



# The Legacy of John Waldie and Sons: A History of the Victoria Harbour Lumber Company

*Kenneth A. Armson, Marjorie McLeod*

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At the time of his death in 1907, John Waldie, founder of the Victoria Harbour Lumber Company, was identified as "the second largest lumber operator in Canada." A young Scottish immigrant who came to Wellington Square (now Burlington, Ontario) in 1842, he rose to prominence as a wealthy merchant and ship owner. In 1885 he entered the lumber business. Active in local and federal politics, and a friend of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, he invested capital in mills, people and forests.

Local history and genealogical connections are part of the Waldie story, headquartered at Victoria Harbour in Simcoe County. Documentation of the forest that the company logged, their nature, amount and sizes of logs harvested with the descriptions of the forests as they are now, throws new light and shatters some of the current myths.

This little-known story provides insights into days of rampant entrepreneurialism, the world of the lumber barons and the overall impact on our Ontario forests.

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