

Black History Month: Ingersoll



Harriet Wright 1833-1913

It is believed Harriet A. Wright came to Ingersoll via the Underground Railroad. Hattie appears on the 1901 Census of Canada in Ingersoll and states that she came to Canada in 1862 from America, which is during the prime northward migration years of formerly enslaved peoples. Harriet perhaps had a difficult life working as a domestic servant, and raising a family of three troubled sons on her own. In 1886, her son Benjamin was sent to reformatory school for arson. In 1905, her son Isaiah was found dead in the Thames River. She lived at 294 Tunis Street in Ingersoll at the end of her life. Her story ended tragically, but perhaps on her own terms. She rests in the Ingersoll Rural Cemetery.

"AUNTIE" WRIGHT DEAD.

Passed Away This Afternoon at the Hospital Twenty Minutes After Being Admitted.

Auntie Wright (colored) died at the Alexandra Hospital between one and two o'clock this afternoon twenty minutes after being admitted. Today Mayor Coleridge and Chief Fish visited her home on Tunis street and found her with her hands and feet frozen. They at once called the ambulance and had her removed to the hospital where she died as stated above.

Deceased had been a resident of Ingersoll for many years and was a familiar figure on the streets. She had resided alone for years and during the past two or three years had been very feeble.

Members of the council for many years have tried to persuade deceased to go to the House of Refuge at Woodstock, but she refused, and it is said that members of the Indigent Committee have found the door locked against them when they went to visit her to see if she needed food or fuel. Apparently her reason for locking the door when members of the council visited her was that she feared they would take her to the Refuge.

The council has kept her in fuel and food and when her home was visited today she had a supply of both.

Ingersoll Chronicle 6 February 1913