

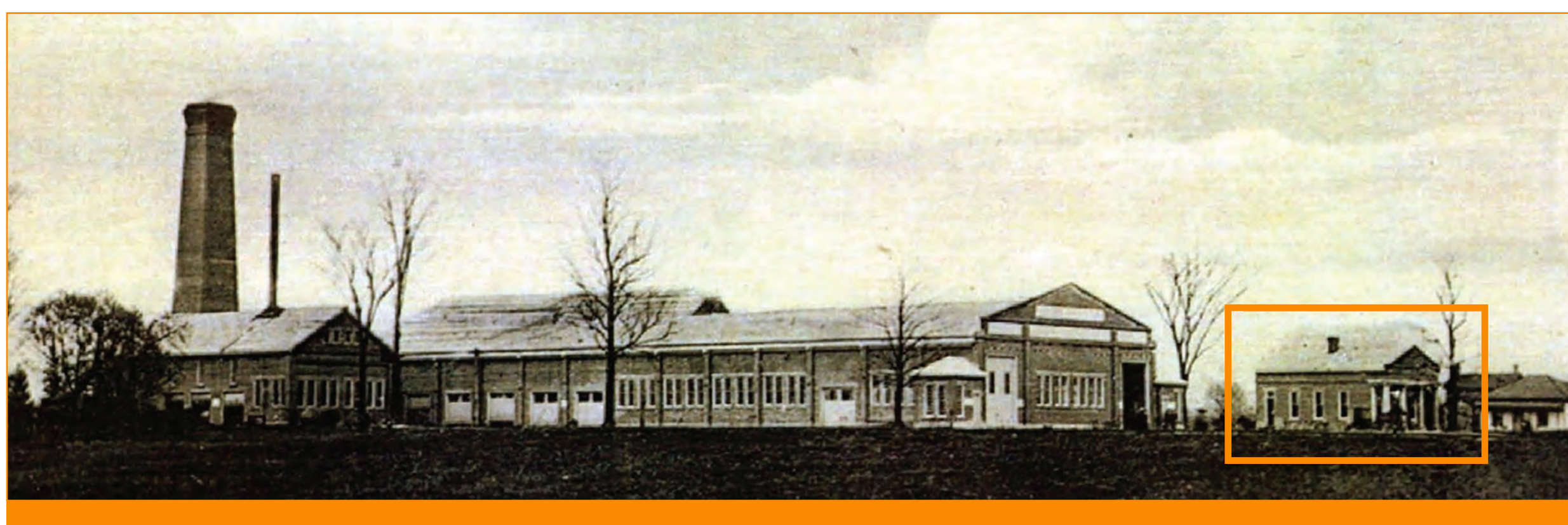
# FROM CERTO TO KRAFT

## ALMOST A CENTURY OF FOOD MANUFACTURING IN COBOURG

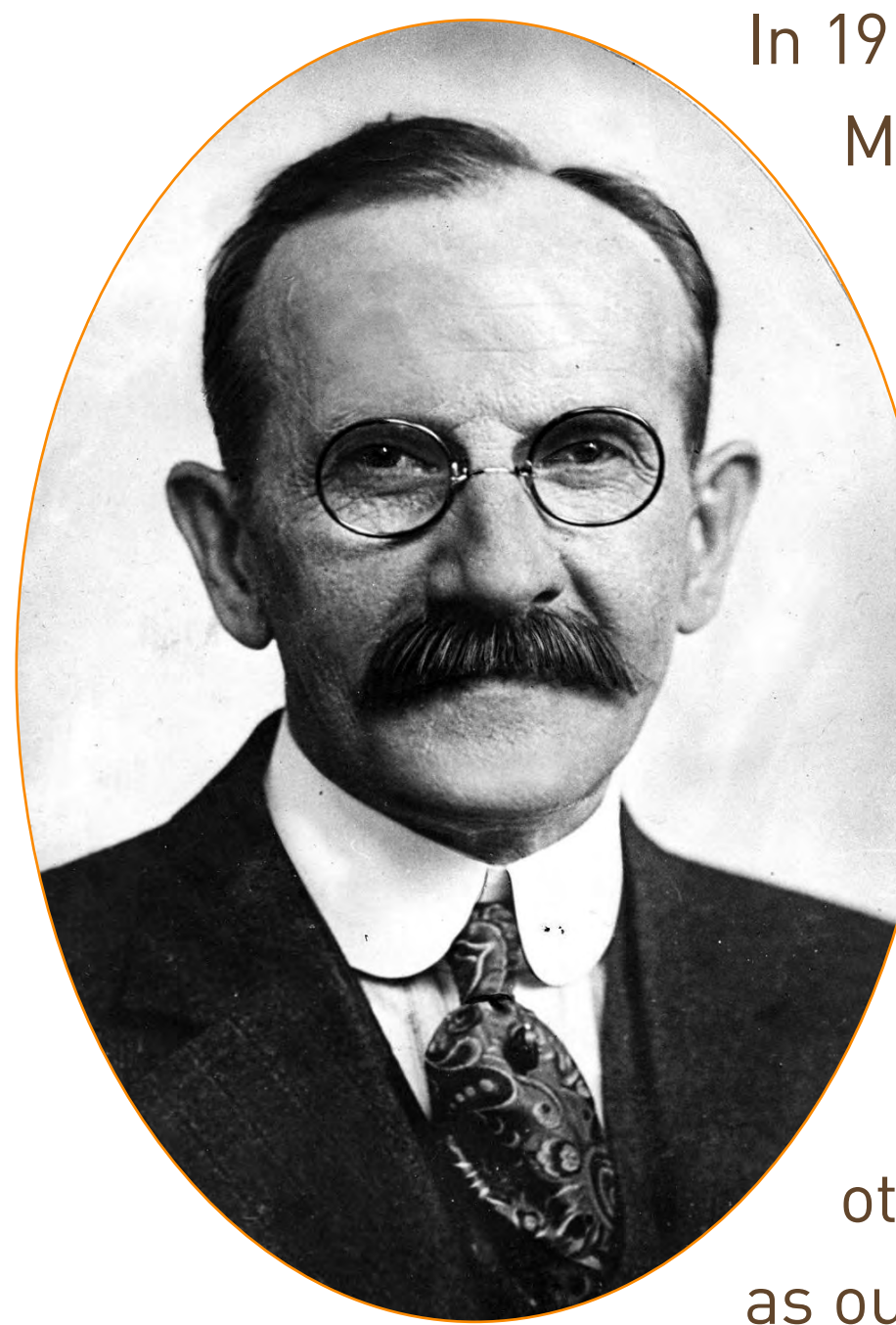


Scattered throughout the Town of Cobourg there remain today a number of sites that hide the stories of major industries no longer with us. Among these are the now vacant site of the Crossen Car Works (later a tannery) and the abandoned remains of the woolen mills on Tremaine Street. **The large food facility still known as Kraft looms between William and Ontario Streets.**

Provincial Steel was the first industry to occupy the site on William St., just north of the railroad tracks, known in modern times as General Foods then Kraft. In 1909 the steel company erected the small red brick Classical Revival building and a large plant. But their tenure was short-lived - in 1914 the plant was acquired by the Imperial Munitions Board and became a warehouse for the storage of nitrate of soda, used in ammunition shells for the First World War.



## THE FIRST FOOD ARRIVAL



In 1919, with the war over and the building empty, the Munitions Board sold the property to Robert Douglas of Rochester, New York, who owned the York State Fruit Company. This area was the heart of apple-growing country, with orchards stretching from Bowmanville to Trenton. **The bounty of apples and preferential business rates attracted Douglas to Cobourg.** From here he had more favourable access to Canadian and British markets.

His Cobourg Company, Douglas Packing, began as a manufacturer of vinegar, but Douglas looked ahead to other products he could manufacture here. His theory, as outlined in a patent application filed in 1913, was that

commercial jams could be made to gel both more reliably and more quickly with the addition of a single, somewhat elusive ingredient called pectin. He knew that apples were high in pectin and he developed a means of extracting it.

Soon **Cobourg had the first pectin plant in the British Empire.** At first pectin was only marketed to the canning trade, but by 1923 Douglas was bottling pectin for the retail market - the home canners. He called it "Certo". Douglas Packing became Douglas Pectin. There were 40 employees at the time.

