

## Maxton's Ice House

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When I was in eighth grade, I became aware of an employment opportunity at Maxton's Ice House at the edge of town. When I went to apply, the owner, Claude Maxton, wasn't impressed. I was both short and way skinny, and Mr. Maxton didn't think I would be able to do the work. However, he decided to give me a chance.

I crushed ice. The ice would come by train in 300-pound blocks. Each block was scored into 10 smaller blocks so you could remove each with an ice pick. The top two weighed 50 pounds and the remaining eight blocks were 25 pounds each.

It was my job to crush each block into drinking ice for local bars or bigger pieces for coolers. The crusher would crush the blocks into a tub, and an auger would transfer the ice from the tub to an overhead bin.

Underneath the bin was a scale I would use to weigh the bags as I removed the ice from the bin through a hole I opened and closed with a small board. I tied off the bags and put them in piles as high as I could reach.

In the winter the ice was used by local bars and restaurants. In the summer Hopewell Park generated a lot of business due to all the campers who visited the area.

When I was done crushing, I would work in the convenience store, either operating the cash register or removing the items from the shelves and dusting.

However, every Saturday at 3 p.m., world wrestling would come on the TV in the back of the store by Claude's desk. He always took time to watch the wrestling, and I was allowed to join him as long as there weren't customers in the store.