

# W. T. Hawkins Co. Has Established Plant In City

## Food Specialty Firm Plans To Employ 150 at Capacity

W. T. Hawkins Ltd., producers of food specialties, have established their Canadian manufacturing operations in Belleville.

Production of one of the company's largest items is expected to get underway by the end of this week in the new plant in the Graham building at 105 South Pinnacle Street. Eventually the company expects to employ 150 people.

A lease for 20,000 square feet of floor space in the Graham building was signed at noon on Saturday, 15 days after the company's plant and machinery was destroyed in a \$250,000 fire in Tweed. By 8.00 p.m. Saturday seven carloads of machinery had been moved into the new quarters. Canadian sales of the company's six products is between \$1,500,000 and \$2,000,000 annually.

The new Belleville plant gives W. T. Hawkins 6,000 additional square feet of floor space and will allow expansion and experimentation with new products.

### WORKERS TO COMMUTE

James Marker, production superintendent, said today that initially the staff will be small with most workers commuting to Belleville from Tweed. All key personnel and workers accustomed to the company's methods, will be brought from Tweed each day.

As the company acquires the necessary specialized machinery to expand production it is expected that the staff will grow until a maximum working force of 150 is employed with a weekly payroll of \$5,000.

Special equipment required by the company is being manufactured in Tweed from designs and patterns made by Mr. Marker.

Negotiations to establish the Hawkins plant here were initiated by Mayor Jane Forrester on Friday, January 6th, the same day the plant burned in Tweed.

Mayor Forrester, and industrial commission chairman, William Argue met with W. W. Hawkins, vice president of the company, the next day.

Company officials were shown several sites in the city before they decided on the S. Pinnacle St. location. A second meeting with Mayor Forrester, Mr. Argue and Mr. Hawkins, was held in the city hall a week later. The lease for the Graham property was signed Saturday, January 21st, at noon.

"Our establishment here is a matter of reconstruction," said Mr. Marker this morning. "We built this machinery originally. The fire in Tweed was bad; everything buckled. We lost a lot of tools. These have been replaced and we are now building new equipment."

Mr. Marker stated that the Tweed plant was terribly congested as the company's operations outgrew its facilities.

"We not only have more space here, but it is better laid out and will make for great efficiency," he said of the new quarters. "It will allow us to make new items we have never touched before."

### START PRODUCTION THIS WEEK

He said the company would start producing Cheezies this week and would progress to Magic Pop, Gold Star potato chips as machinery became available.

He also stated that the company would continue its program of promoting potato growers in Canada to produce potatoes suit-

able for the company's uses.

W. T. Hawkins Ltd. established its Canadian plant in Tweed in 1949. Its maximum employment, in two shifts, was 125. When the plant, housed in a building owned by the Tweed Steel Works, was destroyed earlier this month the company was employing 75 workers mostly women. The company's head office is in Chicago.

Following the fire Reeve T. C. Graham held a special meeting of council attended by company officials with a view to keeping the plant in Tweed. Lack of sufficient space in Tweed was responsible for the company's move to Belleville.