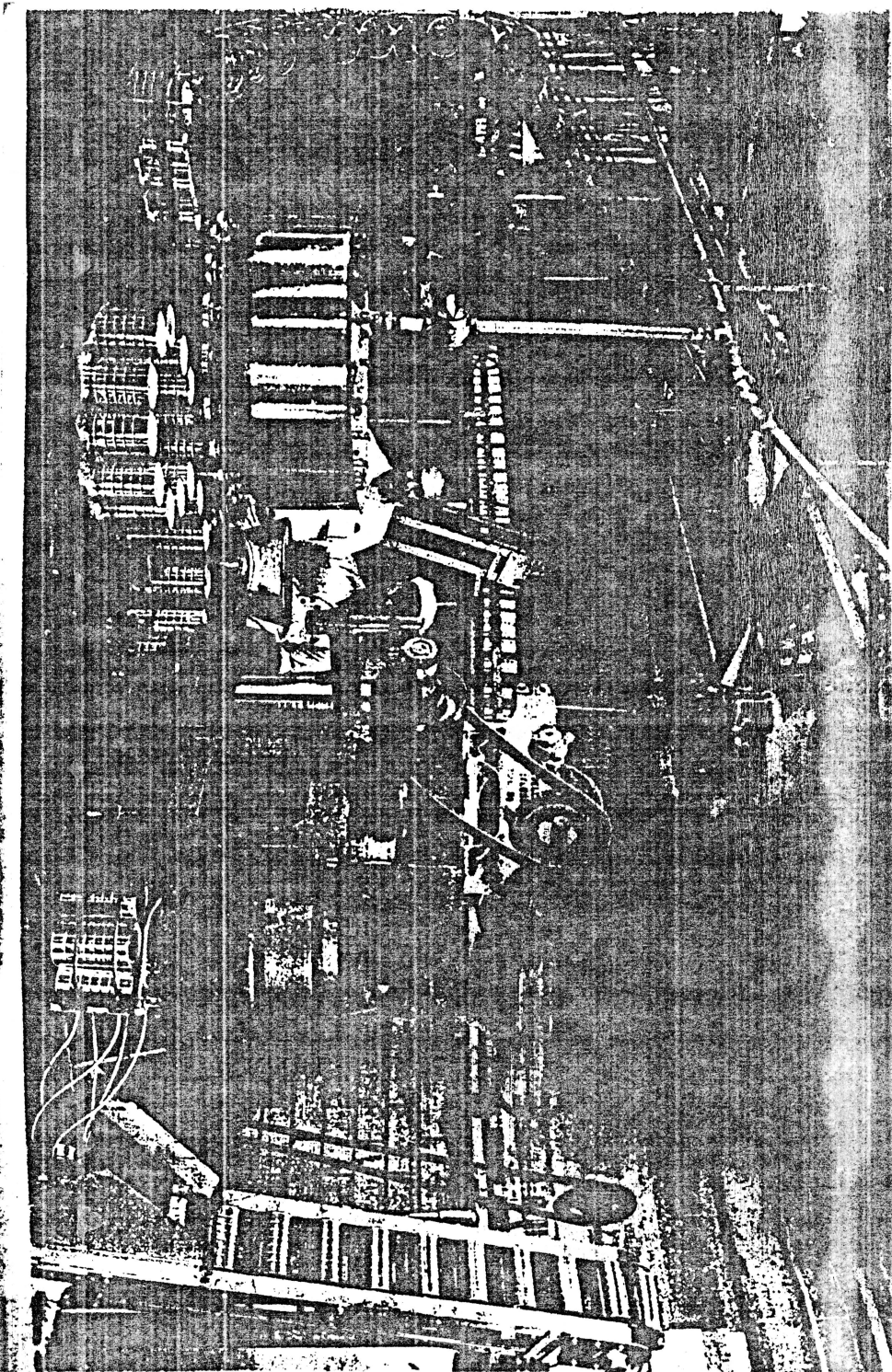
## ROTARY PEA GRADER



BLANCHER  
for  
peas



EXHAUST BOX - purpose to  
exhaust air from open cans of



At the same time mechanical harvesters for peas and other vegetables came upon the scene. These machines needed more acreage in which to move, as already explained Pea threshers, tomato pickers, bean pickers, and corn pickers all ganged up on the small farms so to speak.

Another development put in its appearance in the early 1940s. Experiments in frozen foods had been going on for several years. Joining frozen foods was the advent of conveniently packaged foods, These innovations drastically changed the eating habits of the American consumer. Canned foods became less in demand.

Soon after the end of the Second World War the lot of the canning industry in Utah and the nation became clear. Plant after plant began to close their doors. The demise was inevitable.

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The compiler of this account spent many years, off and on, as a seasonal worker in peas and tomatoes for the California Packing Corporation. He remembers well the peak period of productivity of the many canneries in Weber County. He saw the industry as it struggled to survive in a changing environment. He saw the many companies as they flourished and then he saw them as they boarded up their windows and locked their doors.

Even the giant of them all the Calpak closed its plants in Weber County and in fact in all the state of Utah. The Stevens Canning Company stands alone in the 1980s as the sole survivor in the county of a once flourishing profitable business.

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#### EPITAPH

Gone are the smell of peas being blanched, of tomatoes being scalded, of catsup as it is boiled to reduce it to the desired viscosity, gone are the clatters of empty cans as they descend the chutes on their way to the fillers, gone are the sounds of the retorts as the pressure is being reduced when the cooking period was over.

Silent and mute are all the sounds associated with the canning industry. Rusting inside of the many buildings can be found, among the stale smells of inactivity and the dust of neglect, those old machines, the graders, the blanchers, the fillers, the cappers, the retorts, those old veterans which saw so many cans of fruits and vegetables pass their way