

# From the past - into the future

**M**aldon's oldest industry has taken a giant leap forward with the help of 20th century technology. For centuries the town's famous crystal salt has been packed by hand before being shipped off to such customers as Sainsbury's, Fortnum and Mason's and Harrods – not to mention a thriving export trade with Sweden. Now a brand-new filling machine has trebled the company's output.

## VERSATILE

"All our output used to be packed by hand," said Mr Clive Osborne, Maldon Crystal Salt Co's general manager.

"But with the new machine we can produce three times the amount with the same number of staff.

"And the machine is so versatile we may be looking

for contract filling to use up the spare capacity. The machine can handle anything from powders to oysters, for example."

Maldon salt, being crystalline in form, is particularly liable to be broken down if given rough treatment. "So this machine, although a particularly expensive piece of equipment, is ideal for our purposes," said a delighted Mr Osborne.

"Packaging has been holding us up the the past. We couldn't meet all our orders. We've been quoting two to three month's delivery before the machine was installed."

Maldon Crystal Salt, noted for its healthful properties, is produced by boiling the water from the River Blackwater until nothing but salt crystals remain. Salt has been produced from the river at Maldon since Roman times.



*Maldon Crystal Salt Co's new filling machine in action. Watching the machine at work are Mr Clive Osborne, left, and Mr Colin Horwood, area sales manager of manufacturers Driver, Southall Ltd.*