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Article abstract

Despite centralization of population and economic activity during the last hundred years, villages and hamlets in the Guelph area have not "died." New functions have replaced many that disappeared, while the increasing use of the car has led to a proliferation of service stations, and to more economic diversity in the largest places. Commuters have increased the populations of many small settlements with good access to employment in cities. If gasoline prices continue to rise, many small places may again experience slower growth and relative economic stagnation.

THE CHANGING FUNCTIONS OF VILLAGES AND
HAMLETS IN WELLINGTON COUNTY, 1881-1971*

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F. A. Dahms

ABSTRACT/RESUME

Despite centralization of population and economic activity during the last hundred years, villages and hamlets in the Guelph area have not "died." New functions have replaced many that disappeared, while the increasing use of the car has led to a proliferation of service stations, and to more economic diversity in the largest places. Commuters have increased the populations of many small settlements with good access to employment in cities. If gasoline prices continue to rise, many small places may again experience slower growth and relative economic stagnation.

Malgré la centralisation de la population et de l'activité économique depuis cent ans, les villages et les hameaux de la région de Guelph ne sont point "morts." De nouvelles fonctions viennent remplacer celles qui disparaissent; en même temps, l'emploi croissant de l'automobile a amené une prolifération de stations-service, et une diversité économique plus large dans les centres les plus importants. La population de plusieurs petits villages d'un accès facile aux villes et leurs emplois s'est accrue de ceux qui font la navette. Si le prix du pétrole continue à monter, beaucoup de petits centres pourront connaître de nouveau une croissance plus lente et une économie relativement stagnante.

* * *

There is ample evidence to indicate that the commercial functions of many small settlements declined and ultimately centralized in larger places during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In fact, a number of studies that considered the role of settlements as central places providing goods and services to residents of their hinterlands have predicted or demonstrated the "disappearance" of

*The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Program 40, supported the research upon which this paper is based.

villages and hamlets during the last hundred years.¹ Other writers have suggested that although commercial functions of central places may have declined or disappeared, their populations and residential functions have increased or remained static.² This apparent contradiction appears to be the result of a major emphasis upon the study of settlements as central places, almost to the exclusion of a consideration of their other functions.

This paper addresses the topic of functional change in small settlements in the Guelph area between 1881 and 1977. It considers both population and functional changes in eight villages and hamlets within a previously defined study area. This is the Guelph Central Place System as delineated in 1970 (Figure 1).³ Here the population

¹See for example G. Hodge, "The Prediction of Trade Centre Viability in the Great Plains," Papers and Proceedings, Regional Science Association, Vol. 15 (1965), pp. 87-115; "Do Villages Grow? - Some Perspectives and Predictions," Rural Sociology, Vol. 31 (1966), pp. 183-196; B.J.L. Berry, Geography of Market Centres and Retail Distribution (Englewood Cliffs:Prentice-Hall, 1967), pp. 114-118; C.R. Lewis, "The Analysis of Changes in Urban Status: A Case Study in Mid-Wales and the Middle Welsh Borderland," Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, Vol. 64 (1975), pp. 49-65; J.U. Marshall, "The Urban Network of the Queen's Bush 1896-1962: A Pilot Study in Comparative Statics," Unpublished Paper Presented to Ontario Historical Geographers (McMaster University, 1975), mimeo, 12 pp.

²J.F. Hart and N.E. Salisbury, "Population Changes in Middle Western Villages: A Statistical Approach," Annals, Association of American Geographers, Vol. 55 (1965), pp. 140-160; J.F. Hart, N.E. Salisbury, E.G. Smith, Jr., "The Dying Village and Some Notions About Urban Growth," Economic Geography, Vol. 44 (1968), pp. 343-349; G. Hodge and M. Quadeer, Towns and Villages in Urban Canada, Report Prepared by Ministry of State for Urban Affairs (Ottawa, 1976); F.A. Dahms, "Declining Villages?" in Second Annual Agricultural History of Ontario Proceedings, ed. T.A. Crowley (Guelph: Office of Continuing Education, University of Guelph, 1977), pp. 50-65; C.C. Zimmerman and G.W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System (Ottawa: Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1970), pp. 21-25.

³F.A. Dahms and J.A. Forbes, "Central Places in the Golden Triangle: The Guelph System 1970," in The Waterloo County Area: Selected Geographical Essays, ed. A.G. McLellan (Waterloo: University of Waterloo, 1971), pp. 113-127; F.A. Dahms, "How Ontario's Guelph District Developed," Canadian Geographical Journal, Vol. 94 (1976), pp. 48-55.

peaked at 63,515 in 1881, declined to 54,181 in 1921, and rose to 97,508 by 1970. At these same dates, there were 62, 42, and 44 central places in the area. Although major changes did occur between 1851 and 1970, there was remarkable stability in the importance of the largest places. The ranks of the 13 major towns that survived as central places from 1851 to 1970 fluctuated little during that period. On the other hand, smaller settlements arose, declined and disappeared with changing economic and technological circumstances. In 1851 there were only 16 central places in the area but by 1891 (the peak year) there were 63. Many centres lost all their economic functions after 1891, while others lost a number of functions or experienced major changes over the years. Nineteen sixty-one was the all time low (after 1864) when only 34 settlements in the study area retained any central place functions.⁴

It is known that the decline or the demise of small settlements was often the result of the centralizing effect of the car and the increasing urbanization of the countryside.⁵ As farmers became more mobile, they bypassed local villages and began to shop in larger towns or cities. Increasing proportions of the population became urban, providing larger local markets which led to the duplication of functions, functional units and establishments in cities or towns which captured many smaller places' former functions.⁶ Although this process has been well documented, there is little detailed evidence on exactly what occurred in the smaller settlements during this period of centralization. What precisely have been their population trends? Which functions have

⁴F.A. Dahms, "Some Quantitative Approaches to the Study of Settlements in the Guelph Area, 1851-1970," Urban History Review, No. 2-75 (October 1975), p. 16.

⁵J. Spelt, Urban Development in South Central Ontario (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), pp. 232-237.

⁶A function is one type or class of economic activity such as retailing gasoline or grinding grain; an establishment is the building where a function occurs, and a functional unit is one occurrence of a function in its own establishment or in combination with another function. A general store with a gasoline pump would be two functional units in one establishment.

disappeared entirely? Which have been replaced, or emerged in a modern equivalent form? How has the "mix" of activities in the smaller places changed over time? Has the ratio of population to economic activities increased or decreased in these places, and if so, why?

This paper answers some of the questions posed above by providing a detailed analysis of the changing functions of eight small central places in the Guelph Central Place System between 1881 and 1977 (Figure 1). They have been chosen to be spatially and functionally representative of unincorporated municipalities in that area, having populations of 50 to 1500 in the time period under consideration. For comparative purposes, the 10 most and least widely distributed functions in the whole study area are tabulated for 1891, the year with the maximum number of places, and for 1970, the last date for which data on the whole study area have been compiled. This information will indicate the relationships between the development of the same settlements and the overall changes in the study area.

Table I illustrates the wide variety of functions available in unincorporated places in the Guelph area in 1881. In total there were 38 different kinds of economic activities and 122 functional units. Counts of functions illustrate the variety of activities available in a place, whereas counts of functional units reflect duplication of these activities and the possibility of comparison shopping. Ratios of persons to functions and functional units give an indication of how well the resident population of each centre is provided with goods or services, although they also serve persons living outside the boundaries of the places being discussed. This is demonstrated by the figure of 964 persons per function in the whole study area in 1881, as opposed to only 88 in the settlements being considered here. For individual places, the range is from a high of 83 in Rockwood to a low of 19 in Orton. For the whole study area, there was a total of 67 different kinds of functions in 1881, as against only 38 in the settlements being discussed. The 67 reflects an upper limit to the number of different kinds of functions that might be found in any area, whereas the 38 reflects the relatively low order

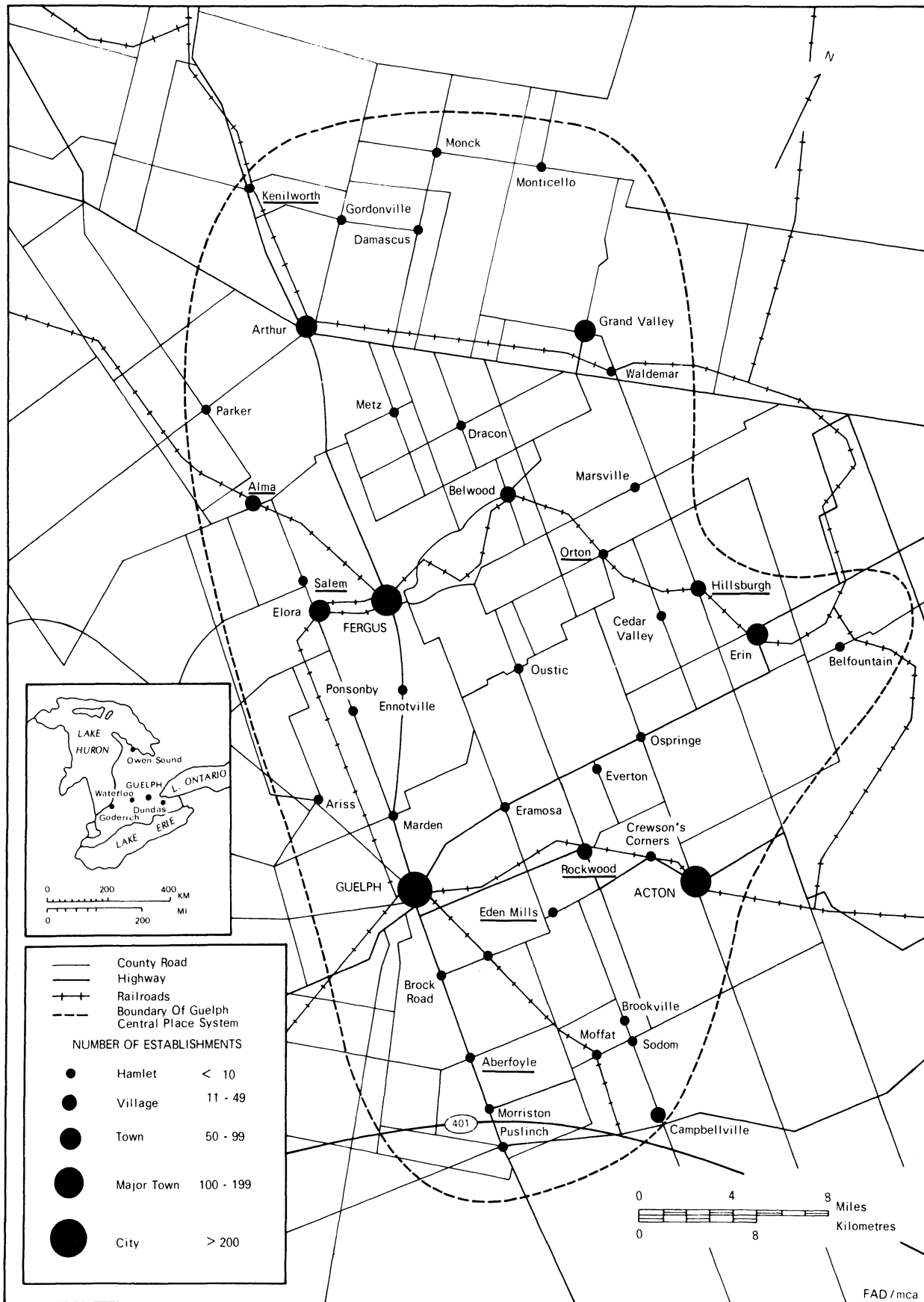


Figure 1: The Guelph Central Place System, 1970.

TABLE I

CHANGES IN POPULATION, FUNCTIONS AND FUNCTIONAL UNITS, 1881 - 1977

Year	<u>Alma</u>		<u>Aberfoyle</u>		<u>Eden Mills</u>		<u>Hillsburgh</u>		<u>Kenilworth</u>		<u>Orton</u>		<u>Rockwood</u>		<u>Salem</u>	
	1881	1977	1881	1977	1881	1977	1881	1977	1881	1977	1901	1977	1881	1977	1881	1977
Population*	200	271	150	112	300	332	400	819	50	105	175	42	1500	959	600	743
Functions	9	6	7	5	7	6	17	11	2	3	9	3	18	16	17	6
Functional Units	12	14	12	7	7	6	29	25	2	4	12	4	22	46	26	8
Persons/Function	22	45	21	22	43	55	24	74	25	35	19	14	83	60	35	124
Persons/Functional Unit	17	19	13	16	43	55	14	33	25	26	15	11	68	21	23	93

Year	<u>Total 8 Places</u>		<u>Change</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>	<u>Total in Study Area</u>		<u>Change</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
	1881	1977	1881-1977	1881-1977	1881	1970	1881-1970	1881-1970
Population*	3375	3383	+8	+0.2	63,515	97,508	+33,993	+53.5
Functions	38	23	-15	-39.4	67	78	+11	+16.4
Functional Units	122	114	-8	-6.6	888	1,376	+488	+55.0
Persons/Function	88	147	+59	+67.0	964	1,250	+286	+29.7
Persons/Functional Unit	27	30	+3	+11.1	73	71	-2	-2.7

*1976 data for 1977; 1881 data from Dun and Bradstreet.

SOURCES: Dun and Bradstreet, Reference Books (Toronto, 1881, 1977); Statistics Canada, 1976 Census of Canada, Supplementary Bulletin: Population of Unincorporated Places, Canada, 1978; F.A. Dahms, "Some Quantitative Approaches to the Study of Central Places in the Guelph Area, 1851-1970," Urban History Review, No. 2-75 (October 1975), p. 16.

and small size of the sample places under consideration.

By 1977 there were only 23 functions in the eight settlements, but 78 in the whole study area. The total number of functional units in the sample had dropped from 122 to 114 as compared to an increase from 888 to 1376 in the study area. Ratios of persons per function and functional unit indicate that residents of the sample settlements did not have as many different local functions per capita in 1977 as their 1881 counterparts. On the other hand, the ratio of persons per functional unit in these places has changed little in 89 years (Table I). In the whole study area, the increase in persons per function is lower than in the 8 settlements, and there has actually been a decline (2.7 percent) in the number of persons per functional unit. This illustrates the proliferation of functional units in large settlements accompanied by a slight decline in the smaller places (Table I).

When changes in population are considered, several trends become apparent (Table I). First, the population of the eight settlements combined has increased slightly between 1881 and 1976. In fact, if Rockwood's drop of 541 is disregarded, the other seven places collectively gained 549 persons between 1881 and 1976. Hillsburgh and Salem led, with increases of 418 and 143 respectively. After Rockwood, Orton was the next largest loser, followed by Aberfoyle. Even where losses occurred, however, only Orton and Rockwood declined by more than 50 persons. This trend reflects the 22 percent increase in the combined populations of all unincorporated municipalities in Wellington County between 1961 and 1976.⁷ Clearly, small settlements here are not "dying" completely, especially in their residential functions. They have, however, grown much more slowly at 0.2 percent for the sample, than the 53.5 percent increase for the study area as a whole (Table I).

A comparison of the goods and services offered in the whole study area with those found in the eight settlements provides an overview of the changing functions of all settlements in the Guelph area, and a

⁷ Statistics Canada, Special Bulletin, Population, Unincorporated Settlements (Ottawa: Census of Canada, 1971, 1976).

contrast with those in the small places considered here (Table II). Functions are ordered according to the number of places in which they are found rather than according to the total number of establishments. Such a ranking reflects their spatial distribution, rather than duplication in large centres which would be demonstrated by ordering according to the number of establishments. Between 1891 and 1970, the service station replaced the post office as the most widely distributed function, while the general store dropped from second to third place. Blacksmith, which was third in 1891, disappeared entirely from the 1970 list, although the service station may be considered its modern equivalent. The hotel, which in 1891 ranked fourth, has had some of its functions (provision of meals) replaced by restaurants which were fifth in 1970. One might consider the building and fuel supply function of 1970 somewhat equivalent to the sawmill of 1891. Similarly, the grist mill in 1891 has been replaced by the hay, grain and feed sales outlets of 1970. Some functions of the grocery store of 1891 have been taken over by the variety store of 1970 and grocery stores in 1970 would provide some of the products formerly offered by the butcher. Of the ten most frequent functions in 1891, the footwear/shoemaker, butcher, and harness maker disappeared from the list by 1970.

There is very little correspondence between the least frequently found functions in the years being considered. Those for 1970 are of a much higher order than the ones in the 1891 list. The inclusion of variety store in the least frequent list of 1891 as opposed to its place in the most frequent list of 1970 indicates the change in its relative importance and ubiquity. In 1970, practically all the least frequent functions for 1891 were found in the four or five largest places in the Guelph Central Place System, and ranged from two or three to ten establishments each.⁸

There were more persons per establishment, persons per function, and persons per place in 1970 than in 1891. The number of functions

⁸Dun and Bradstreet, Reference Book (Toronto: Dun and Bradstreet of Canada Ltd., 1970).

TABLE II

CENTRAL PLACE GOODS AND SERVICES: GUELPH AREA, 1891, 1970

Good or Service 1891 Ten Most Frequent	Number of Places Estab- Found lishments		Good or Service 1970 Ten Most Frequent	Number of Places Estab- Found lishments	
Post Office	59	59	Service Station	42	152
General Store	42	81	Post Office	32	40
Blacksmith	41	69	General Store	32	39
Hotel	28	73	Hay, Grain & Feed Sales	20	41
Footwear/Shoemaker	26	60	Restaurant	16	78
Sawmill	17	22	Variety Store	16	72
Butcher	15	38	Building & Fuel Supply	16	60
Grocery Store	14	89	Grocery Store	16	56
Grist Mill	14	15	Furniture and Appliances	15	65
Harness Maker	13	22	Car Repair (Garage)	15	43
<u>Ten Least Frequent</u>			<u>Ten Least Frequent</u>		
Upholsterer	1	2	Custom Tailor	1	3
Tinsmith	1	1	Fruit and Vegetables	1	2
Musical Instruments	1	1	Hobby Shop	1	2
Fish	1	1	Delicatessen	1	2
Dairy	1	1	Pet Shop	1	1
Broker	1	1	Women's Accessories	1	1
Locksmith	1	1	Women's Shoes	1	1
Sewing Machines	1	1	Daily Newspaper	1	1
Variety Store	1	1	Psychiatric Hospital	1	1
Bookbinder	1	1	Radio Station	1	1

<u>Totals:</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1970</u>
Population	57,648	97,508
Places	63	44
Establishments	991	1,376
Functions	64	78
Persons per establishment	58	71
Persons per function	900	1,250
Persons per place	915	2,216

SOURCES: Dun and Bradstreet, Reference Books (Toronto, 1891, 1970); Census of Canada, 1891; F.A. Dahms, "Some Quantitative Approaches to the Study of Central Places in the Guelph Area, 1851-1970," Urban History Review, No. 2-75 (October 1975), p. 16.

increased from 64 to 78, although the number of places in which these were found dropped from 63 to 44. A population increase of almost 40,000 is reflected to some degree by an increase in the number of establishments from 991 to 1376 between 1891 and 1970 (Table II).

When making general comparisons between functions found in 1891 and 1970, one is impressed by the number and importance of services in 1970 whose purpose was to accommodate the motor car. Service stations were found in by far the most places in 1970, and had almost twice as many establishments as the restaurant which was the next most common function. The garage was also on the list of most frequently found 1970 functions. By 1970, only two places lacked a service station, whereas in 1891 four places were without a post office which was then the most widely distributed function.

When the functions of the sample settlements are tabulated in detail (Table III), the kinds of changes that have occurred there become more apparent. Functions have been categorized as those which are the same or directly comparable between 1881 and 1977, and as modern activities with no real equivalents in 1881. Those in the latter category include construction companies and modern tradesmen, wholesaling establishments, garden nurseries, and modern industrial manufacturing plants. Functions such as service stations or garages have not been separated in these tabulations since they may be considered the modern equivalents of the blacksmith shop. This type of classification enables us to differentiate between functions which in 1977 are almost direct replacements for their earlier counterparts and those which could not have existed in any form in the economy of 1881.

Thirty-one activities found in the eight places in 1881 had disappeared completely by 1977, but this was offset by 14 functions that did not exist in the earlier period. Seven functions were found in one or more settlements in both 1881 and 1977 but of these, only baker, general store and hotel existed in the same place at both dates. The most common functions in 1881 were general store, blacksmith, and shoemaker, while in 1977, construction companies and modern tradesmen, wholesale outlets, and general stores topped the list. These were

TABLE III

NUMBER OF FUNCTIONAL UNITS IN SELECTED SMALL SETTLEMENTS IN WELLINGTON COUNTY, 1881 AND 1977

Function	Settlement and Year																	
	Alma		Aberfoyle		Eden Mills		Hillsburgh		Kenilworth		Orton		Rockwood		Salem		Total	
	1881	1977	1881	1977	1881	1977	1881	1977	1881	1977	1901	1977	1881	1977	1881	1977	1881	1977
Agent											2				1		3	-
Baker							2						1	1			3	1
Blacksmith	2		3		1		2				2		2		3		15	-
Brewer															2		2	-
Butcher	1											1	1				2	1
Building Materials								1									-	1
Cabinetmaker							1								1		2	-
Car Dealer														3			-	3
Car Repairs		1		1				3									-	5
Carding Mill													1				1	-
Carpenter	1																1	-
Carriages			1														1	-
Clothing Store														1			-	1
Construction		3				1		5		1		1		9		2	-	22
Companies & Trades*																		
Cooper					1								1		1		3	-
Drover																1	1	-
Drugstore							1										1	-
Fancy Goods													1				1	-
Furniture Store								2									-	2
General Store	1	3	3	1	1	1	4	1	1	2	2	1	2	3	3	1	17	13
Gloves													1				1	-
Grain							1										1	-
Gristmill			1				1						1		2		5	-
Grocery Store	1							2			1			1			2	3
Hardware											1						1	-
Harness Maker	1										1				1		3	-
Holding Co.*								1									-	1
Hotel							1				1		2	1	1		5	1
Insurance Agent							2										2	-
Last Factory															1		1	-

TABLE III - *continued*

Function	Settlement and Year																Total	
	Alma 1881	1977	Aberfoyle 1881	1977	Eden Mills 1881	1977	Hillsburgh 1881	1977	Kenilworth 1881	1977	Orton 1901	1977	Rockwood 1881	1977	Salem 1881	1977	1881	1977
Manufacturing* (Modern)					1		2						5		2		-	10
Millinery							1										1	-
Money Lender					1												1	-
Nursery (Garden)*						1							3				-	4
Organs & Pianos															1		1	-
Peg Factory															1		1	-
Physician	1							1					2				3	1
Repair Shop														4			-	4
Restaurant		1		2										2			-	5
Saddler							1						1				2	-
Sawmill	1		1				1				1						4	-
Service Station		2		1		1		4		1		1		3		1	-	14
Shingle Mill													1				1	-
Shoemaker			2		1		3				1		1		3		11	-
Souvenir Store						1											-	1
Surveyor														1			-	1
Tailor							2						1		1		4	-
Tannery							1							1			1	1
Tavern	2						2		1				1		1		7	-
Tinsmith							1						1				2	-
Trucking*														2		1	-	3
Wagons	2		1		1		2						1		2		9	-
Wholesale Outlet*		4		2				3						6		1	-	16
Woollens					1												1	-
<u>Total</u>																		
Comparable Functions	12	7	12	5	7	4	29	14	2	3	12	3	22	21	26	2	122	59
Construction; Modern Manufacturing, Wholesaling, etc.		7		2		2		11		1		1		25		6		55

*Modern functions with no earlier close equivalent.

SOURCES: Dun and Bradstreet, Reference Books (Toronto, 1881, 1901, 1977).

followed closely by modern manufacturing and service stations. In both 1881 and 1977, general stores were found in all settlements. Blacksmiths had shops everywhere except in Kenilworth in 1881, while service stations were found in all eight settlements in 1977. Construction companies and tradesmen operated everywhere except Aberfoyle in 1977 while many other activities were found in only one or two places at both time periods (Table III).

When direct equivalents are tabulated, it is evident that all places except Kenilworth provided a greater variety of goods and services in 1881 than in 1977 (Table III). However, when totals are compared, the addition of modern functions puts the 1977 figures for Alma and Rockwood above their 1881 levels. Construction companies and modern tradesmen, modern manufacturing, and garden nurseries are the major additions in Rockwood, while wholesaling is important in both places. As the largest centre at both time periods, Rockwood has seen a great diversification of its functions even though its population is down from that of 1881 (Table I, III). Salem, Hillsburgh, Orton, and Aberfoyle had the greatest decreases in functions between 1881 and 1977.

The "mix" of activities in these small places has changed somewhat since 1881. Gone are the blacksmith and shoemaker, both primarily services for local farmers and town residents. The service station and general store doubtless still cater to nearby farmers and townspeople, although with a smaller variety of goods and services than their earlier counterparts. Modern industry, tradesmen, small construction companies, nurseries and wholesaling are essentially new to the small town economic mix. Given modern communications and technology, those activities serve a far larger area than any 1881 equivalent. Construction companies and modern tradesmen reflect local population growth, while some of the wholesale activities (such as fuel or farm supply dealers) are still related to the local agricultural economy.

Conclusion

The evidence presented here does not agree in all respects with



'Downtown' Hillisburgh, Ontario, 1979: typical recent functions. (Source: F.A. Dahms)

earlier findings on "declining villages." Although the strictly comparable functions of unincorporated Guelph area settlements have decreased since 1881, this change has been more than offset in Rockwood and Alma by the addition of modern manufacturing and wholesaling. In general there are now more persons per function in the eight settlements, but the ratio of persons to functional units is remarkably close to that of 1881. Contrary to expectations based on central place research, populations have increased rather than declined in the majority of cases. The changes noted are considerably more complex than a simple decline or disappearance of functions.

Detailed comparisons indicate that the primary economic function of small settlements has changed since 1881 from that of serving farmers and their horses to serving the automobile. It is somewhat ironic that all these places now have at least one economic activity almost totally dependent on the car, which was supposed to have ensured their ultimate economic demise. The larger have diversified, and because of the car and truck, can serve as wholesale depots or



Salem, Ontario, 1979. The ruins of a mill on the river, and in the background a renovated building.
(Source: F.A. Dahms)



Salem, Ontario, 1979. A luxury commuter residential development just behind the last building on right in mill photograph, above.

(Source: F.A. Dahms)

locations for manufacturing, construction and trades serving a much wider area than was possible previously.

Finally, the residential functions of small settlements should be recognized. Generally, buildings do not disappear, but continue to be used for residential purposes even if local economic activities have declined. In most villages and hamlets, new houses are still being built, and many former commercial establishments have been converted to residential use. If populations continue to increase, even more local suppliers of goods and services will be able to exist in these places. The attraction of employment in wholesale, construction or manufacturing may well attract more residents who are tired of the "big city," to the undoubted advantages of village life.

Data from the 1971 census indicate that commuters account for much of the population increase in small Wellington settlements during the last 10 years.⁹ For example, 74.1 percent of Hillsburgh's employed labour force commuted to work in 1971, most to the Toronto area. A large new subdivision in Hillsburgh almost exclusively accommodates commuters. Seventy-two percent of Rockwood's employed labour force commuted to work in 1971; 42 percent to Guelph and 25 percent to Toronto. Salem and Eden Mills have also had an influx of commuters to new subdivisions with 72 and 71 percent of their employed labour forces travelling out of town to work in 1971. In the southern part of the study area, commuters in both nucleated settlements and the countryside comprised between 40 and 60 percent of the employed labour force. Only in the northernmost part of the study area do locally employed residents equal or surpass the commuters.

One might conclude that the small town in the Guelph area has changed considerably since 1881, but is certainly far from being "dead." Although prediction is always an uncertain undertaking, it is suggested that many "dying villages" may be well on their way to better health and increasing economic importance. Even the smallest in the Guelph area have remained as residential nodes, and the largest have diversified

⁹Statistics Canada "Number of Individuals Age 15 and Over in the Employed Labour Force Showing Place of Residence by Place of Work for Selected Enumeration Area Groups in Wellington County, 1971" (Ottawa: Census of Canada Special Tabulation, 1977).

considerably since 1881. However, once again, the car may affect their fate. If gasoline prices continue to increase, they will become less attractive to long distance commuters despite their desire to live outside the cities. On the other hand, the large new supply of houses will not disappear, and inertia may provide stability despite rising fuel costs. Small towns may have reached another population plateau similar to that between 1870 and 1911. It would be both interesting and instructive to determine whether this is also the case elsewhere in Ontario and Canada.