History of the Town of Ingersoll

by

Agatha Simister

"Next stop Ingersoll!" calls the trainman, as we near the little town on the Thames River. What a thrill that gives to all who call it home. The town that has made a worthwhile contribution to the life of the Dominion as well as the Empire - on whose soil have stood a King and Queen - whose sons and daughters have distinguished themselves in the four corners of the globe - a town that has had its share of ups and downs, with pestilence, fire and flood; but continues to hold its own as an important center of industry.

Long before the advent of the white man to these parts, Indians recognized it as a pleasant situation, choosing it for their summer camping ground, partly because of the purity of the water supply. there is nothing to remind us of those days except an occasional arrowhead turned up by plow or spade. But who knows but that beneath some of the numerous hummocks in the adjacent fields perhaps are resting the bones of a Redman long since gone to his Happy Hunting Grounds? there is reason to think this district was not off the beaten path even in those remote days, as the following will show.

Between 1856 and 1860 workmen on the property of Mr. Daniel Carroll, which is now "Bonnie Braes", the home of Mr. J.L. Patterson, while excavating, found, a few feet beneath the surface of the ground, cobblestones arranged in the form of a Cross. Underneath was a grave containing human bones, and an iron urn in which were papers written in French, explaining that a French missionary had died and been buried there. The papers were given to the Rev. Mr. Marsh C. of E. Rector in Ingersoll, who sent them to a Monastery in Quebec. There they were placed in the Archives and probably remain to this day. It is not known to which Monastery they were sent. They offer an interesting field of research for any student wishing to spend a holiday among the archives of the monasteries of Quebec.

In view of the foregoing, it is not at all improbable that our district has known the tread of the great missionaries, Marquette and Joliet as they passed on their way farther West. But there is no evidence of any French settlement having been here. First, because there are no buildings resembling those of French Canada in the district, and also, because the Roman Catholic Parish was a later founding.

The definite settlement of this part seems to have begun after the American Revolution, when large numbers of former British subjects crossed the line - some as Loyalists and others, as what would be called now, opportunists, or those who saw in the newly-opened country opportunities for speculation. As one of them remarked, on being asked why he had left his comfortable home in Pennsylvania to come to a wilderness, "one could get more interest on his money."

Such was the chief consideration that lead Major Thomas Ingersoll to seek his fortune in Canada. He had fought on the Revolutionary side, rendering distinguished service, which he felt was inadequately rewarded after cessation of hostilities. There were many wishing to share the spoils promised by the leaders, with much dissatisfaction resulting. They wondered whether they would not have been just as well off under the old Flag. Governor Simcoe issued a pro-

clamation. He also met Chief Brant, who had lead many Indians to settle on the Reserve bearing his name - Indians who had found British guidance good in Pennsylvania, and desired its continuance. Chief Brant transmitted his enthusiasm for the new country to Major Ingersoll, offering to show him choice land on the banks of the River La Tranche (Thames). He also provided a party of Indian guides to conduct him on this tour of inspection. We may picture the party as they roamed through the woods, part of which was swamp. If it was the spring season how pleasant they must have thought it all, with the Elm trees putting on their lacey lovliness. Elm trees growing by the River today are descendants of those that grew in the forest primeval. To see this part in summer would have been no less attractive. There would have been no less attractive. There would have been no well-tilled fields, no cattle grazing in rich pastures, none of the many signs of industrial occupation to be seen now. But there would have been valuable timber growing in rich soil, perhaps deer grazing in the forests, the same birds to be seen now, with Partridge in large numbers, also the Wild Pigeon, a sight never to be experienced by later generations. Autumn or winter would have presented for the new-comers just as fine pictures, so they well might have felt they had been led into a "goodly land".

At what ever season Thomas Ingersoll viewed the country, it is certain that his impression was favorable, for he returned to the states, making arrangements to bring his family back. He also reported to a group of friends who had appointed him as agent to consider prospects for their participation in the migration.

Once more an Ingersoll was to set out for a new land, just as his ancester Richard Ingersoll, had left Bedfordshire, England to settle in Salem, Mass. in 1629, and his more remote ancesters had left Normandy for England. Although Normandy is said to have been the cradle of the family, it is probable that it had some Scandinavian connection, for the suffix Inger, is undoubtedly of Scandinavian origin, rather than Norman. But search in Scandinavian archives has so far brought no clue either to the origin of the name, or to the affix oll. This offers an additional field to the research worker.

The following is a list of those who came with Major Ingersoll and the date of registration of their grant of land. Samuel Canfield, 1798; Elisha Harstling, 1798; Thomas Dexter, 1798; Eleazer Scott, 1798; Noah Sawyer, 1802; James Hopkins, 1798: Samuel Hall, 1802; Ichabod Hall, 1801; Lucius Morgan, 1802; Thomas Ingersoll 1802; John Sherman, 1806; Elisha Otis; David Curtis, 1802; Robert Spellman; Daniel Ingersoll; David Salsey; David Sabine; John Gordon; David Thompson, 1803; Benjamin Loomis, 1803; Seth Putnam, 1802; Ebenezer Cook, 1803; John Clark, 1804; Nicholas Brink, 1802; Samuel Mack, 1804; James Sage; Reuben Thrall; James Forrester; Reuben Forrester; Elisha Haskin, 1805; Lanadar Barnes, 1805; Montgomery Austin; James Piper; Charles Whiting, Joshua Crossman; Ebenezer Whiting; Samuel Burdick; Thomas Lee; M. Parsons.

It will be seen that Thomas Ingersoll received his grant of land about 1802, although he probably first came here about 1793 after seeing the Simcoe Proclamation. In "The Life of Laura Secord", by Emma Currie, mention is made of documents signed in 1795, showing that he was then getting his affairs in order to leave his home in Massachussettes.

Western Ontario was then a dense forest, with no roads, except the Indian Trail from Detroit to Ancaster. The latter place was a thriving settlement of greater importance than Hamilton, a position which it held until the Great Western Railway was routed by the other side of the valley, when the star of Ancaster waned while those of Hamilton and Dundas waxed greater.

Once arrived in the new country, Major Ingersoll set about to make a home for his family felling an Elm tree from which he built his log house. That house stood near the present site of Mr. Gayfer's store or the Hydro shop. It was planned to have a settlement similar to the Talbot settlement.

Quoting Mrs. Currie, "the conditions of the grant were that there were to be forty settlers, each to have 200 acres or more upon the payment of 6dsterling per acre. The balance of the 66,000 acres was to be held in trust by Mr. Ingersoll for the benefit of himself and his associates by paying the same price, 6d sterling. Arrangements had been to bring in one thousand settlers from New York State, when representations were made to the Home Government that such settlers would be injurious to the country and deprive others of settling." As not all those desirous of becoming settlers were Loyalists, and in view of what later occured in the Rebellion of 1837, that attitude was not altogether unreasonable. The same objections were raised against Colonel Talbot's scheme, but he went to England, and through the influence of friends was able to have his grant sustained. He urged Major Ingersoll to do like-wise, but he was unable, lacking both firends at court and funds. So he had to relinquish his homes for the Ingersoll Settlement. In discouragement, he left the district, moving to Etobicoke, where he died in 1812.

During his few years in Oxford County Mr. Ingersoll was Justice of the Peace, an office which entailed more work than now. Clergymen and lawyers were widely scattered so the J.P. had to substitute for both. Mr. Ingersoll among other duties performed marriages.

Following is a copy of a marriage certificate of such a ceremony.

Whereas Daniel Carroll of Oxford# County of Oxford, District of London and Province of Upper Canada, and Clarissa Hall of the same place were desirous of inter-marrying with each other, and there being no parson or minister of the Church of England living within eighteen miles of there or wither of those, they have applied to me for that purpose. Now these are to certify that in pursuance of the power granted by an act of the Legislature of this Province passed in the thirty-third year of his Majesty's reign; I, Peter Teeple Esq. one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace, having caused the previous notice by the statutes required to be given, have this Nineth Day of November, 1818, married the said Daniel Carroll and Clarissa Hall to-gether, and they are become legally contra ted to each other in marriage.

Given under my hand this 19th day of May, 1835,
Sgnd. Peter Teeple, J.P.

Witnesses- - EVE Horsman
Present Elisha Hall.

the village was at that time called Oxford, receiving the name of Ingersoll later on.

Probably Major Ingersoll issued many such certificates during his term of office. After his departure for Etobicoke his interest in this part of the country ceased and it was not until 1817 that his two sons Charles and James decided to return and repurchase their father's farm at a sherriff's sale. Mr. James Ingersoll was then first white child born here. His brother was born before the family came to Canada. The brothers set to work to make a settlement. They found the hold house in a ruinous condition, so, like their father they probably built one for their family first, It is recorded that they also built a saw-mill, a necessary part of every community in those days, a grist-mill, a store, a potashery and distillery. No record remains of the exact location of those buildings, but in the case of the mills, it is safe to assume that they were situated near a stream, as water power was necessa y for their operation. So they were probably situated along what is now Water or else Mill Street. In fact perhaps that was the origin of the name of the latter. There is evidence that the house and store were situated on King Street as that was the main thoroughfare. Mr. James Sinclair noted that Mr. Elisha Hall's mill which was situated where the Stuart mill later was on Canterbury Street was the first one in town. Mr. Daniel Carroll had one at the North-West corner of Charles and Mutual Streets. It was evidently more to share in the prosperity of the new community, than to create it, that the Ingersoll brothers came.

Of the appearance of the village at that time, there is little evidence. King Street, or as it was called, The Commisioner's Road, was the main one. The building, now Mr. Kerr's butcher shop, was there. Probably a few houses were scattered here and there, with inns where the stage coaches stopped. The Carroll Hotel was the center of a good deal of activity, giving shelter to many notables, such as the Governor and his suite. Sometimes balls were held there, which people from other places attended. Those balls were said to be very fine affairs, with none of the back woods atmosphere about them. The house occupied by Mrs. Thomas, at the corner of King and Merritt Streets was another hotel in the early days.

It has been asked why the town was not first built on the river banks, instead of farther south. The river banks in those days were marshy and not suitable for building upon. In the spring the flood waters extended as far south as the present sight of the C.P.R. station, and on the north side all that which is now the C.N.R. station yard was a swamp. Added to that it was desirable to build the business section of the town on the stage road. It was heavily timbered with elms, and as they were valuable for lumber, they were soon cleared out and the clearing used for building space. No factory chimneys appeared on the horizon, but there were other signs of industry, for in contrast to Woodstock, where many retired officers of the Army and Navy settled, Ingersoll was a town to which people came to make money. That they succeded to evident by the number of fine houses built during the middle of the last century.

Those shops and houses on King Street East between Carroll and Mill Streets were among the first ones, with Mr. Daniel Carroll's fine house nearby. It would appear that among the early residents of Ingersoll no artists, for it appears there are no sketches of it extant.

The Ingersoll brothers seem to have become prominent in the community from the first, for we find Mr. Charles Ingersoll, becoming Magistrate, Postmaster, a Commissioner of the Court of Request, Lt. Col.

of the 2nd Oxford Militia and a Member of Parliament. In 1832 a severe epidemic of Cholera swept the country, causing many deaths. Newly arrived settlers were stricken even before reaching their destination, and it caused great hardship. Cemeteries along the Governor's Road contain many graves of those whose bodies were buried where they were stricken, their families pushing on to their new homes. Mr. Charles Ingersoll and his eldest son were victims. In his will he gave the village the name of Ingersoll in memory of his father.

The first recorded industry in the village of Oxford, was a saw-mill, established by Elisha Hall, and situated where Smith's Ice House now stands. After the land had been cleared sufficiently, each clearing was planted in grain, so the next mill to be erected in a new community was a grist-mill, for previous to that it was sometimes necessary to travel long distances to find one. It was not unusual for settlers to go on foot from this neighbourhood to Hamilton for such a purpose. Many times it fell to the lot of the women folk to make the trip, when supplies ran low and the men could not be spared from more pressing duties at home. If the trip was made by horse-back two sacks of grain could be carried, one on each side, instead of the single sack for the foot-traveller. Precious indeed was flour in those days, and it can be readily understood that the coming of the Ingersoll brothers to the community was welcome when they built a grist-mill. One can fancy the feeling of satisfaction on the part of those who knew the fatigue of that long trip to Hamilton with the howling of wolves to add terror. Industry in those days seemed to be a matter of sequence, with one thing leading to another. Following a grist-mill came a distillery, also built by the Ingersolls, which utilized grain unsuitable for milling purposes. Clearing the land of trees lead to erection of a potashery, where ashes from the immense quantities of brushwood remaining from the lumbering operations, were taken. From the ashes potash was extracted which was shipped to Europe, adding to the young country's foreign credit. With the resulting business which would naturally follow the above-mentioned industries, an opening was created for a general store, operated by the Ingersolls. Thus the community grew.

The clearing of the land opened up opportunities for the manufacture of machinery, for both lumber mills and agricultural work, and one of the first to establish a foundry was Mr. Rumsey, from Connecticut. It had been his intention along with his brothers, to move farther West, but while in conversation with a fellow traveller in a stage-coach, he learned of the prosperous district developing around Ingersoll. So, bidding farewell to his brothers, and wishing them luck at the same time feeling that he got off the stage-coach and cast his lot in this community. The brothers proceeded to Michigan. In the garden of one was an arbor where his wife Anne used to entertain her friends. It became known as Anne Rumsey's Arbor, later expanding to become the city of Anne Arbor.

Mr. Rumsey coming from the industrial sectionoof Connecticut, soon realized that a country in which lumbering and agriculture played such a large part, was sure to require machinery. So in 1837 he acquired the land at the North-East corner of Charles and Thames Streets where he erected a foundry. Some few years later, a Mr. William Richardson, also an American, operated a foundry on Charles Street, at a point about opposite Mill Street, where the first steam engine in Oxford was built. Another American, Mr. Tomas Brown operated a tannery. Per-

haps one of the most welcome industries, from a woman's point of view, to be established in the new and thriving community was a carding mill, erected by Mr. Charles Parkhurst. It was on Charles Street, on the property now occupied by the New Idea Furnace Company. By it the already over-worked housewife was relieved of the task of carding wool for upon her largely rested the responsibility of providing clothing for the family, of wich carding was perhaps the most tiresome. For her still remained the work of spinning and weaving, and in many cases sewing. Although the travelling tailor was beginning to appear. These tailors would go through the country, staying with a family outfitting each member thereof, and then going on to the next customer. When the needs of a community had been filled to last a year or so, the tailor supplied with needle and thread, scissors and was, would move on to the next community. Shoe-making for the pioneers was done in the same way, until the prosperity of a community justified a settled tradesman there. When Mr. Parkhurst later installed a spinning machine, domestic labor was still further lightened, with only weaving to be done at home. That in time became unnecessary after the weaving machine was introduced. Very little money was used in the transaction of business. with millers, operating either flour, or saw or woolen mills as they retained a proportion of the finished product in return for service. This they disposed of, sometimes profitably, sometimes otherwise.

While the major development of the town was taking place on the South side of the River, a beginning was being made on the North as well. In 1799 the Hon. John McGill, a U.E.L., of Scottish birth, who had served with distinction during the American revolution, received from the Crown that land extending North of the River to the Town Line and bounded by what are now Mutual and a line running through Cashel Street, or approximately within those boundaries. Hon. John McGill was a brother in arms of Colonel (Afterwards Sir John Graves) Simcoe. His name is perpetuated in McGill Street, Toronto. There is no record of his having lived in this section of the country, and in 1832, 200 acres were sold to Mr. Henry Crotty, a recent arrival from Ireland. Mr. John Carnegie, a Scotsman, acquired 158 acres. They are known as the Crotty and Carnegie Surveys, respectively.

While the former was partially sub-divided, a large part of it was retained as farm land, but the latter was entirely turned into building lots, which shows the hopes entertained by the owner. In clearing the land Mr. Carnegie carried on a good deal of bartering, repaying with property those who assisted him in the work. He came to Canada with considerable means which he spent freely though not always prudently, always being willing to assist those in difficulty.

It was said that by endorsihg one note he lost $30,000. Wayfarers were always welcome at his house, and many were the kindnesses shown by him and his wife. He built a grocery store at the South east corner of Thames and Carnegie Streets, while Mr. Joseph Adair had a hotel near the railway tracks, where Mr. Scott's feed store is. So by the time the railway came through in 1853, there was the beginning of a settlement North of the River. From the appearance of some of the early houses it would appear that there were hopes of making it a first-class residential district. But with the railway came factories, and the inevitable result. Meanwhile the growth of the town was progressing. Mr. James Noxon, came up from Prince Edward County and established an implement factory on Thames Street South, where the Cole Furniture factory is, in 1854. The excellence of the Noxon implements,

many of them modeled by the ambitious young man at night, by the light of a lantern held by his wife who played a large part in making the business the outstanding success which it became. Numerous mills were built. Following those erected by Mr. Hall and the Ingersoll brothers. Mr. Carroll had one at the North-West corner of Carroll and Mutual Streets, The Stewarts turned the former Hall mill on Canterbury Street into an oatmeal mill, The Kings had one on King Street West, near the T.L.E. and P. McGinnes brothers had one on Victoria Street, Mr. James Smith operated three or four at one time; the Parkhurst mill, the Partlo mill on Mills Street, Smith's mill on Thames Street South and Stewart's mill. Mr. Murdoch had a carriage shop on King Street, at the S.-E. corner of Oxford Street, The Christopher brothers and Adam Oliver had a saw mills, several hotels were being opened and altogether it looked as if Ingersoll might become one of the most important places in the Province.

In the preceeding, we have attemped to give an outline of the early settlement of the town, and its first industries - a saw-mill a grist-mill, a potashery and a distillery. The need for the first two is apparent, as the work of the one paved the way for the second, for the settlers were eager to plant grain as soon as a clearing had been made. There was a ready market both at home and abroad for the products of field and forest. Many passed through swamp land, so it was necessary to overcome the difficulty of transportation, not as would be done now, by draining, but by building curduroy roads. These roads were made by laying logs flat on the ground across the road. Another type of road to overcome the same difficulty was the block road, a few examples of which are still to be seen in some of the older sections of Toronto. In these, the blocks of wood were driven into the ground lengthwise.

But even with the use of great quantities of lumber for building log-houses, curduroy and block roads, snake fences, bridges, and fuel ther was still tremendous amount of wood available which was not suitable for export. This led to the establishing of potasheries throughout the country. There the settlers took the shaes of all the brushwood from their clearings. From the ashes potash was extracted, and shipped to the British Isles and Europe. Thus the young country was enabled to add to the foreign credit begun by the fur trade. With the exception of the grain trade those early industries began a deple - tion of our country which has continued, and only recent efforts in reforestry and preservation of wild life have attempted to make amends for the despoiling begun in pioneer days. Governmental departments can do much. But individual effort can accomplish more, if it is unanimous.

Thomas Hornor - Oxford Pioneer

Mr. H.L. Kipp

Thomas Hornor, eldest son of Isaac and Mary Hornor, was born near Bordertown, New Jersey, on March 17, 1767. He was the great grandson of John and Mary Hornor who came from England in November 1683. The Hornors appear to have been the first who became convinced of the doctrines taught by George Fox and to have been fellow-sufferers with him in prison.

Isaac Hornor, grandfather of Thomas Hornor was a man of considerable means. He was a man of strong character and firm in his convictions. The unlawfulness of slavery was not questioned in those days. However, Isaac Hornor became convinced that it was wrong and accordingly, about the year 1744, he set all his slaves free. He was said to be the first person in the State of New Jersey who set his slaves free.

John Hornor, as son of Isaac, actively aided in the founding of the college of New Jersey, erected in Elizabethtown in 1745 and later moved to Princeton, New Jersey.

During the American Revolution, John Graves Simcoe went with the British troops into New England. He was given assistance at that time by a man named Watson, an uncle of Thomas Hornor. Later, when Simcoe became the first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, he invited Thomas Hornor and his uncle Watson to come to Canada and settle in Blenheim Township, promising them the whole township if they would build a sawmill and a grist mill there.

In the year 1793, Thomas Hornor and his cousin Thomas Watson came to the County of Oxford. They were probably the first or among the first white persons to tread the soil of this county. Simcoe had the first three concessions of Blenheim surveyed and Hornor and Watson selected the site for their mill, which was just west of the present village of Princeton and on what is now known as Hornor's creek. At the time of their first visit in 1793 the nearest white settler to the east was where the city of Brantford now stands, and the nearest one west was at Chatham.

Hornor and Watson then returned to their homes in New Jersey and in 1794 proceeded to Albany, New York, to purchase materials and engage mechanics to erect the mill. There is no record that Watson returned to Canada, at this time. Thomas Hornor and the men he engaged packed their goods in two small, roughly made boats, which they launched on the river Hudson near Albany, proceeded up the Hudson to Mohawk river, then up the Mohawk for about 100 miles. They carried their goods and boats across to the Norvel Creek, then down Norvel Creek into Lake Oneida, across the Lake to the Oswego river, thence into Lake Ontario. They then travelled along the southern coast to Burlington Bay where they landed all safe. The boats were made fast and left for future use. The goods were drawn by oxen on roughly made sledges, through the trackless bush to their destination in Blenheim Township. They erected the mill and had it in running order in the latter part of 1795. However, before it had been run the dame gave way, and because of the scarcity of help, was not rebuilt until two years later. Hornor also built a grist mill which was burned down in 1809 and never rebuilt.

When these two mills were erected, Hornor was in a position to claim the Township of Blenheim, he having at a very great loss faithfully performed his part of the contract, but Simcoe's successor would not acknowledge his claim.

In Mark, 1801, Thomas Hornor was married to Olive Baker at Burford by Col. James Ingersoll, J.P.

In June, 1806, he was appointed Deputy-Lieutenant of the County of Oxford. Previous to this, I believe in 1798, he had been appointed captain of the Norfolk Militia. However, during the war of 1812, he shouldered his musket and took his place in the ranks as a private and so remained until duly discharged.

Mr. Hornor was the first member for the County of Oxford when it became entitled to a member in 1820, and continued to be a member with the exception of two years, till the time of his death, by cholera, August 4, 1834. In the old journals of the House of Assembly, we find the name of Mr. Hornor often as chairman in the house, or of committees. He was evidently a working member.

In connection with his parliamentary conduct, there is one little incident we might mention. Just before the passage of the "Alien Act", which caused much intense excitement throughout the province, Hornor called a meeting of his constituents, and addressed them as follows: "Gentlemen, I which to know how you desire me to vote on this bill, and I will vote just as I am instructed by you; but mind, if you say I shall support the bill, I will do so, because there is not time for you to elect another member before the vote is taken should I resign, but I never will come to the County of Oxford again. I shall give my vote as you direct, leave the House, and the country, send for my family, and never return again". He was directed to oppose the bill.

The creek on which Mr. Hornor built the first sawmill in the county bears his name. In the year 1935, a petition was presented to the Provincial Parliament by the Chamber of Commerce of Princeton to set aside 2,400 acres of land in the Township of Blenheim, to be known as the "Hornor Crown Game Preserve". A part of this land is drained by Hornor Creek. Surely this is a very fitting reminder for generations to come of the name of that pioneer, Thomas Hornor, the first white man to reside in the County of Oxford.

EARLY DAYS IN INGERSOLL

Maude Craig *

What, if anything, does Ingersoll mean to you? A watch? To a great many people I suppose that is what comes to mind but it has nothing whatever to do with this story. To me it means a host of interesting history, people and things.

First it is a small town, population around seven thousand, situated in the Thames River valley in that part of Southern Ontario between London and Woodstock in the County of Oxford. In fact before it attained the status of a town, it was a village named Oxford.

To drive along Highway 401 or the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway through this part of the country between May and October is a pleasurable experience not soon forgotten. The farm land is lush and rolling, frequently interrupted by a small stand of bush. Well kept houses and barns and grazing herds of cattle give the impression of prosperity. From some vantage points one can see this view for miles, ever changing but ever beautiful.

The Ingersoll family, in Colonial days, were among the most influential citizens of the United States. One Jared Ingersoll held the important post of Collector of the Import Tax on tea at the time of the Boston Tea Party. A son, named Charles Jared, was a statesman, lawyer and author. Still another Jared was a member of the council who framed the Constitution of the United States and Robert Green Ingersoll, Colonel of the 11th Illinois Cavalry, was also a lawyer, politician, lecturer and author.

Major Thomas Ingersoll, born in Massachusetts in 1749, came to the Niagara Peninsula in 1793 and was promised some 80,000 acres of land in the present Oxford County for himself and a group of associates. He was married three times and by his first wife had a daughter, Laura who became Laura Secord, a heroine of our Canadian history. He also had two sons, James, the first white baby born in Ingersoll and Charles, a veteran of the War of 1812.

Thomas Ingersoll was an intimate friend of Governor Simcoe and was known also to Brant, the Titular chief of associated Indian tribes. Ingersoll was the point where the Indians had for centuries left the river trail to cross country to Brantford, headquarters of Brant on the Grand River, a military outpost directed by Gov. Simcoe.

Settlement was slow until 1800 and the village was actually established by 1820. There are some interesting tombstones in the Ingersoll Cemetery such as that of John Carroll Senior who died in 1855 at the age 102. There is, in Virginia, a place called Carrollton named for his brother whose signature appears on the American Declaration of Independence.

Pioneer life was indeed rigorous but oatmeal, saw and flour mills began to come on the scene. Then came a carding mill and to which spinning was added and yarn was exchanged for fleece wool.

In 1832 the first road was started and the stagecoach passed through to Woodstock in 1844. Some industries were beginning to de-

velop at this time and in the early 1850's the Great Western Railway made its appearance.

About this time the dairying industry came into being. Invitations were extended to leading experts from the most advanced districts in the U.S. both before and when the first Dairymen's Association was formed. Ingersoll became known as the home of the cheese-making profession and Ontario was given preference in markets in Europe under the name of "Ingersoll District Cheese". A Prof. Arnold from Utica, N.Y. was brought to Ingersoll to give lectures on the making of cheese and those classes were attended by students from all over Ontario.

The cheese business was the cause of the setting up of many other industries such as the making of cheese boxes and various other things needed in the making of cheese. The highlight of the cheese business came in 1865 when the first cheese factory was erected. To stimulate interest among foreign buyers, a group of Oxford producers co-operated to manufacture a gigantic cheese in 1866. Weighing 7300 lbs. and measuring 21 feet in circumberence it was exhibited at the New York State Fair and in London England.

Ingersoll was the home of James McIntyre who has been often referred to as Canada's "best bad poet". Another claim to fame is that it was the birthplace and home for many years, of Amy Semple MacPherson. It is also the home of the Hutt Family of which William of Stratford Festival fame is a member. Jack Hutt, a cousin of William holds an administrative post at the Festival Theatre.

One of the Centennial projects in Ingersoll was a wine and cheese party. Former sons and daughters who had made a name for themselves in different fields were invited to take part and it proved a greatsuccess.

During Centennial Year thousands of pages were turned out and thousands of photographs produced from, it seemed, every part of Canada, except Ingersoll. This, I felt, was inexcusable and there is still a wealth of history not told in this small outline. Perhaps some time in the future it will be written in depth but in the interim, after having read this much, I hope Ingersoll will mean more to you than just a watch. No doubt this is because I am one of those who proudly call it "my home town".

*Mrs. M. Craig born in and formerly a resident of Ingersoll, now lives in Ottawa. She still retains her interest in the scenes of her early years.