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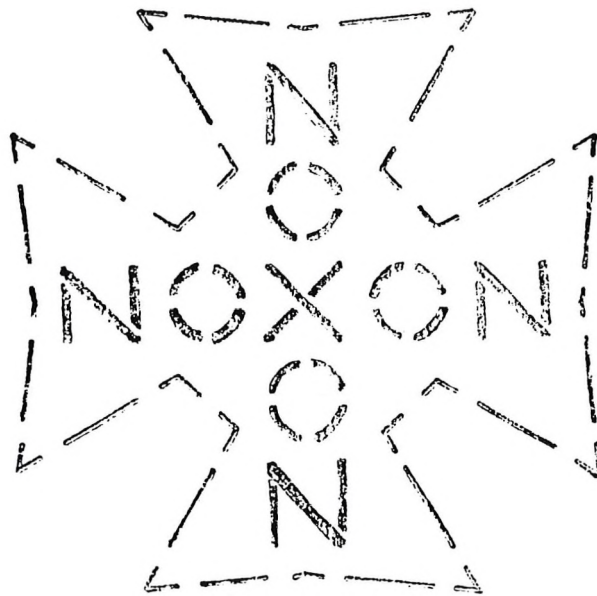
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PREPARED FOR THE ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM

by Joni Seager,

with assistance from Wayne Berry

Illustrations by Tracy Hughes

August, 1976

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research for this project would have been quite impossible without the assistance of the many people who gave so willingly of their time and knowledge. Sincere thanks are due to Mrs. L. Noxon (Stratford), Miss H.M. Sillar (Public Relations, Canadian Manufacturer's Assn.), Mr. Byron Jervey (Ingersoll), Mr. & Mrs. L. Diggs (Ingersoll), Mr. L. Wanamaker (Belleville) and Mr. T.A. Brown (Curator, National Museum of Science and Technology).



Ontario Ministry
of Agriculture
and Food



Ontario
Agricultural
Museum

P.O. Box 38
Milton, Ontario
L9T 2Y3

(416) 878-8151

August 20, 1976.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Diggs;

Well here is the completed Noxon report, as promised. I hope it will be of interest to you. Unfortunately, the photograph which should be on Page 7 of the report was not back from the copying shop by the time the text was completed. Since I am leaving the museum to go back to school, I felt it best to send out the report while I'm still here, even without the photo.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our General Manager, Mr. R. Carbert, at the museum address above.

I thank you for your valuable assistance in this project.

Sincerely,

Joni Seager

Joni Seager.



Ontario Ministry
of Agriculture
and Food



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Agricultural
Museum

P.O. Box 38
Milton, Ontario
L9T 2Y3

(416) 878-8151

July 22, 1976.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Diggs:

Please find enclosed the picture and articles which you so kindly loaned to us yesterday. They were a great help to us and on behalf of the museum, we wish to thank you very much for your information about the Noxon Company.

If at any time, you recall further details about your work at the Noxon Company, we would very much like to hear from you. You can write to us at the museum at any time you wish.

Once again, many thanks for your kind co-operation.

Yours very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wayne Berry".

Wayne Berry

INTRODUCTION

The Noxon Implement Company of Ingersoll was one of the most successful Canadian firms in the manufacture of farm implements. Within forty years of its opening, it had captured a large share of both the domestic and international markets. But less than twenty years later, the firm declared bankruptcy and closed down, almost overnight. It had a short and interesting history; a rapid rise to success and an even more rapid decline. In many ways, this seems to be typical of turn-of-the-century Canadian firms, but in other aspects, the Noxon story is quite unique.

Unfortunately, the Noxon history has all but passed into obscurity. The company papers have disappeared, either destroyed or lost, most of the men who worked the factory are long since gone and the factory itself is now a lumber warehouse. There are therefore large gaps in the record and the full story may never be known. This is reason alone to now undertake the writing of the Noxon history, incomplete as it may be, before it disappears from sight altogether.

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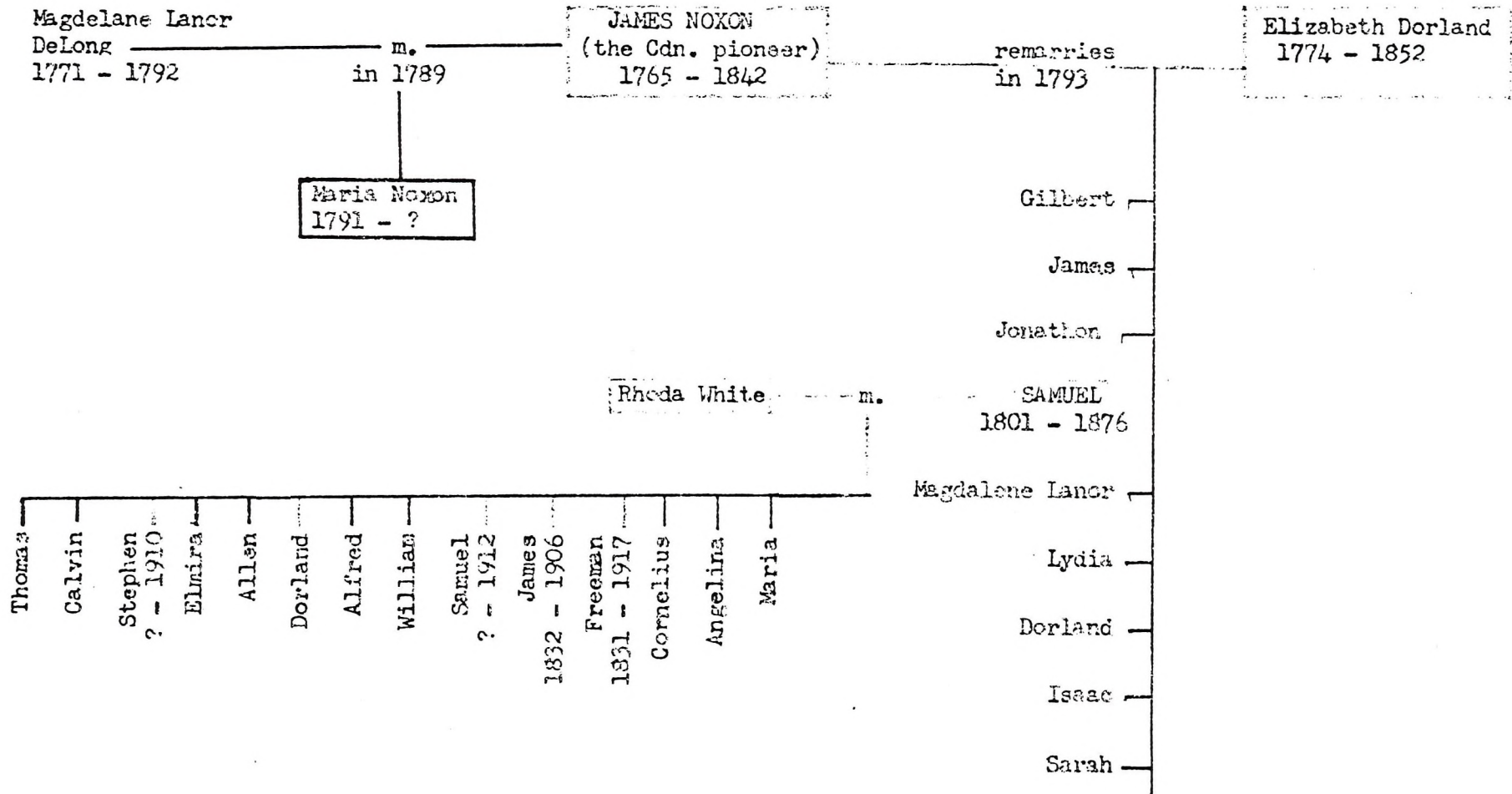
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CHAPTER I

The Noxon Family, at Home and
in the Community

THE NOXONS*



* for complete family tree, see Appendix

The Noxon Family

The early history of the Noxon family is surprisingly well documented. The Canadian branch of the family is descended from Andrew Noxon of Ayrshire, Scotland. One of Andrew's sons, James D. Noxon, was engaged to the daughter of Sir Samuel Pascoe, the Governor of Jamaica. However, Sir Pascoe did not approve of the marriage and the young couple was forced to elope from Jamaica, eventually settling in New York. It was this couple's grandson, James (II), who was the Canadian pioneer.

James (II) came to Canada in 1788 as part of the United Empire Loyalist migration. He first settled on Hay Bay, but afterwards bought 200 acres of land in Sophiasburg, Prince Edward County. In his early years, James (II) did not appear to have any particular religious convictions, but after the death of his first wife (Magdelane Lanor), he joined the Society of Friends (Quakers). He remained a Friend for 45 years and became one of their ministers. Three of his children (James, Jonathon and Magdelane) also became preachers for the Friends.

One of his other sons, Samuel (Sr.), was the father of the founders of the Noxon Company. Samuel (Sr.) owned a large farm and saw-mill in Sophiasburg. His business must have been lucrative: he not only supported a family of fourteen children, but provided them with luxuries that were uncommon in the nineteenth-century. For example, when Samuel (Sr.) saw that his sons had a mechanical turn of mind, he built a wood-work shop expressly for their use. Furthermore, all of his sons attended business college: we know that Stephen was enrolled at Eastman's Business College in Rochester, New York, and James went to Jefferson County Institute,

Watertown, New York. These early advantages undoubtedly provided a valuable basis for his sons to start their own manufacturing company.

This then brings us to the founders of the Noxon Company, the grandsons of the Canadian pioneer. There were five brothers involved in the company, four of whom we can identify positively: James (III), Samuel (Jr.), Stephen and Freeman. There is some confusion as to whether the fifth partner was Dorland or Thomas. Both Dorland and Thomas lived in Ingersoll for a time and it is possible that both were involved in the company; most sources list Dorland as the other partner though, and I have assumed that this was the case.

James and Samuel were the first to come to Ingersoll, in 1855, Stephen following in 1865 and Freeman and Dorland in 1869. For the first year in Ingersoll, James worked in a hardware store owned by Mr. W. Eastwood. Eastwood had his own foundry and was involved in the manufacture of agricultural implements long before the Noxon Company was formed; he and James were to become arch rivals in business. In September, 1856, James and Samuel opened the J. & S. Noxon Company.

James remained active in the company until approximately 1890, at which time he moved to Toronto and accepted a position as Inspector of Prisons in Ontario. He died in 1906. Of his children, William was the only one to retain an interest in the family company and he was appointed the Agent-General in England for the Noxon company. When the company dissolved, William went on to become the Commissioner

SUDDEN DEATH OF MR. JAS. NOXON

Founder of Noxon Bros. Manufacturing Co. Passed Away at Toronto.

(From Monday's Daily.)

Many friends and acquaintances in Ingersoll and vicinity will learn with sincere regret of the death of Mr. James Noxon, formerly of this town, which occurred suddenly at Toronto yesterday. The Globe says:

The death occurred rather suddenly, from a stroke of apoplexy yesterday afternoon at his home, 72 Madison avenue, of Mr. James Noxon, founder of the Noxon Bros. Manufacturing Company, Ingersoll, and for many years inspector of prisons, in Ontario. He had been ill for the past two years, and had reached the advanced age of 74 years.

The late Mr. Noxon was for many years an influential figure in the political life of Oxford county, and was also prominent in the business activity of Ingersoll, to which place he went in 1855 from Blebyfield, Prince Edward County. In 1891 he was appointed inspector of prisons for Ontario under the Mowat Government, and continued to hold that position until a year ago, when he resigned. During his tenure of office he resided in this city. He was highly respected and well known in many parts of the province. He was a member of the Masonic and Oddfellow Orders.

Three sons and two daughters survive him. They are: Meta, Wm. O. Noxon and James Noxon, jun., city; Samuel H. Noxon, St. Louis; Mrs. Canfield, Ingersoll, and Miss Nellie Noxon, city. The remains will be shipped to Ingersoll, where interment will take place on Wednesday.

Death notice, from the front page of The Ingersoll Chronicle, Thursday, December 20, 1906.

of Immigration for Canada. One of James' other sons, Samuel H., went into an interesting career as the representative for Standard Oil in China.

Samuel, the other founder of the company, retired from business in the late 1800's and took up residence at his farm near Wellington, Prince Edward County. Stephen and Freeman both remained in Ingersoll until their death. When the company dissolved in 1915, the remainder of the Noxon family dispersed -- some to the United States, some to Nova Scotia and some to Prince Edward County. There are no Noxons living in Ingersoll today.

The portrait of the Noxon family (reproduced on the following page) is the only extant one available. It was taken on the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Rhoda and Samuel (Sr.), when the entire family was present -- dating approximately from the 1860's. In 1920, this picture was printed in The Ingersoll Chronicle, with the following caption:

It would be quite impossible nowadays to duplicate such a family group as that pictured above. It shows the sixteen members of the well-known Noxon family taken over 50 years ago, when the father, Samuel Noxon, and his wife Rhoda, celebrated their golden wedding on the family homestead at Bloomfield, Prince Edward County. There were eleven sons and three daughters. The only surviving son is Dr. Allan Noxon...and the one living daughter is Mrs. Dingman [Elmira] now residing in Florida. Dr. Noxon is now over 80 and remarkably active. Five of the sons were identified with the Noxon Mfg. Co., of Ingersoll and one was for several years an inspector of Ontario prisons. The family comes of United Empire Loyalist stock.



This picture of the Noxon family was taken at the 50th wedding anniversary of the parents Rhoda and Samuel (front row third and fourth from the right). Their five sons who came to Ingersoll are Stephen (back row second from left),

Samuel (back row fourth from left), Thomas Henry (back row second from right), James, (front row left), and Freeman (front row fourth from left).

Sitting in the back row, from left to right, are: Maria (Mrs. Saylor), Stephen, Alfred, Samuel, Dorland, William, Thomas, Allan; in the front row (l. to r.), James, Cornelius, Angeline (Mrs. Hubbs), Freeman, Rhoda and Samuel, Elmira (Mrs. Dingman), and Calvin.

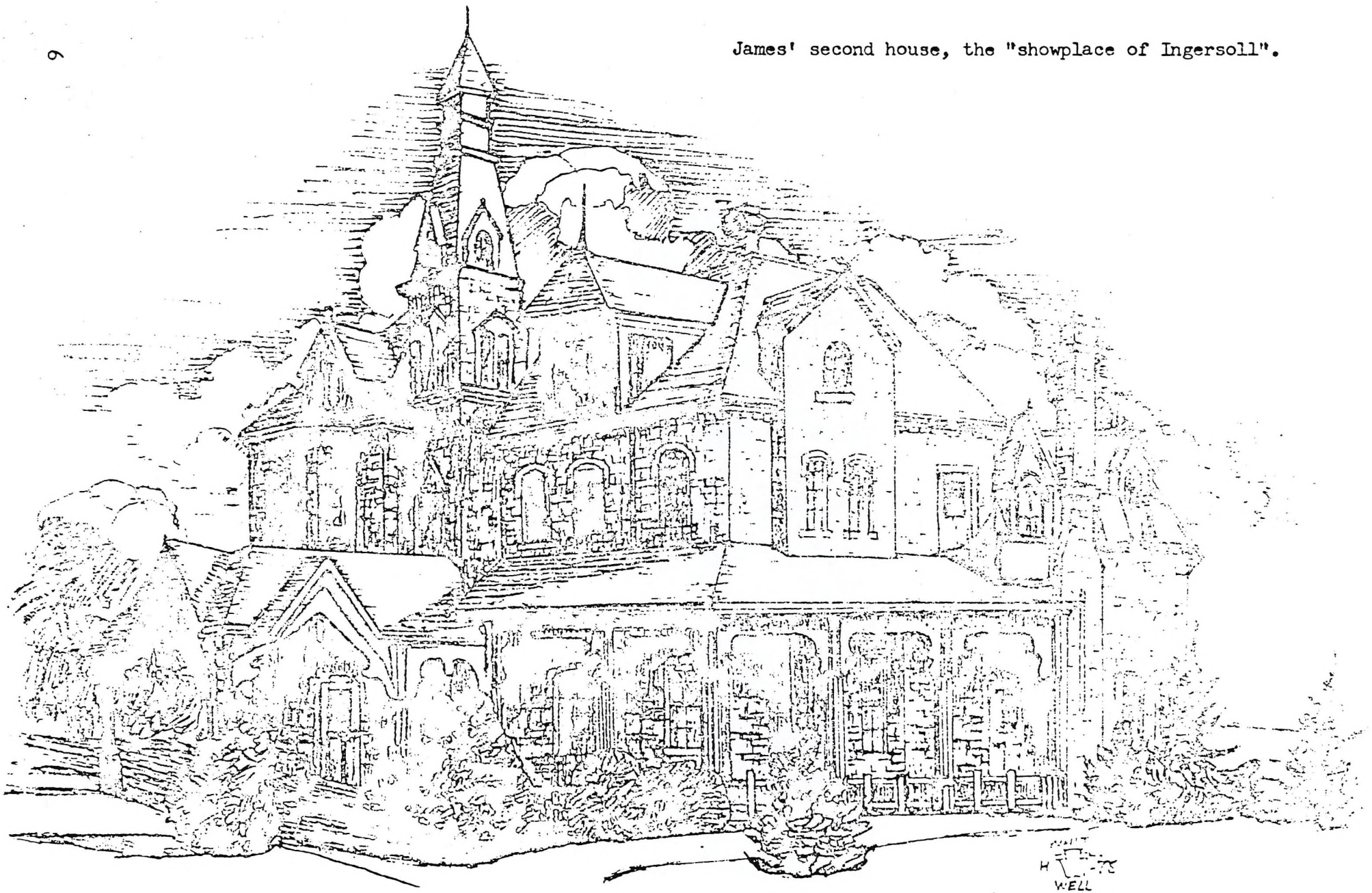
At Home

Each of the Noxon brothers built themselves an elegant home in Ingersoll, befitting their status as prominent manufacturers in town. Mr. Diggs¹ commented that this brought about a spate of competitive house building in Ingersoll: the Noxons set the standards of wealth and elegance, and in an attempt to 'keep up with the Noxons', everyone else of any importance felt obliged to equally impressive houses. Thus we have the beginnings of the "upper-class" residential section in Ingersoll, centered along Oxford Street (see street map at the end of this section).

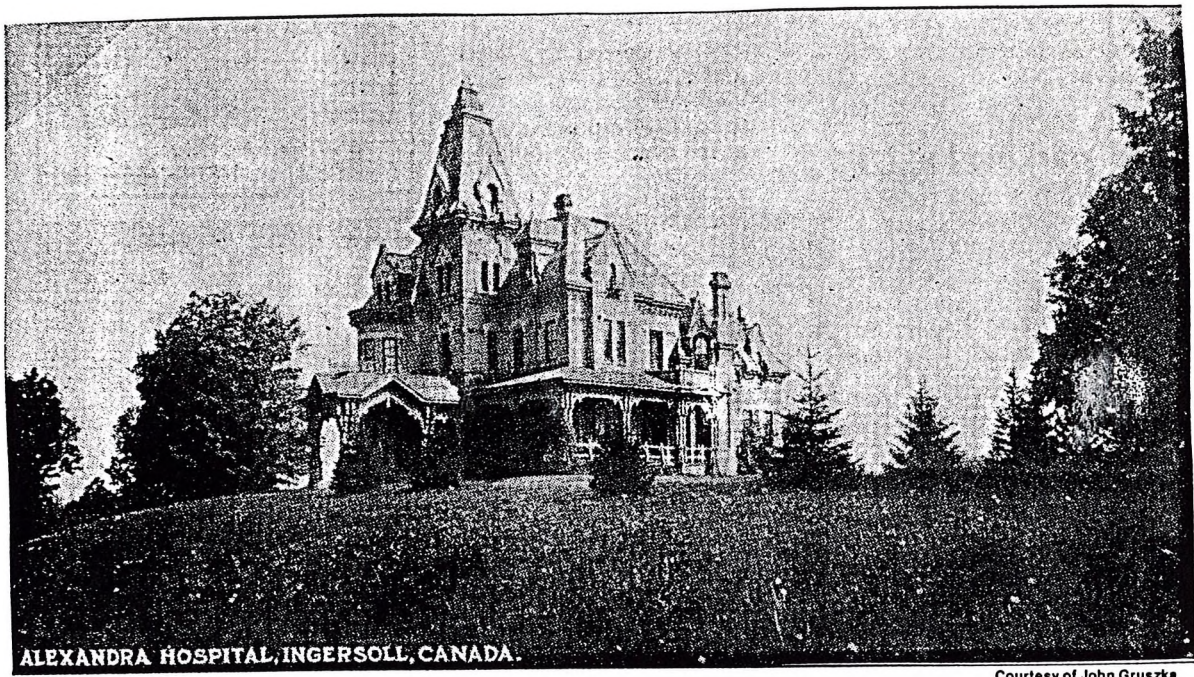
James' first house was a simple one-storey white brick house on Thames Street, close to the factory. However, his second house was regarded as the showplace of Ingersoll. It was a palatial residence, considered to be "one of the finest homes between London and Hamilton". Among other things, the house had a magnificent six-foot wide curved staircase, made of cherry wood. Some local ladies even now

1 - Mr. Len Diggs (of Ingersoll) is a former Noxon employee whom we interviewed in doing the research for this project. He worked for the Noxons, both in England and in Ingersoll, travelling "all over the world for them, setting up and repairing agricultural machinery".

James' second house, the "showplace of Ingersoll".



H
WELL



ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL, INGERSOLL, CANADA.

Courtesy of John Gruszka

ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL, in Ingersoll as it appeared around 1909. A note on the back of this postcard said "Public opening and reception of the Alexandra Hospital, Wednesday, Sept. 22, 1909."

recall with pleasure the fancy parties held in the beautifully lighted ballroom of the 'house on the hill'. Many dignitaries, including Sir Wilfred Laurier, stayed in the Noxon home and it was considered quite an honour to receive an invitation to the house.

James built the mansion in 1874, at a cost of \$10,000. When he moved to Toronto (and took up residence at 72 Madison Avenue), it was sold to Dr. Angus McKay. McKay was a prominent physician and politician, well known in Toronto, where he served in the Provincial legislature for sixteen years, as the "Handsome Member from South Oxford".

DR. M^cKAY, L.R.C.P.,
EDINBURGH
Physician, Surgeon, Etc.

Graduate of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh.
Formerly Surgeon in the British Marine Service.

OFFICE, THAMES STREET, INGERSOLL, ONT.

In 1901, Dr. McKay sold the house (for \$6,250) for it to be converted into a hospital. It was renovated and reopened in 1909 as the Alexandra Hospital. In 1951 it was torn down to make way for a new hospital.

Samuel built his home nearby to James', at 310 Oxford Street. There is an interesting though rather morbid, anecdote about this house: Samuel had the third floor of the house made into a playroom for his children. During an epidemic of

diphtheria, the Noxon children were confined to the third floor and two or three of them died. To avoid contaminating the rest of the house, the dead children were lowered out of a small window in a basket and taken for burial from there. The house still stands today.

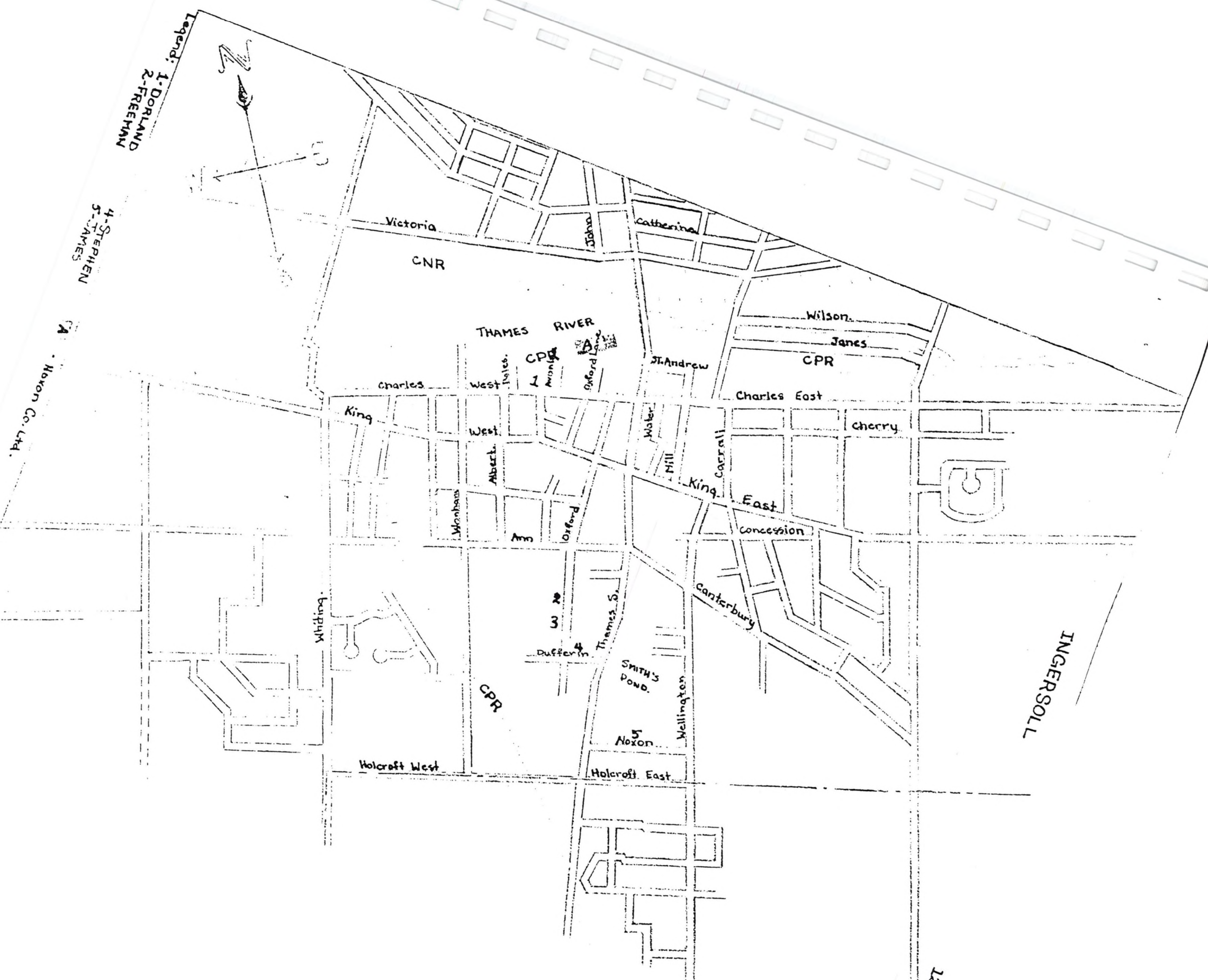
Freeman and Stephen also had houses on Oxford Street. Dorland lived on Charles Street West, opposite the Erskine Presbyterian Church.

In the Community

All of the Noxons were very much involved in their community and contributed greatly to the growth of Ingersoll. Simply by locating their factory in the town, they gave a great boost to the economy -- employing up to 300 men in their plant and attracting auxiliary industries to the small community. At one time, the Noxon Company was the largest manufacturing concern in the town and the Noxons themselves have come to be recognized as founding fathers of industry in Ingersoll.

Four of the brothers held municipal offices at various times. James was a Councillor in 1861, 1864, 1865, 1872 and 1886; Reeve in 1866; first Deputy Reeve in 1877 and 1878; mayor in 1884, 1885 and 1887. Stephen was elected a Councillor in 1890, and Dorland in 1898. Thomas was a Councillor in 1894, 1895 and 1897.

Apart from his Noxon Company duties, Stephen held several positions in other businesses. He was a director of the Equity Fire Insurance Company and president of the Ingersoll Board of Trade, the Ingersoll Electric Power & Light Company and



Legend:
 1-DORLAND
 2-FREEMAN

4-STEPHEN
 5-JAMES

W. Noxon Co. Ltd.

INGERSOLL

the Guelick Silica Baritic Stone Company. Stephen retained the Quaker faith of his grandfather and was a life-long member of the Society of Friends.

However, it was James who was the most active in the community. He was a member of various service organizations, including the Masonic and Oddfellow Orders. One of his greatest concerns was the development of the dairying industry. In 1864, he was the chairman of a committee which introduced the co-operative dairying system into Western Ontario; he was secretary of the Dairyman's Association of Western Ontario in 1867 and president in 1871. J. Sinclair, in his 1924 History of the Town of Ingersoll, describes James' involvement with dairying:

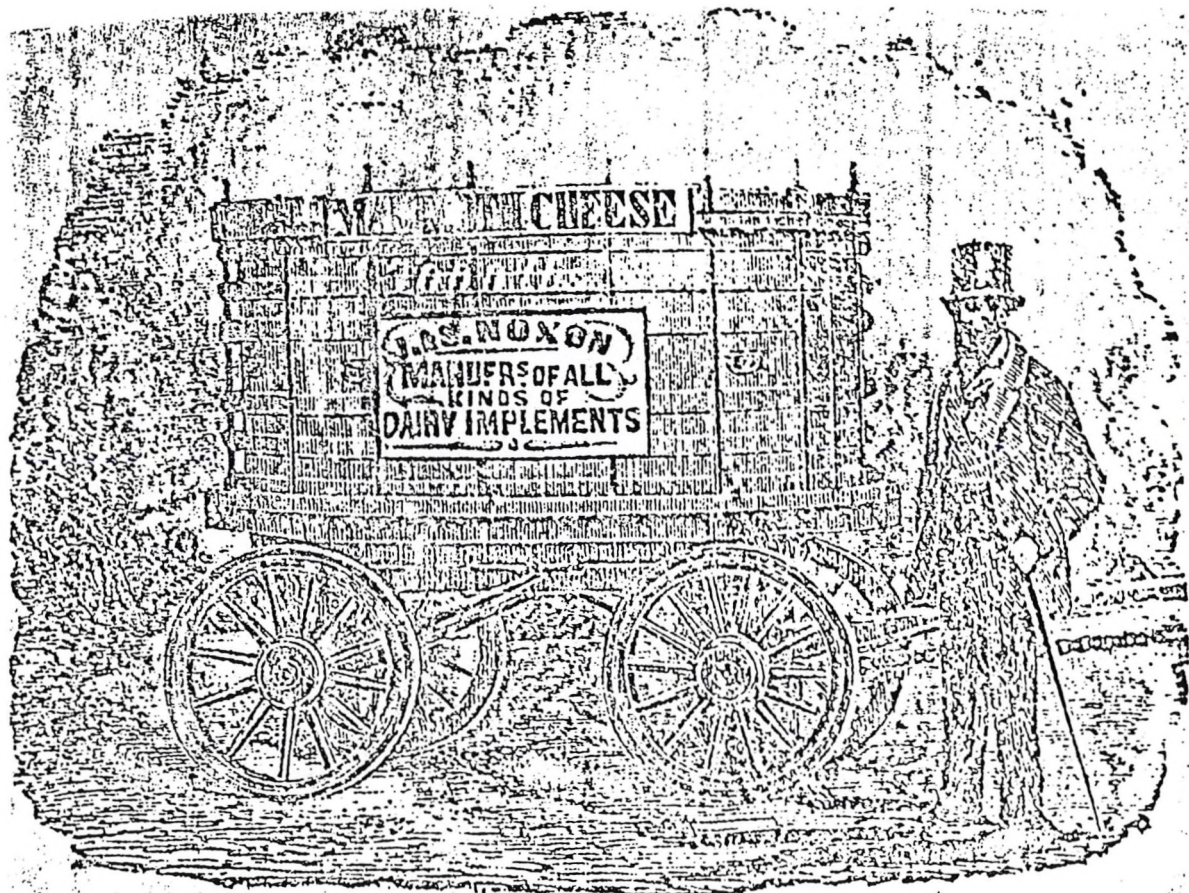
His ability was directed into every channel of our progress in public affairs, and in the interest he took in our dairy business, and it was to him as president of our [dairy] organization that it owes much to its earliest success. He gave this subject a leadership that overcame many of the difficulties that are sure to arise in any enterprise in its initial stages.

Although I have found no mention of it elsewhere, Mr. Sinclair also gives James credit for advancements in the railway system: "To Mr. Noxon we owe the securing of the Credit Valley Railway connection which ultimately extended to St. Thomas."

The Noxon company itself was a progressive one and brought several improvements to the town. The company started the first gas plant in Ingersoll, for example. The Noxon brothers had the very first gas plant in the back of their factory, just for the use of the factory. Then, in 1872, they expanded this operation and formed

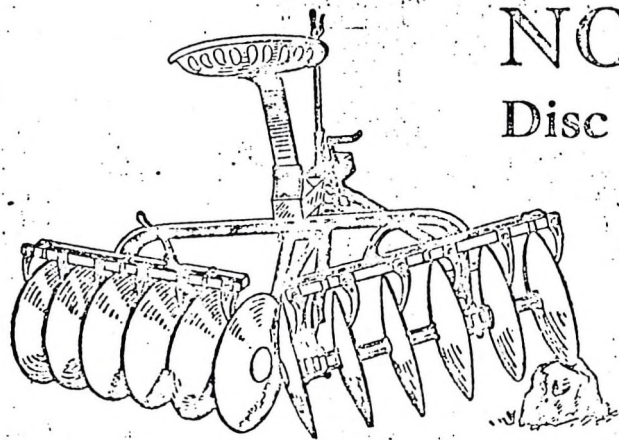
the Ingersoll Gas Light Company, with plant facilities in town. Although only the central part of town had gas supply, it was a major undertaking, requiring fourteen miles of gas pipes. The Noxons kept controlling interest in this company, with William (James' son) as president, O.C.L. Wilson vice-president and William Bowman manager.

In 1866, the cheese manufacturers of Ingersoll combined forces to produce a "Mammoth Cheese" (weighing four tons) which was shipped to England to advertise the famous cheese industry of Oxford County. The Noxon Co. was actively involved in promoting this venture and they produced the press used to make the cheese.



Ad from the Ingersoll Chronicle. The man standing next to the wagon appears to be James Noxon.

In 1901, agricultural implement manufacturers organized themselves into a special Agricultural Implement section of the Canadian Manufacturer's Association. All of the major companies were represented, including Maxwell, Massey-Harris, Cockshutt and Sawyer-Massey. The Noxon Company, of course, was involved, being one of the most prominent manufacturers in Ontario, with W.F. Johnston (the general manager of the company at that time) acting as their representative.



NOXON Disc Harrows

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With or
Without
Fore Carriage

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Binders, Mowers, Rakes, Hay Loaders, Drills, Cultivators,
Disc and Lever Harrows, Pulpers and Sleighs

INGERSOLL :: ONTARIO :: CANADA

from the Farmer's Advocate, May 1914

Probably one of their last ads.

CHAPTER II

The Noxon Factory

1856 - 1872

In September of 1856, James and Samuel Noxon opened their implement factory for business. There is some confusion about ownership of the company since the very first advertisement lists the company as "Noxon, Turner & Co." (see below). Other than this advertisement, there is no mention of Turner's connection with the company. Whatever the association, it must have been short-lived, for by 1857 the company was listed only as "J. & S. Noxon Co.".

INGERSOLL
AGRICULTURAL WORKS
 AND IRON FOUNDRY.
NOXON, TURNER, & CO.,
 BEG respectfully to intimate to the inhabitants of Oxford and surrounding counties that the
 NEW FOUNDRY recently erected by them, is now in full and complete operation.—
 They will hereafter keep constantly on hand & for sale the most extensive & superior assortment of
Stoves, Ploughs, Harrows, &c.
 Ever before offered in this county. Particular attention will be devoted to selecting the very
 best materials, and securing mechanics of good practical experience in the various departments
 of their business, so that for durability and workmanship their manufactures cannot be surpassed
 by any similar establishment in Canada. From the advantages they can offer, they are confident
 intending purchasers will consult their own interests by calling to examine their excellent stock,
 which will be disposed of on the most reasonable terms. A liberal reduction made to Wholesale
 Dealers. By unremitting attention to business, and closely studying the wants and interests of
 their customers, they hope to merit a share of public patronage.
 Ingersoll, September 11, 1856 160

The very first advertisement for the company. Ingersoll
Chronicle, Sept. 26, 1856.

In the early years of operation, the Noxon Company was really just a foundry, specializing in ploughs and stoves, other agricultural implements being more of a side-line. However, by 1860, they had stopped producing stoves and commenced the manufacture of mowers, reapers, grain drills and sawing machines. Apart from manufacturing their own machines, they also acted as a distribution agent for

other companies.

Their first factory was merely a group of frame buildings on the east side of Thames Street. It was a typically small, family operation, with James as president and Samuel as general manager, employing no more than about twenty-five workers.

By 1869 though, their reputation had grown and Noxon machines were marketed throughout Ontario and into the United States. The Noxons were particularly inventive and they were constantly improving the usefulness of farm implements. One of their early inventions was a "new improved sawing machine", as described below:

Ingersoll Chronicle, Friday, Dec. 5, 1862

NOXON'S PATENT IMPROVED SAWING MACHINES

It certainly is creditable to modern inventors that they have supplied machinery for performing almost all kinds of manual labour, from the most ponderous and laborious to the most delicate and wearisome, in a manner to excel the methods they have supplanted; and in no case is this particularly more noticed than in the facilities afforded the farmer in carrying on the operations of the farm. He now tills his soil, sows and harvests the crops, and thrashes and prepares it for market, by machinery; but it is only recently that a really useful machine has been invented to relieve him of the severe toil required in cutting his wood either for market or to be consumed at his own fireplace. The enterprising firm of J. & S. Noxon of this place have invented and are now largely manufacturing a Sawing Machine which is certainly superior to anything of the kind yet invented, both in the simplicity of its construction and the ease with which it can be wrought. It is made to be attached to any ordinary thrashing machine horse power, and by an ingenious contrivance in the machinery, the saw raises itself to permit the movement of the log for the next cut; thus with this and their other improvements, making the machine almost self-acting. It can be

worked with either two or four horses, and the manufacturers warrant it capable of cutting sixty cords of wood per day. Their machine was awarded the "Extra Prize" at the Provincial Exhibition held in Toronto, and was highly commended for the simplicity of its construction and as being not likely to get out of order. We cheerfully recommend this thoroughly reliable firm, whose advertisement will be found in our columns, to the favourable notice of the public.

NOXON'S PATENT



SAWING MACHINES,

To which was awarded the First Prize and Diploma, for Superior merit and Usefulness, at the last County Fair.

WE are now manufacturing a number of these Machines, and are prepared to warrant them to be the best made in the country. That orders may be promptly filled it will be necessary to send them in early.

WE are also manufacturing a large number of PLOWS of the very best patterns, including the Mearley and McSherry Plows, at prices to suit the times, as well as TWO and THREE WHEEL CULTIVATORS, HARROWS, FIELD ROLLERS, STRAW CUTTERS, ROAD SCRAPERS, &c. We would invite special attention to our celebrated ROOT SLICER, which is capable of cutting two bushels of roots per minute.

OUR Plow Points are all manufactured of American Iron, and will out-wear any four common ones, thus making it greatly to the interest of Farmers to buy their Plows of us.

Every Article sold by us warranted to give satisfaction. TERMS LIBERAL.

J. & S. NOXON.

INGERSOLL, August 16, 1861.

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Being shrewd businessmen, the Noxons were also always aware of improvements made by their competitors and on more than one occasion they went to great expense to buy up new patents from other inventors. An 1864 article in the Ingersoll Chronicle testifies to this:

Ingersoll Chronicle, Friday, June 3, 1864

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

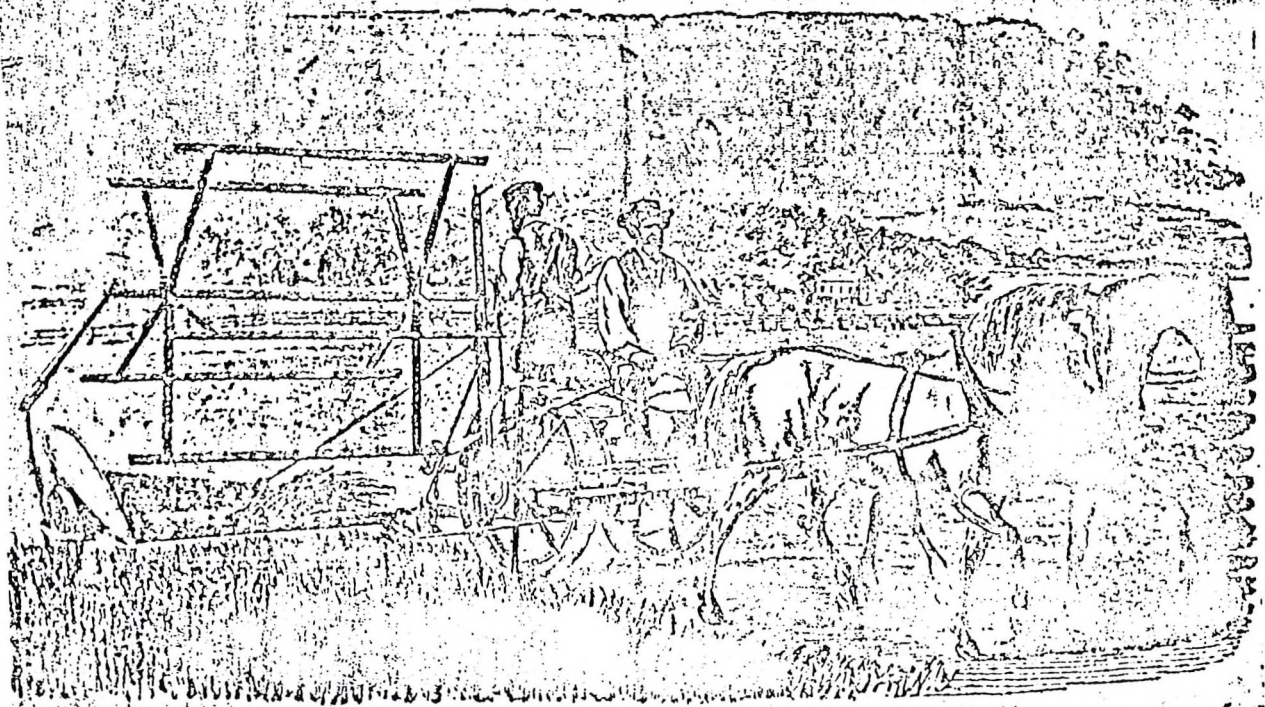
We direct the attention of our readers to the Advertisement of

Messrs. J. & S. Noxon, in our columns today, as an evidence of the spirit and enterprise displayed by these gentlemen in building up amongst us, and successfully conducting one of the most extensive manufacturing establishments in this part of Canada. Having been foremost in introducing valuable improvements in agricultural machinery, they have made a provincial reputation for their manufactures, which has given their firm a place in the first rank with the most enterprising and successful business men in this branch of industry to be found in the country. We confess we were astonished to learn that the sales of this firm extend over the whole of Upper Canada, as well as a considerable portion of the western section of the Lower province, and we were more than ever surprised when on being shown their books, we found that even our American cousins had favoured them with orders for some of the articles manufactured by them, and thus by the inexorable logic of self interest acknowledging their superiority over those supplied by their own establishments.

The Messrs. Noxon have commenced to manufacture the celebrated Ball's Ohio Mower and Reaper, and with their usual shrewdness and tact have obtained their patterns from the inventors (original ones) thus at the very outset securing the means of producing a perfect machine by first obtaining a perfect pattern; and although the expense of these patterns has been very enormous, they, as we think, wisely preferred to incur it rather than attempt (what all mechanics know to be an impossibility) to make a perfect working machine from imperfect patterns, such as they cannot fail to be when taken from an ordinary machine; but notice, as a most favourable feature in connection with their business, that they use only the best quality of stock, and in their yard may be found some of the best brands of American Pig Iron, which is so famous for making a very superior quality of casting for all kinds of machinery requiring great strength and durability, such as is especially needed in constructing a really good reaper. The difference in American iron, and that commonly in use is greater than most people are aware of; it resembles more the toughness and strength of wrought iron than the brittleness and general unreliability of ordinary cast iron. This firm certainly deserves very great credit for the readiness which they have always shown to avail themselves of every means to improve the kind and quality

of the implements now in use, and we take this to be, in a great measure, the secret of their success -- They use only the best materials, and employ only the best workmen. Every article manufactured by them is subject to their personal inspection, and is warranted to work as represented. They are both practical farmers, and are the more quick to discover and adopt the various improvements that are advantageous and profitable to this class of their customers. Our friends the farmers may rely on finding the Messrs. Noxon perfectly upright in all their business transactions, and we would advise any of them who may want a first class mower and reaper to give them a call, feeling assured their machines will be found in many respects superior, and in every respect equal to any manufactured in the country.

BALL'S OHIO COMBINED MOWER & REAPER



THE OHIO AS A REAPER.

The success of the Noxon Company is indicated in these two reports from the Oxford County Gazeteer:

1862: "Ingersoll contains two foundries, one carried on by W. Eastwood, in which he manufactures threshing, reaping and mowing machines, agricultural implements, &c., having thirty hands in his employment and a twelve-horse power engine in active operation. Mr. Eastwood's establishment turns out work to the annual value of \$25,000; the other foundry is that of J. & S. Noxon, who do a large business as founders and machinists, and manufacture all kinds of machinery in iron and wood work -- grain separators, reapers and mowers, to the extent in value of \$12,000 yearly"

1867: "In manufactories the town is now well represented in almost every department, containing two large foundries -- one carried on by W. Eastwood, in which he manufactures threshing, reaping, mowing and sawing machines, agricultural implements, &c. Mr. Eastwood's establishment turns out work annually to the value of about \$30,000. It was established in 1839. The other foundry is that of J. & S. Noxon, who are largely engaged in the manufacture of all kinds of agricultural implements, mowing, reaping and sawing machines, &c. Their manufacture amounts to over \$25,000 per annum."

It is also obvious from these reports that the Noxon Company was taking business away from the Eastwood foundry: between 1862 and 1867, the Noxon Company increased their yearly business by more than 100%, while the Eastwood foundry only had a 20% increase. By 1876, there was no mention of the Eastwood foundry in the Gazeteer report; although there is no evidence of this, it is quite possible that the Noxon Company had forced Eastwood out of business.

In any event, there was obviously an unfriendly rivalry between Eastwood and the Noxons, as the following exchange of letters indicates:

Ingersoll Chronicle, July 17, 1857

MOWING and REAPING MACHINES

To the Editor of the Chronicle.

DEAR SIR, -- In connexion with the trial of Mowing Machines, which took place last Saturday on the farm of James Henderson, Esq., North Oxford, we beg a small space in your columns to make one or two explanatory remarks concerning the performance of Paterson's machine at the trial. The machine had not cut a blade of grass, or in any way been tried, and put in the most exact working order before being taken upon the ground, as were the machines of W. Eastwood and H.P. Brown, which gave them a decided advantage over Paterson's machine, inasmuch as machinery of every description performs more satisfactorily after its working capacity has been tested, and everything necessary to its greater utility in operating has been supplied. We therefore offer a prize -- amount unlimited -- to the proprietor or any other party owning a machine of the same manufacture as the one that was awarded the first prize at said trial, who will prove the superiority of that machine in a trial, where a specified quantity of grass cut in the shortest space of time, with the greatest ease for horses, and in the most workmanlike manner, shall be required.

Yours Respectfully,

J. & S. Noxon.

Ingersoll Chronicle, July 24, 1857

To the Editor of the Chronicle.

SIR, -- I ask the favour of a small space in answer to the letter of J. & S. Noxon, Agents for the Belleville Mower and Reaper. It appears the gas is not all blown off or burnt out yet. I would just say for the information of J. & S. N. that the machine which gained the first prize, manufactured at Mr. W. Eastwood's Foundry, was not got up for that especial occasion, as it was sold to James Henderson, Esq., two weeks previous to the trial -- and we naturally suppose all manufacturers send out their machines ready for work.

As soon as the grain is ready to cut we are quite willing to test the reaping part of our machine. I think sir, when professed manufacturers of Farming Implements try to push off articles manufactured two or three hundred miles away, it is not likely to build up our town and increase its prosperity.

Yours respectfully,

John Powers.

COUNTY OF OXFORD GAZETTEER,

NOXON'S FOUNDRY,

THAMES STREET

INGERSOLL,

MANUFACTURERS OF

COMBINED REAPER AND MOWER,

S A W I N G

AND

THRASHING MACHINES,

CULTIVATORS,

PLOWS, ROOT SLICERS,

SEED DRILLS,

AND

AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS,

IN GENERAL.

J. & S. NOXON.

Early advertisement, dating from the period 1856 - 1872

NOXON'S PATENT CULTIVATOR



Having had the above CULTIVATOR thoroughly tested

by some of our best Farmers, we now offer it to the public with every confidence that all who use it will pronounce it the

BEST NOW MANUFACTURED !!

We warrant them to give perfect satisfaction in all cases, and respectfully invite Farmers to give them a trial.

J. & S. NOXON.

Early advertisement, dating from the period 1856 - 1872

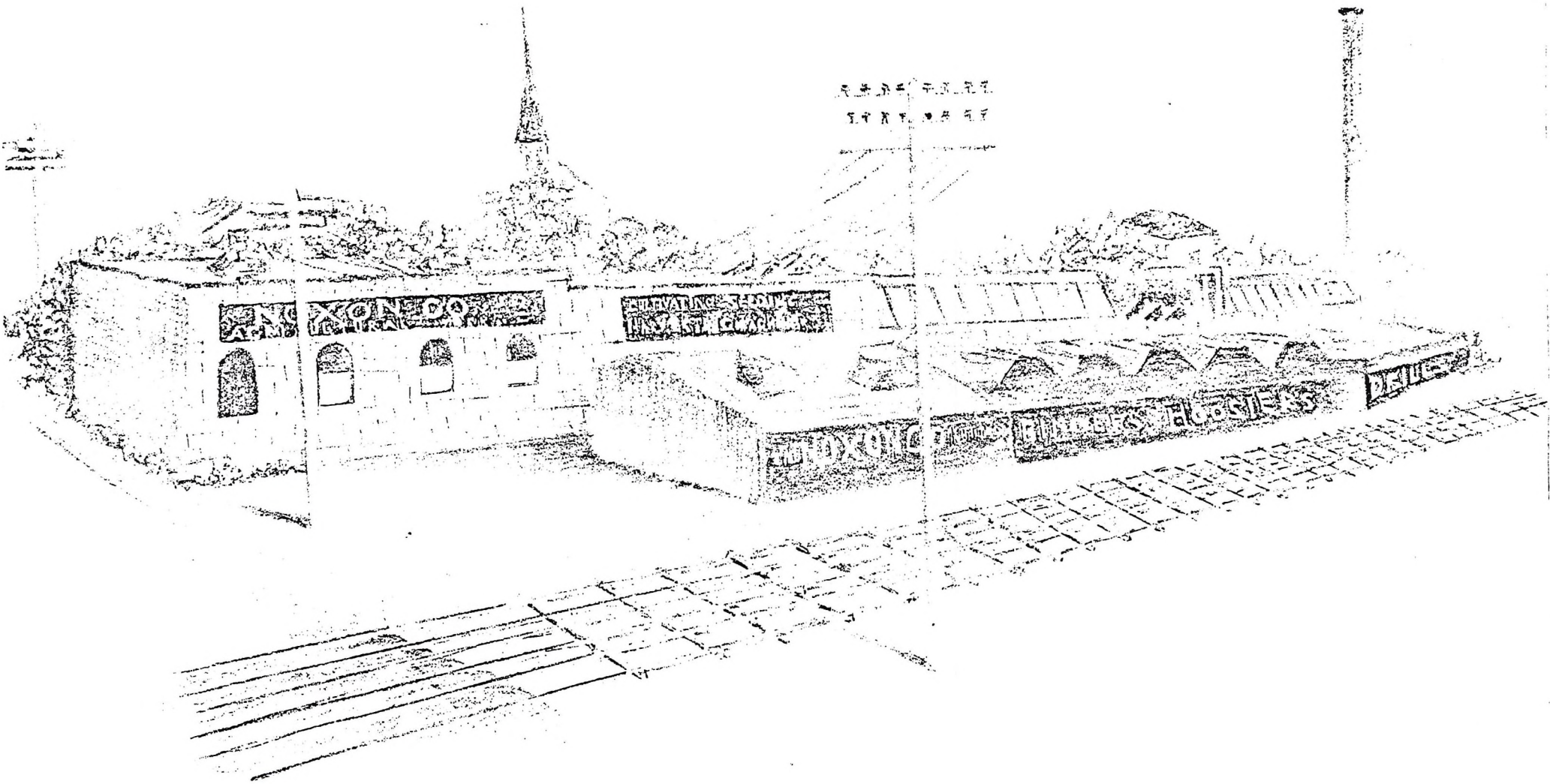
1872 - 1900

In 1872, the Noxon Company was incorporated and became the "Noxon Brothers Manufacturing Company Limited". James retained his position as President, Samuel was Secretary and Treasurer, Freeman was the Superintendent and the other two brothers were involved in work outside the factory.

At the same time, the factory was relocated in a large new building on five acres of land on the other side of Thames Street. This new plant was the largest and most modern in Ingersoll. The whole building was heated by steam; the office was lit by gas, but there were no lights in the factory: instead, the shop area was lighted by a large number of skylights in the roof. Their communication facilities were the best: the Dominion, Montreal and American Express Telegraph companies had branch offices right in the Noxon office. They also had their own railway siding and shipping bays. All in all, it was a very expensive and ambitious operation.



In 1867, the company had been doing business worth \$25,000 a year; by 1876 though, according to the gazeteer report, their annual business revenue had increased to a quarter of a million dollars:

1876: "Of the many notable establishments in Ontario for the production of agricultural implements, machinery, &c., that known as the Noxon Brothers Co. of Ingersoll is perhaps the most extensive. It was established in 1856 and incorporated in 1872, with entirely new premises of most elaborate proportions, at a cost in buildings alone of upward of \$35,000. It gives employment to an average of 130 skilled workmen, with a yearly business of a quarter of a million dollars."











Floor Plan of the Noxon Factory

Drawn for Citizen's Insurance Co., Approx. 1880.

Buildings.
Lumber, piled..... 
Steam Boiler..... 
Specially Hazardous.. **H**
Scale: 40' to 1/2" (Approximately)

Roofings.
Slate..... **O**
Tin or Metal..... **T**
Gravel or Composition.. **P**
Shingles or Wood..... **X**

Structure.
Windows.....  1st 2nd 3rd
Galleries or Verandahs..... 
Openings through..... 
Iron Doors..... 
Wooden Partition..... 
Firewall thro. Roof..... 
Double..... 
Skylight..... 

THAMES

Thames St. - 66' width

RIVER

Siding

Great Western Railway

Platform

Coal

Blacksmith Shop

Cleaning Room

Engine Room

Tank Room

Work for

Shavings

Store Room

Cleaning Ben

Moulding Shop

Coal

Coke

Stores

Storage (to be sheathed with iron)

Paint

Shop Room

Fitting Room

Iron Machine Shop

Wood Workers Machinery and Carpenters

Oil

Office

Queen's Hotel

Office Lumber

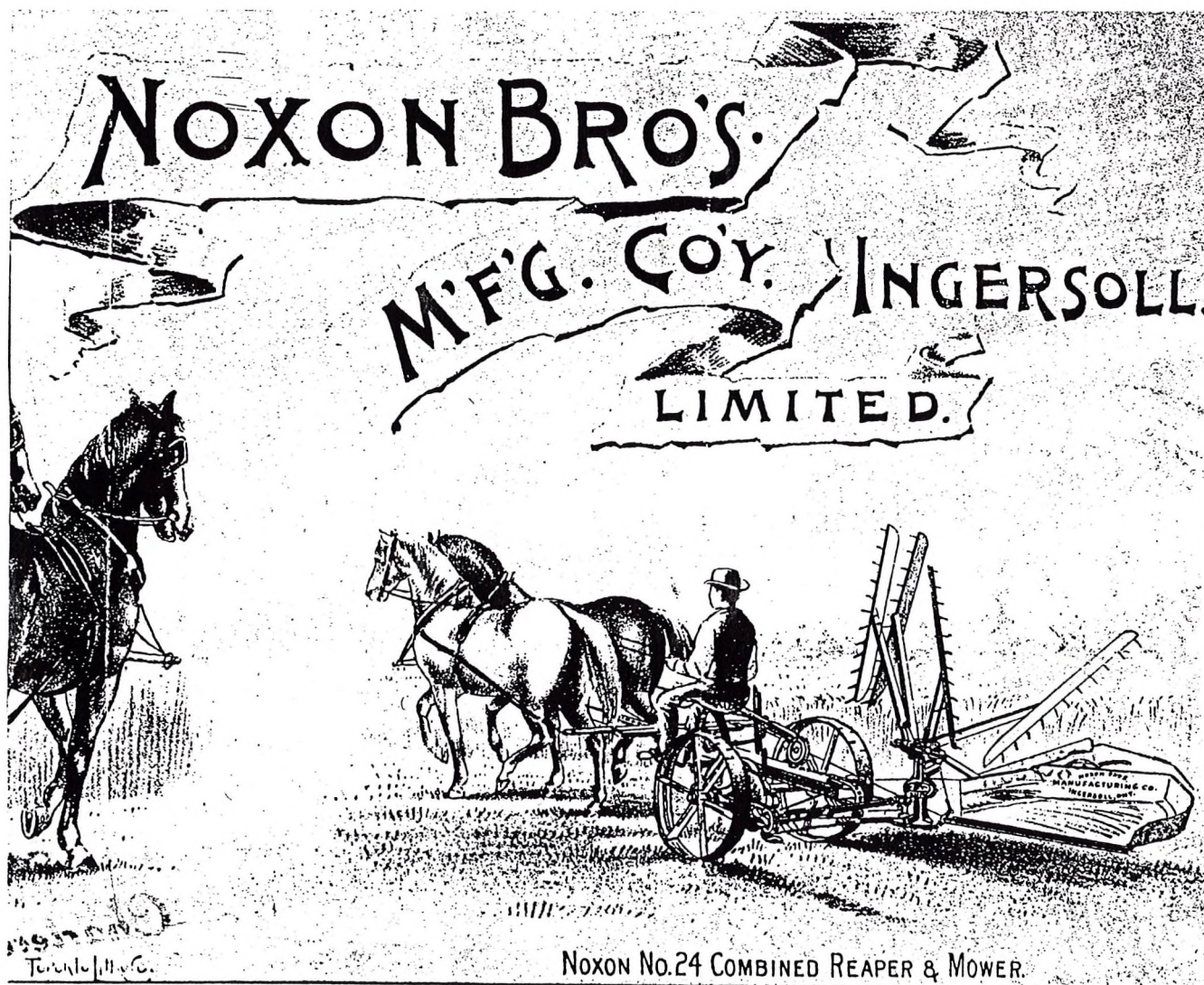
Milliners

Pump Factory

L. Ackert

↓ Credit Valley Railway

The Noxons were producing agricultural implements in great quantity, without compromising quality. They were known as a reliable and trustworthy company and were already beginning to establish markets in Europe. By 1880, they were producing about 1,500 reapers and mowers and about 1,000 grain drills a year. The Noxon grain drills, known as the "Hoosier", attracted much attention at the International Centennial Exhibition held at Philadelphia in 1876 and were considered to be one of the best drills produced anywhere on the North American continent.



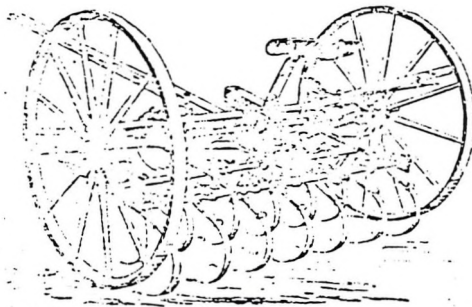
The Hoosier Needs No Introduction.

Over 40,000 Drills and Seeders of our manufacture in use in Canada. The only Drill made with lever for instant and perfect regulation of depth of hoe in all kinds of soil while team is in motion. Sows absolutely correct to scale; saves seed, as every kernel is deposited at a proper depth to grow. Purchase only the best and you will be satisfied. We also manufacture Binders, Reapers, Mowers, Rakes, Cultivators, and Pulpers, as good as the best. Send for illustrated catalogue.

NOXON BROS. MFG. CO., Limited, Ingersoll, Ont., Canada.

THE No. 12 CULTIVATOR IS A MARVEL OF SUCCESS.

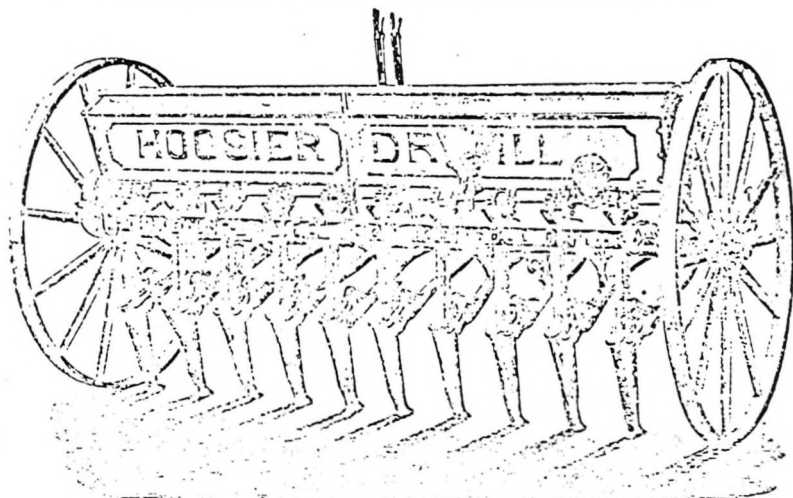
The only Cultivator made that both lines of teeth will cut an even depth in the ground. Examine it and you will see why. The only Cultivator with a movable tooth seat so that the angle of the teeth can be regulated to suit any condition of soil. Pressure can be regulated to act differently on every section requiring it. The teeth are carried between the wheels instead of trailing behind, as in other machines, thus securing lighter draught. This machine is furnished with grain and grass seed box when required. It has reversible dia-



mond steel points for the teeth; also extra wide thistle-cutting points can be furnished. Examine it and you will buy no other.

NOXON BROS. MFG. CO.,
Limited, Ingersoll, Ontario,
Canada.

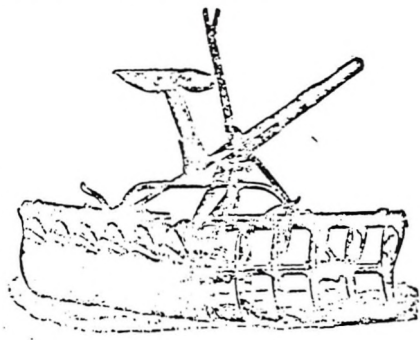
E
ST
ILL
ADE.



NOXON STEEL HOOSIER DRILL

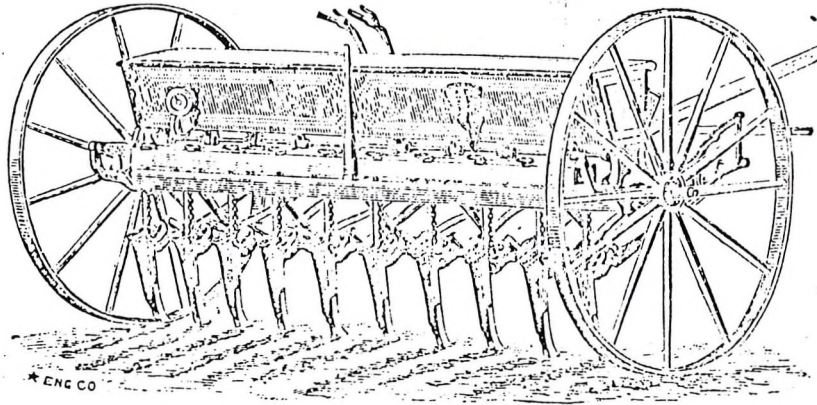
The Buffalo All-Steel Disc Harrow.

This is the only Disc Harrow made or sold in Canada having independent adjustable spring pressure upon the inner ends of the gang discs, allowing any amount of pressure to be thrown upon the inner ends of the gangs by the foot of the operator. By this means a perfectly flexible action is secured, and the ground can be worked at a uniform depth. Examine this machine carefully and compare with others.

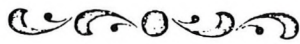


NOXON BROS. MFG. CO., LIMITED,
INGERSOLL, ONTARIO.

Noxon Steel Hoosier



You are never certain that your seeding will be properly done unless you use a **Hoosier Drill and Seeder** with it. There is no doubt about it.

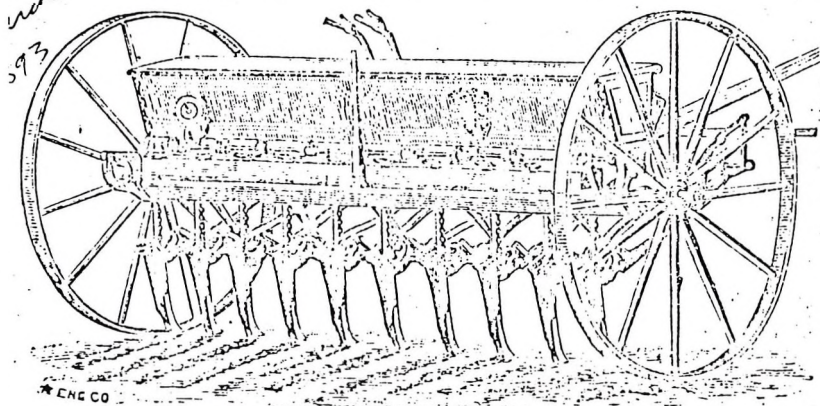


NOXON BROS. MANUFACTURING CO., LIMITED, INGERSOLL, ONT.

from the Farming Digest, August 1897

HOOSIER - STEEL - FRAME - GRAIN - DRILL

There are more Hoosier Drills of our manufacture in use in Canada than of all other kinds combined.



GUARANTEED THE BEST DRILL MADE

Perfect and instantaneous regulation of depth of Hoos in all kinds of soil. THE ONLY PERFECT FORCE FEED in use. The thorough equipment of our factory with the latest improved labor-saving machinery and a largely increased output enables us to offer the Hoosier Drill and all other implements of our manufacture at prices lower than ever before.

For catalogue, prices and terms, see our local agents throughout the country, or send to our office.

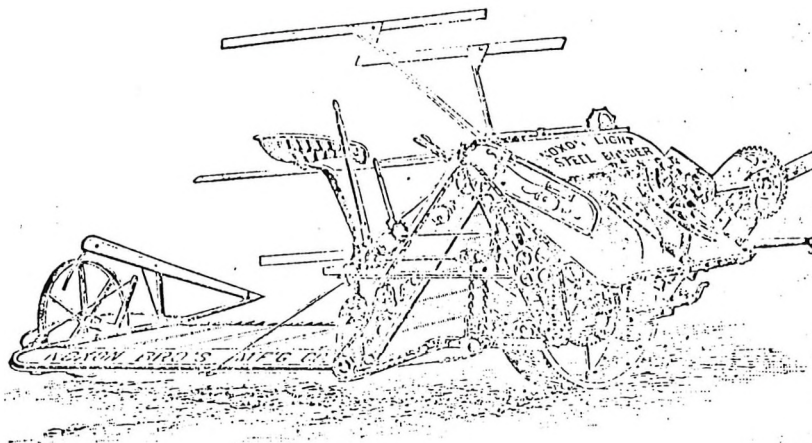
NOXON BROS. MANUFACTURING CO'Y (Ltd.),

Ingersoll, " " " Ontario. 329-1-b-9

from the Farmer's Advocate, March 1893

Noxon Steel Binder

from the Farming Digest, May 1897

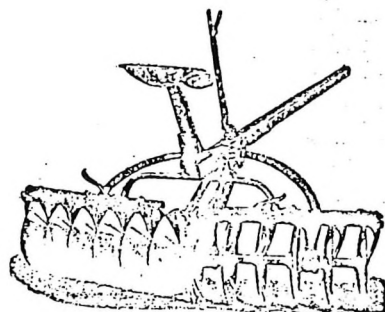


The most perfect combination in principle and construction.

Noxon Bros. M'f'g Co., Ltd.,

INGERSOLL, Ontario.

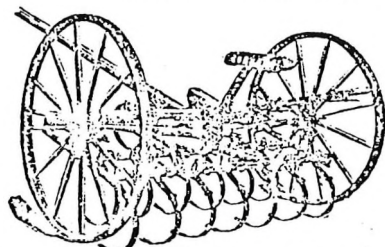
from the Ingersoll Chronicle, 1898



NOXON NEW BUFFALO PATENT ALL-STEEL DISC HARROW

The Buffalo All-Steel Disc Harrow.

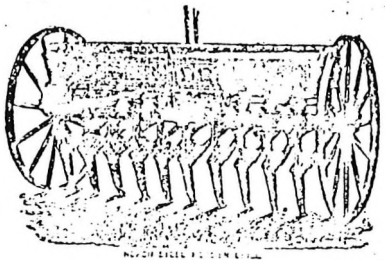
This is the only Disc Harrow made or sold in Canada, having independent, adjustable spring pressure upon the inner ends of the gang discs, allowing any amount of pressure to be thrown upon the inner ends of the gangs, by the foot of the operator. By this means a perfectly flexible action is secured and the ground can be worked to a uniform depth. Examine this Machine carefully and compare with others.



NOXON NO. 12 SECTIONAL SPRING TOOTH CULTIVATOR

The No. 12 Cultivator.

IS A MARVEL OF SUCCESS. The only Cultivator made that both lines of teeth will cut an even depth in the ground. Examine it and you will see why. The only Cultivator with a movable tooth set so that the angle of the teeth can be regulated to suit any condition of soil. Pressure can be regulated to act differently on every section requiring it. The teeth are carried between the wheels instead of trailing behind, as in other machines, thus securing lighter draft. This machine is furnished with grain and grass seed box when required. It has reversible diamond steel points for the teeth; also, extra wide thistle-cutting points can be furnished. Examine it and you will buy no other.



NOXON BEST DRILL MADE

The Best Drill Made.


The cost-effective Introduction.

Over 40,000 Drills and Seeders of our manufacture in use in Canada. The only Drill made with lever for instant and perfect regulation of depth of hoe in all kinds of soil, while team is in motion. Sows absolutely correct to scale; saves seed, as every kernel is deposited at a proper depth to grow. Purchase only the best and you will be satisfied.

We also manufacture Binders, Reapers, Mowers, Rakes, Cultivators and Pulvers, as good as the best. Send for illustrated catalogue.

NOXON BROS. MFG. CO., (Limited)
Ingersoll, Ont., Canada.

DENNIS & KNEAL, Agents,
Ingersoll, Ont.

- TRADE -
NOXON  **Eclipse Feed Mill**
 FOR ONE OR TWO HORSES.

NOXON ECLIPSE FEED MILL

Mill and Power
 all in one Ma-
 chine.

The Most Perfect
 Mill yet invented.

Grinds corn in the
 cob, as well as all
 kinds of grain;
 will grind from
 one to six bushels
 per hour,
 according to size
 and condition of
 grain.

NOXON BROS. MFG. CO. (Limited), Ingersoll, Ontario.

from the Farmer's Advocate, January 1898



The Noxon Co. issued advertising tokens, as illustrated above. Made of tin.

1900 - 1915

By the turn of the century, the Noxon Company was one of the largest manufacturers of agricultural implements in Ontario. They had expanded into an international organization, shipping their products throughout Canada, the United States, England, France, Germany, Holland, Russia, Austria and Belgium and even as far as New Zealand and Australia. Ingersoll was the head office for all operations; London was the distribution center for Europe; Winnipeg and Saskatoon were regional centers for the west. The Praries were a very important market for the Noxon Company and they had a separate agency (the Tudhope - Anderson Co.) to handle their business in the west.

Large scale distribution to European markets did not really get under way until the turn of the century. Mr. Diggs can remember the time when he was sent to erect the first Noxon binder and harvester in Holland: "At the age of 17 (1903), I was sent to erect the first harvester and binder that was ever operated in Holland...near Rotterdam, in the rural district, at a place called Maas Luis...it was a very small community...I can remember erecting that binder, a five-foot binder...it took three of their horses to pull it...farmers came from miles around to see that thing start...everybody was delighted."

The Noxon binders were almost as famous as their Hoosier drills. Although they only started to produce binders in the 1890's, by the turn of the century they were producing an average of 400 a year. An important innovation made their binders

even more popular: the Noxons devised a sheaf carrier which was attached to the binder. Formerly, the sheaves of grain were simply kicked out by the binder and had to be individually picked up and arranged in a stook of five or six sheaves. The sheaf carrier collected the sheaves as they were kicked out by the binder and deposited them in ready-made stooks.

There seemed to be no limit to the number of different implements produced by the Noxons: mowers, ten-foot wide hay rakes, diggers, ploughs, harvesters, hay tedders, an eight-foot side-rake to rake the hay into windrows, hay loaders, two and three wheel spring-toothed cultivators, seed drills, a combined reaper and mower, threshing machines, sawing machines, root slicers, harrows, field rollers, straw cutters, road scrapers, pulpers, &c. They even produced a few non-agricultural products: stoves, sleighs, and for a very short time, sewing machines.

An article in the 1907 Industrial Ingersoll Illustrated provides a good summary of the Noxon operation:

In the front rank of the establishments for supplying the ever-increasing demand for the most improved and efficient machinery for use on the farm we find the Noxon Works, fully prepared to maintain and enhance an enviable reputation acquired by a half a century of diligent study, expensive experimenting, and the application of expert mechanical skill in the production of the very best, most efficient and most reliable implements to assist the thrifty and progressive agriculturist in making his avocation both pleasant and profitable. The Noxon Implement Works were established by the Noxon Brothers in 1856, the site of the foundry being now occupied by the Ellis Furniture Factory. After the first railway was built through Ingersoll the

establishment was moved to the present location in order to obtain the advantages of better transportation facilities. From time to time the capacity and equipment of the concern has been increased so that at present it covers an area of five acres and employs a large staff of men [in 1907, close to 300 men] .

The machines and implements produced by this firm are made for utility and durability, and the material used in their construction is carefully selected, tested and finished up by skilful, competent mechanics in every department, so that purchasers may rely on receiving the very best cultivating, seeding and harvesting machinery for practical use when they place an order with a Noxon agent. C.W.Riley is President, W.F.Johnston, general manager; J.W.Cudlipp, superintendent; Cecil Johnston, sales manager and Mr. J. Anderson, office manager.

The annual output of the works reaches about a million dollars, and the wages and salaries aggregate about \$100,000 a year.

A large part of the Noxon success can be directly attributed to their staff. The foremen were all experts in their own field and were given a lot of power within the organization. Each foreman, for example, had total control over the hiring and firing for his individual department. The picture on the next page, taken in 1906, shows the foremen in the company. From left to right they are: back row - Dick Petrie, machine shop; Al Gregory, blacksmith shop; Bill Porteous, vise shop and assembly; center row - Joseph Armour, paint shop; Herb Bullock, shipping room; front row - James Vance, woodwork shop (Vance, incidentally, was the first man in Ingersoll to import Rhode Island Red chickens); John W. Cudlipp, superintendent; Ted Metherell, moulding shop.

The company reached a high plateau of prosperity from about 1906 to 1910, but

The Noxon foremen, 1906. Notice the edge of the company logo (the Maltese cross we have shown on the title page) in the lower right-hand corner of the picture.



Employees at the Noxon Co. of Ingersoll posed for this photo in 1906. The company was to close before the 20s.

then circumstances started to reverse this upward trend. A serious drought from 1912 to 1914 destroyed much of the wheat crop on the Praries. This meant that new equipment sales to the Praries dropped drastically. Also, the farmers couldn't afford to keep up payments for the equipment they already had and the Noxons were forced to re-possess the machinery for non-payment. In an attempt to avoid this, some of the farmers went so far as to sabotage their equipment and then return it as faulty merchandise. Consequently, literally hundreds of machines were returned and this deterioration of the Prarie market hurt the Noxon Company badly.

Then, in 1914, World War I broke out and shipments to Europe had to be stopped because of the danger in the Atlantic crossing.

The final blow came in the early months of the war. There are conflicting stories as to what actually happened. The most popular version seems to be that a large shipment (valued at approximately \$100,000) of Noxon machinery was torpedoed and sunk on the way to Russia. Another story says that the shipment reached Russia, but payment was never received. The most reliable account is provided by Mr. Diggs. He says that there was indeed a large shipment (mainly of binders) being sent to Russia but it was routed through New York. It was on the docks in New York when it was confiscated by American customs officials: because of the war, they had authority to stop all trans-Atlantic shipping. Apparently, the confiscated shipment was never returned to the Noxons and it was probably lost in all of the confusion.

In any event, the loss disrupted the Noxon Company altogether. By the end of 1914, the company was totally disorganized and only a skeleton staff remained in the factory. In the early months of 1915, they declared bankruptcy and quietly went out of business.

No one took over the factory until 1919, as the following newspaper notices indicate:

The File Co. came to Ingersoll from Port Hope in the fall of 1918 and began making several varieties of files in 1919. Herbert Swallow was General Manager. The Morrow Co. sold the product of the company. It was located in a portion of the Noxon plant. It ceased operations around 1923-24.

About the same time as the File Co. started, a branch of the Bissell Co. of Elora began the manufacture of farm machinery in another part of the Noxon plant. After five years of operation it returned to Elora.

The New Idea Furnace Company came from Hamilton to Ingersoll in 1924. This firm located in the former Noxon plant. The firm made stoves, furnaces, tobacco dryers and gray iron castings.

Ingersoll Weekly Chronicle, January 30, 1919.

A small army of mechanics and labourers are engaged in work at the old Noxon plant, getting it in shape for the File Manufacturing Company and the Bissell Agricultural Manufacturing Company.

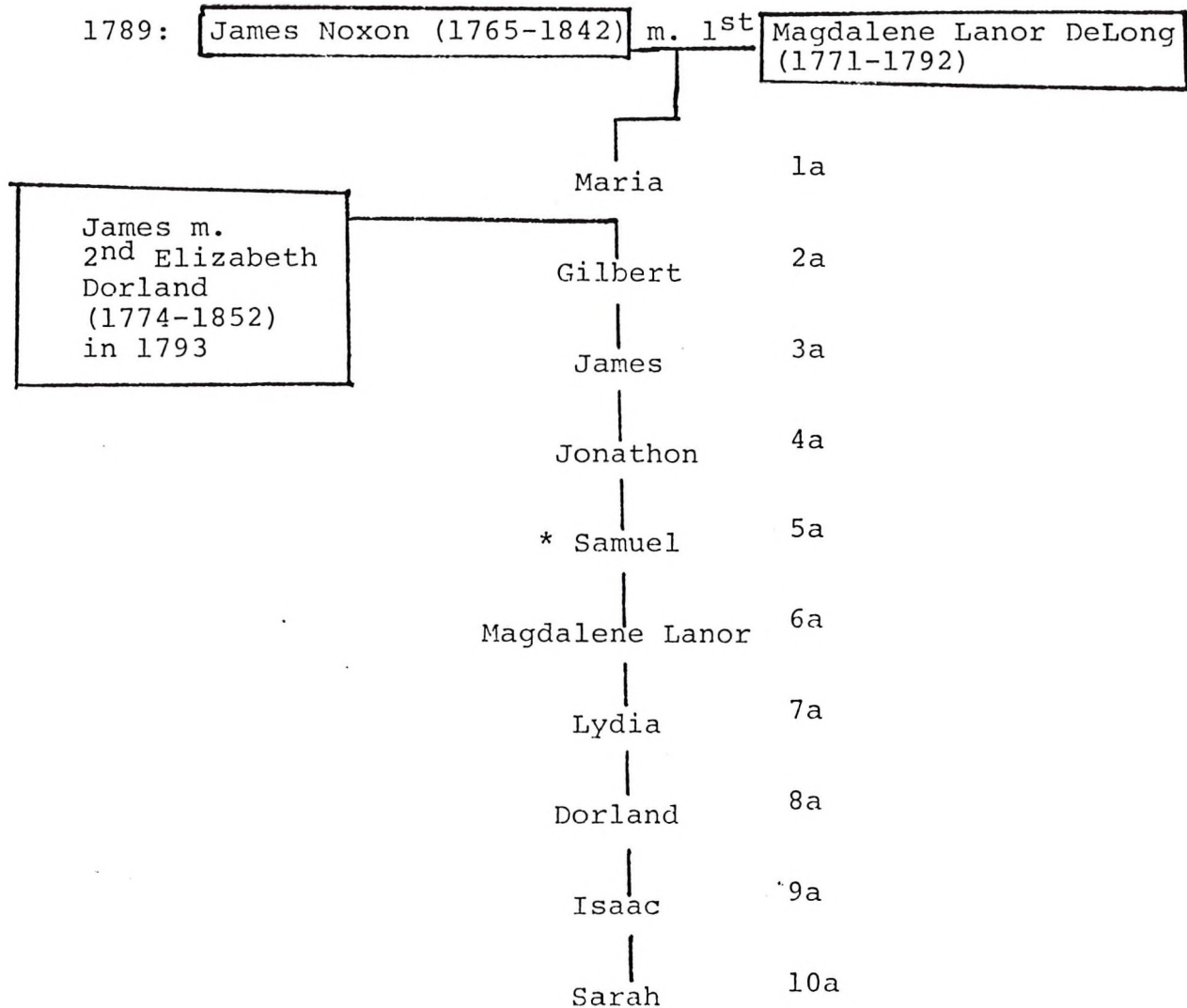
The renovations and improvements being effected are very extensive. Fire walls are being erected, the whole building is being divided into three plants, concrete floors are being put in, the north wall has been torn down and a new one in process of building. A few weeks has made a great difference in the appearance of the old plant, and those who were formerly engaged there will hardly recognize it.

The factory is now a lumber warehouse and is truly unrecognizable as the former Noxon plant, once the most important industry in Ingersoll.

APPENDIX -- THE COMPLETE NOXON FAMILY TREE

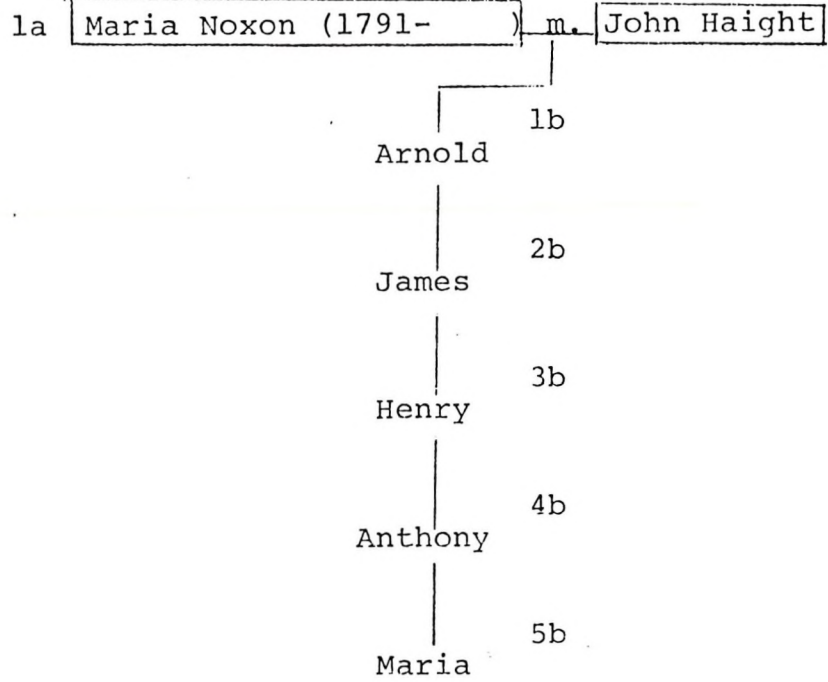
JAMES NOXON (1765-1842)
(Cdn. pioneer)

it is his descendents with whom
we are concerned

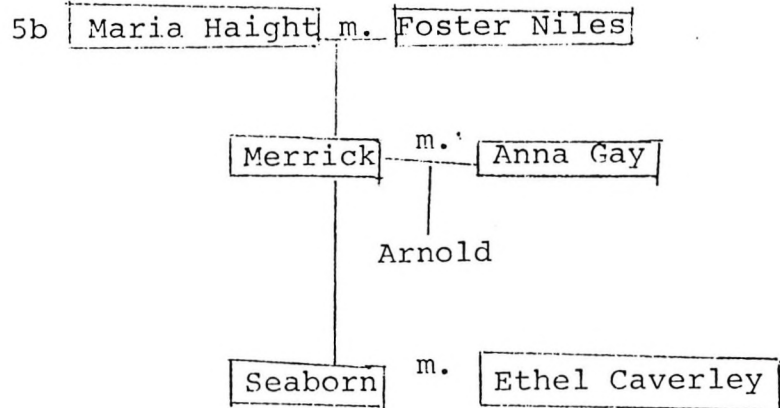


1a James Noxon

Settled in Hillier



5b Maria Noxon Branch (1a)



2a James Noxon

2a Gilbert (1796-1805) Noxon
drowned in childhood

47

3a James Noxon

settled in Hillier

3a	James Noxon (1797-1836) born in Sophiasburg	m.	Catherine Morden (1796-1845)	
	Ann			1c
	Gilbert			2c
	Elizabeth			3c
	Richard			4c
	Lucretia			5c
	Lanor			6c
	Sarah			7c

lc son James Noxon branch

settled in Hillier

lc Ann Noxon m. Selim Pettit

Hiram

James

Miles

Adelaide

Emily

Elizabeth A.

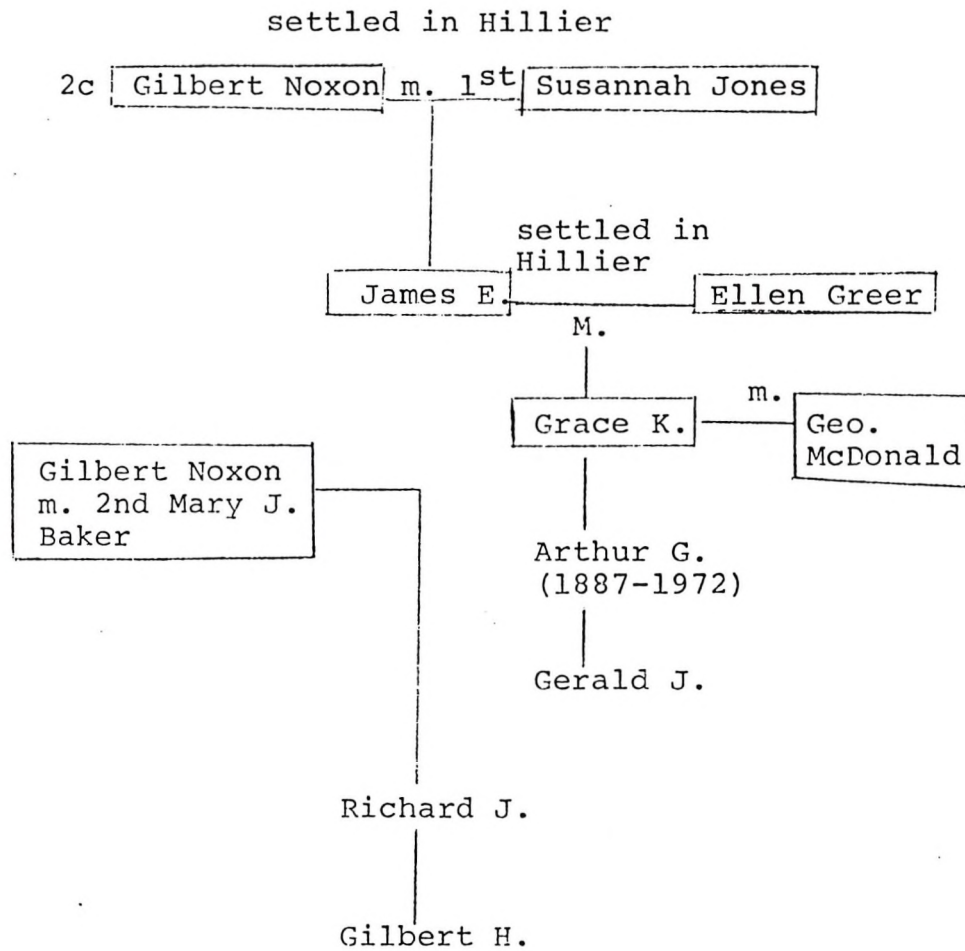
Celia

Robert

Sylvanus

Anna L.

2c son James Noxon Branch

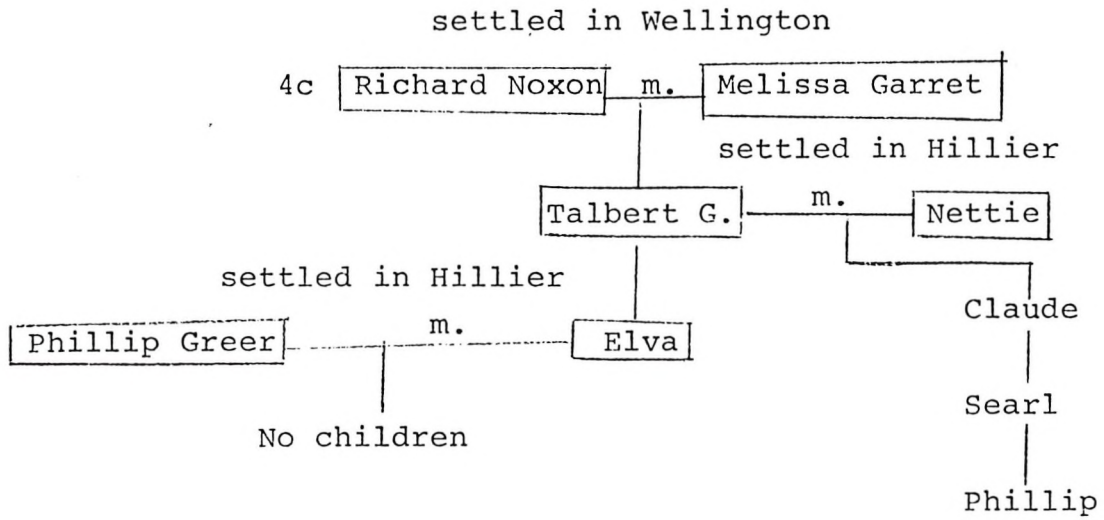


50

3c son James Noxon Branch

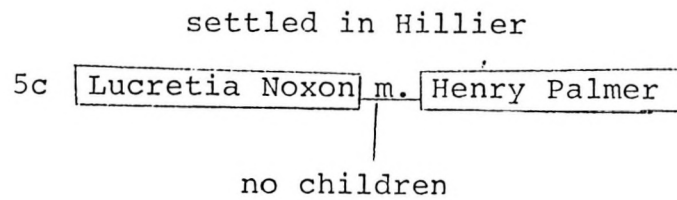
3c Elizabeth Noxon - unmarried

4c son James Noxon Branch



52

5c son James Noxon Branch

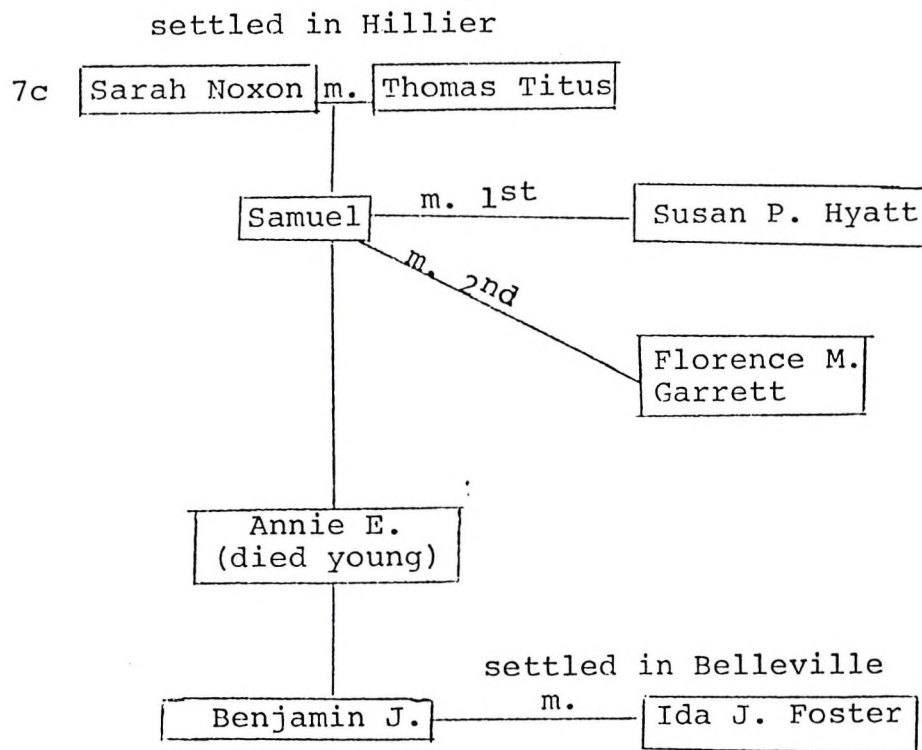


6c son James Noxon Branch

6c Lanor Noxon - unmarried
 - settled in Bloomfield

54

7c son James Noxon Branch



4a James Noxon

settled in Sophiasburg

4a	Jonathon Noxon (1799-1874)	m.	Jemima Way (1802-1890)
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in 1821

Elizabeth 1d

Sarah 2d

Maria 3d

James 4d

Reuben 5d

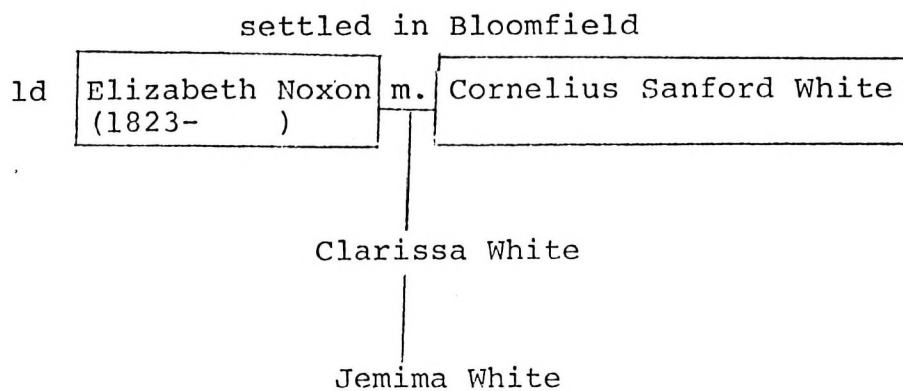
Lydia 6d

Jonathon D. 7d

Phillip 8d

Caleb 9d

1d Jonathon's Branch



57

2d Jonathon's Branch

2d

Sarah Noxon	m.	Elisha Talcott
-------------	----	----------------

3d Jonathon's Branch

3d Maria Noxon
(b. 1827) - unmarried
- settled Bloomfield

59

4d Jonathon's Branch

settled in Bloomfield

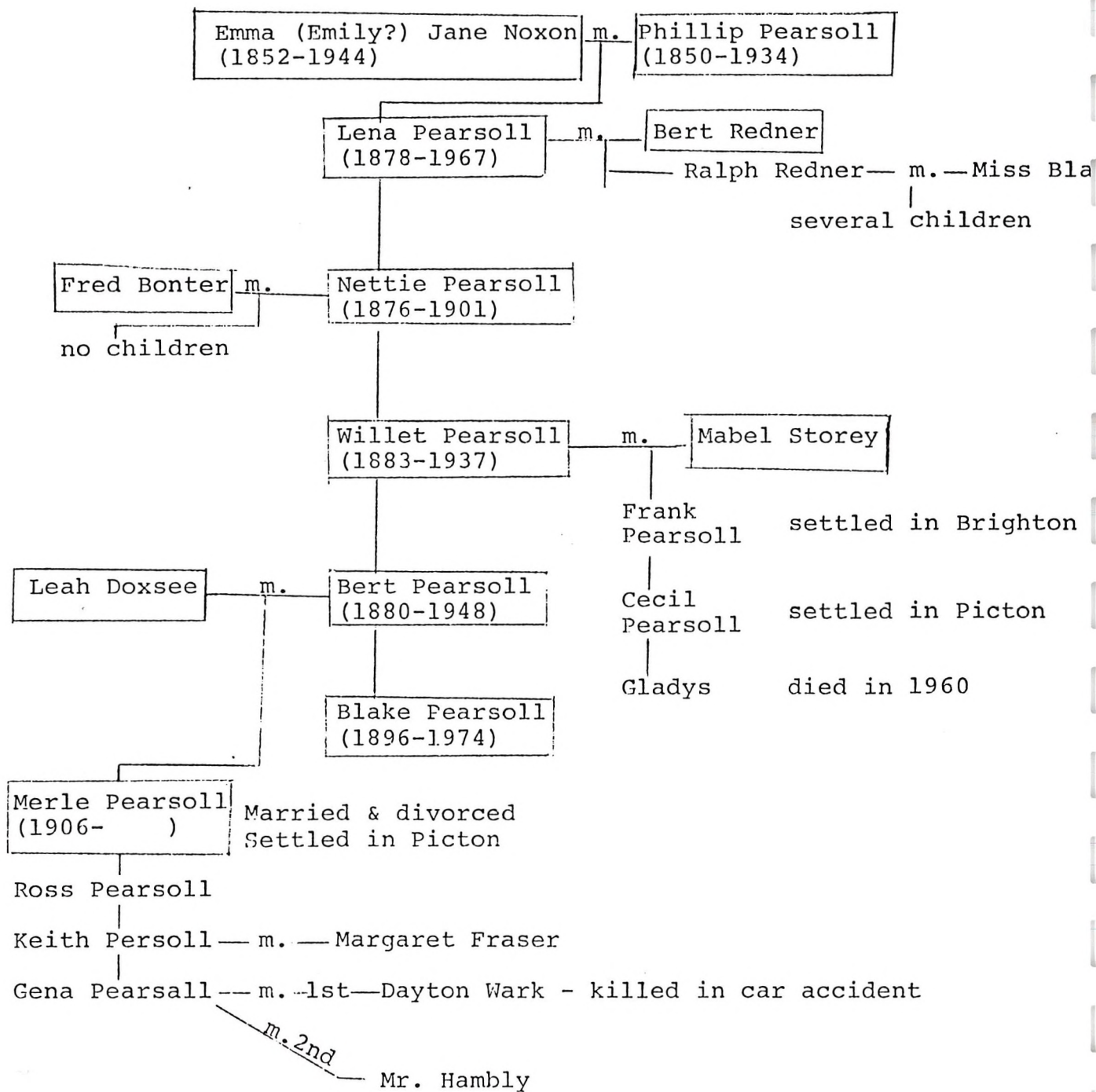
4d James Noxon
(b. 1828) m. 1st Carrie Ann White
in 1852

Emma Jane 1e

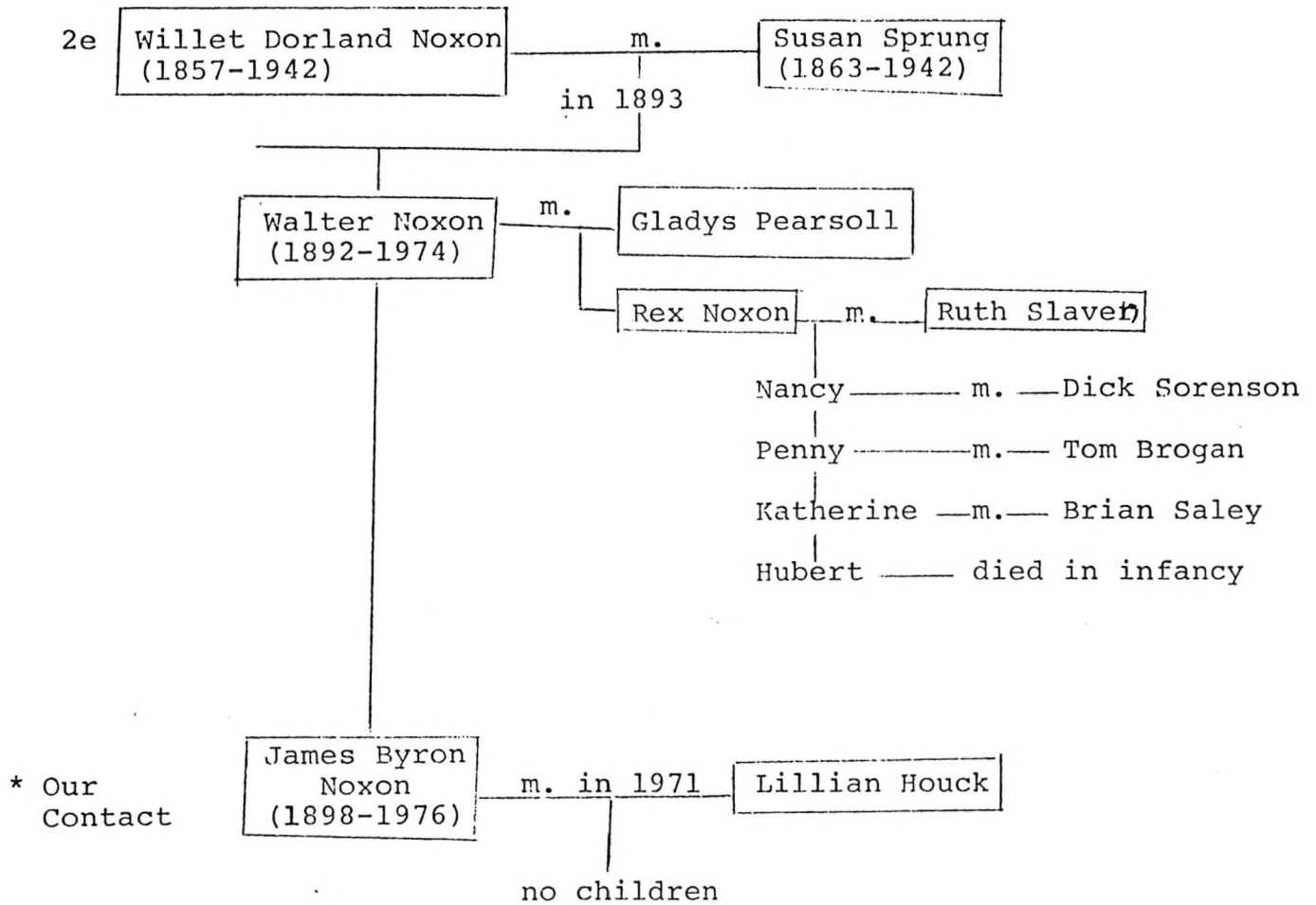
Willet Dorland 2e

James Noxon
m. 2nd
Susanna
Hendrie

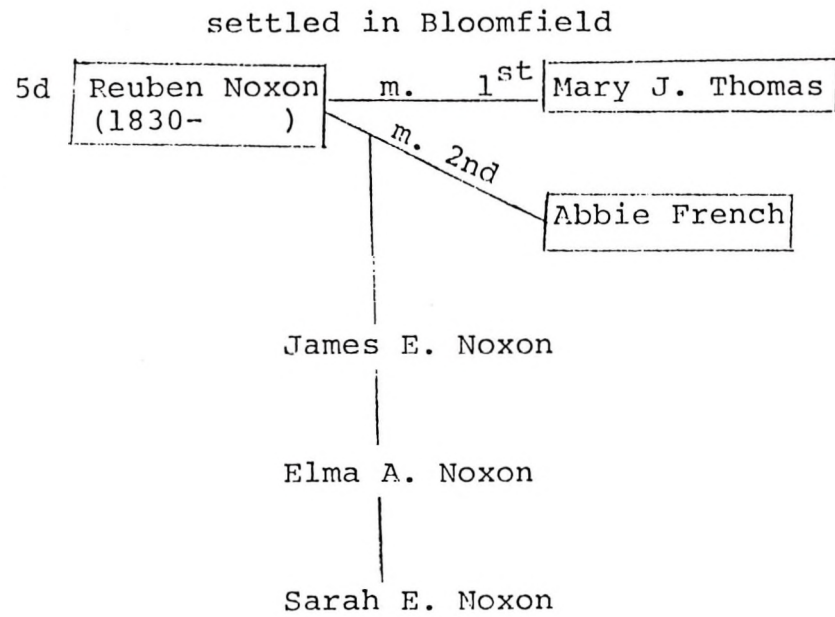
le Jonathon's Branch



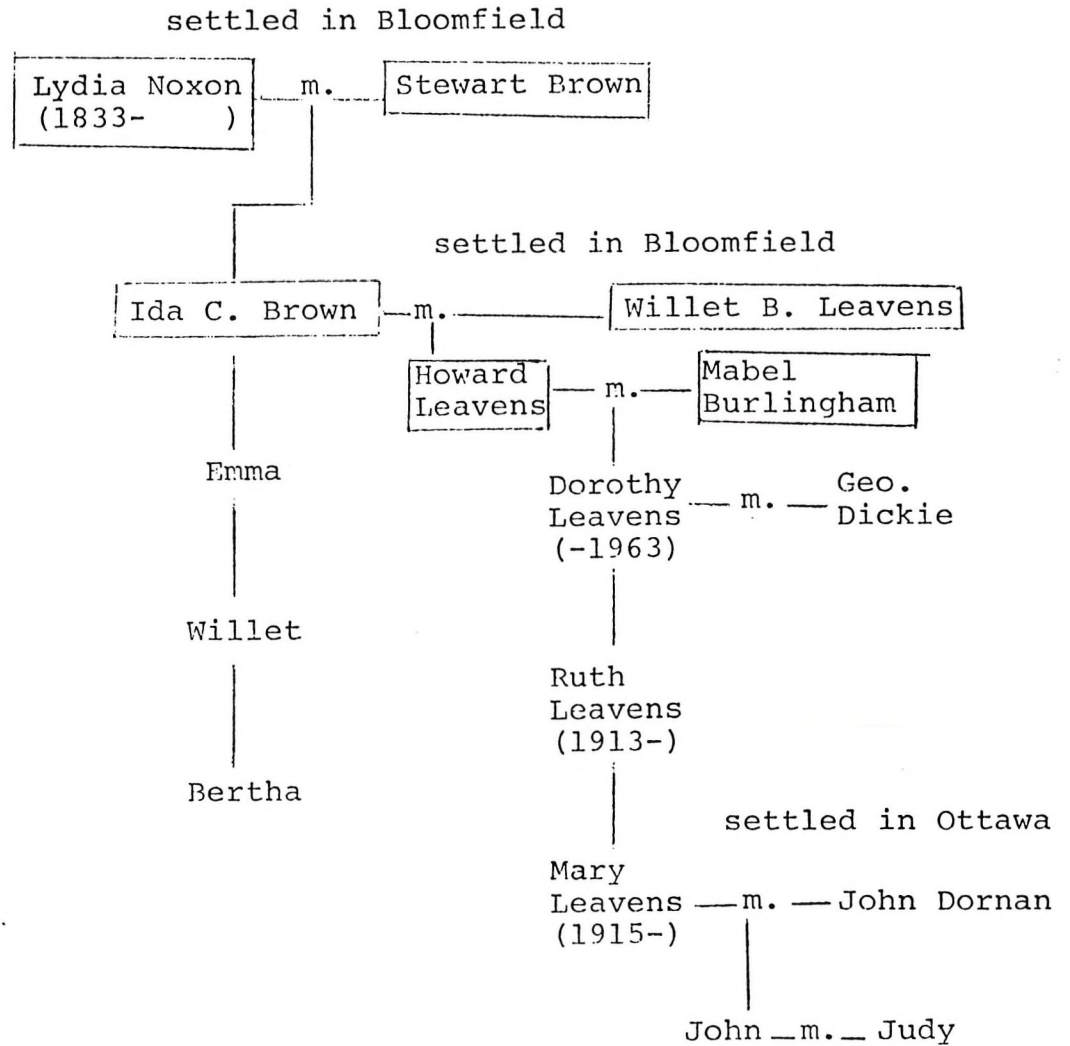
2e Jonathon's Branch



5d Jonathon's Branch

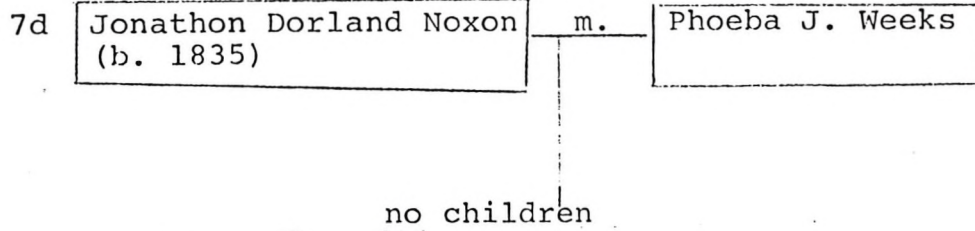


6d Jonathon's Branch



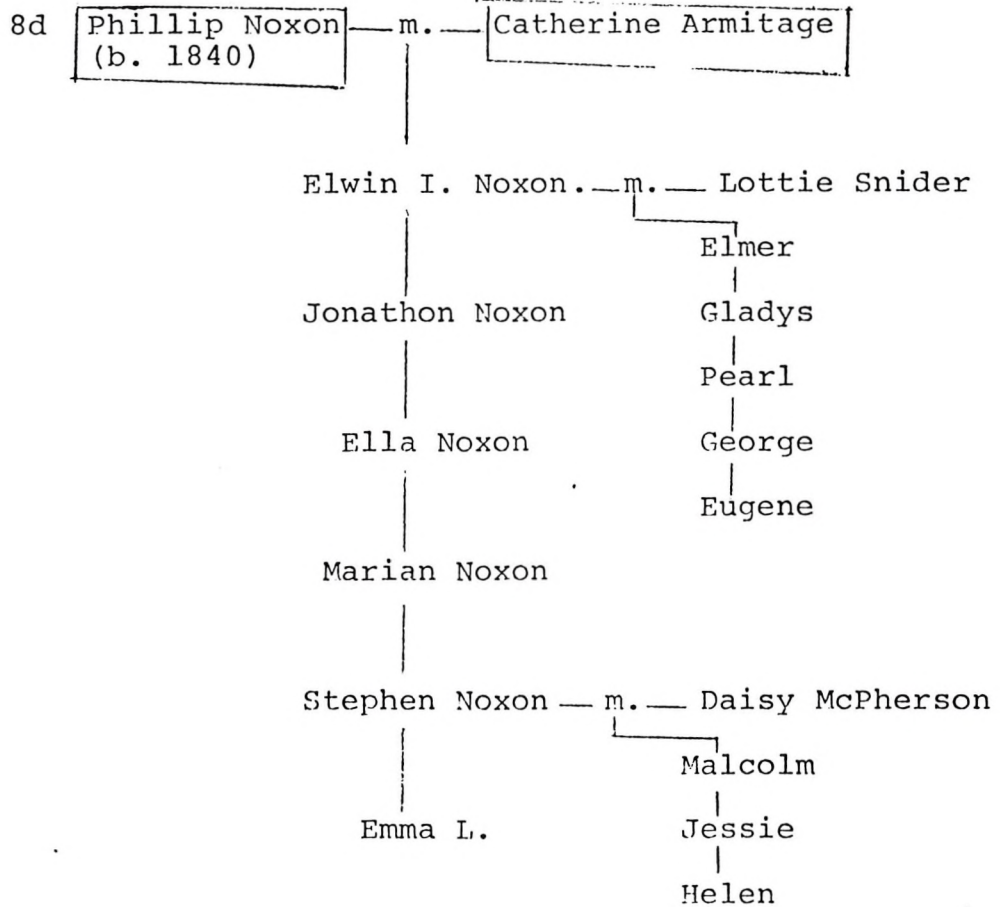
7d Jonathon's Branch

settled in Montoe County
New York



8d Jonathon's Branch

settled in North Dakota



9d Jonathon's Branch

settled in Bloomfield

9d

Caleb Noxon (b. 1843)

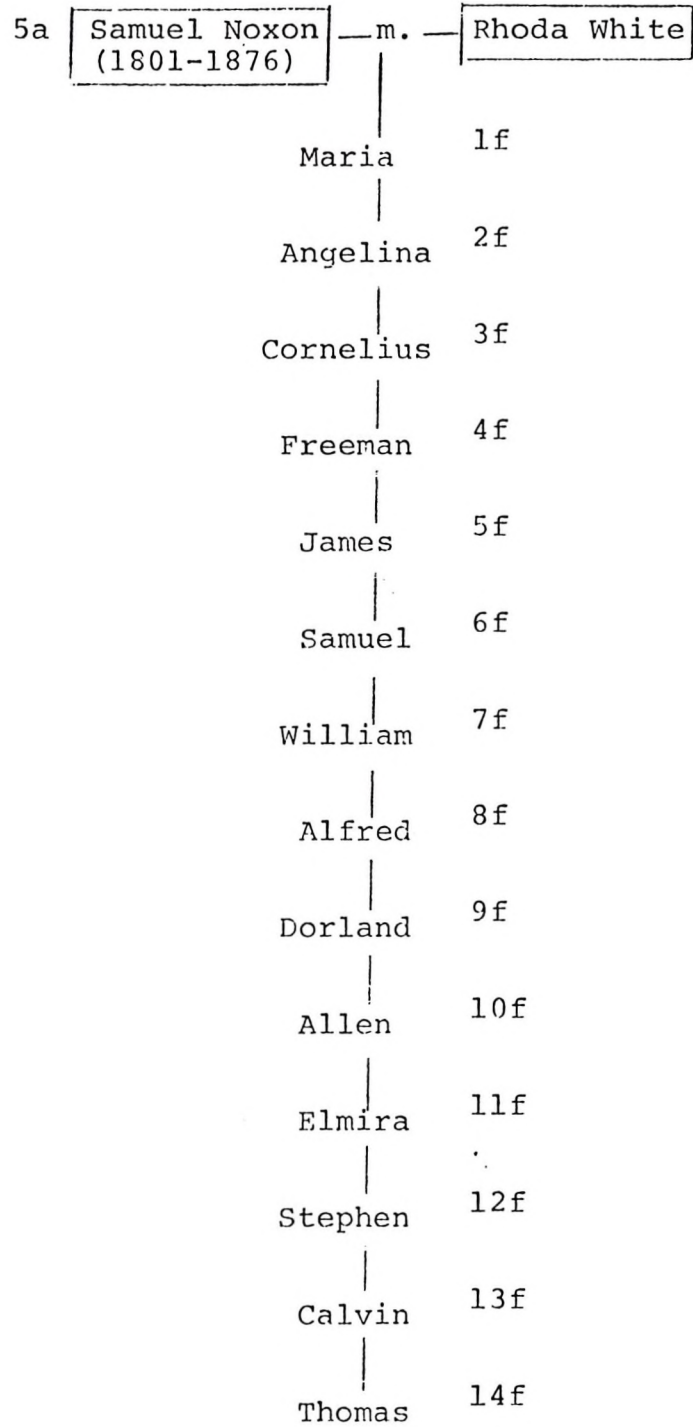
 — m. —

Alzina Tripp

no children

*5a son James Noxon Branch

settled in Hallowell



lf Samuel Branch

settled in Maine

lf

Maria Noxon

 m. in 1844

John Saylor (1821-)

Freeman

Herman

Ashton

Elgin

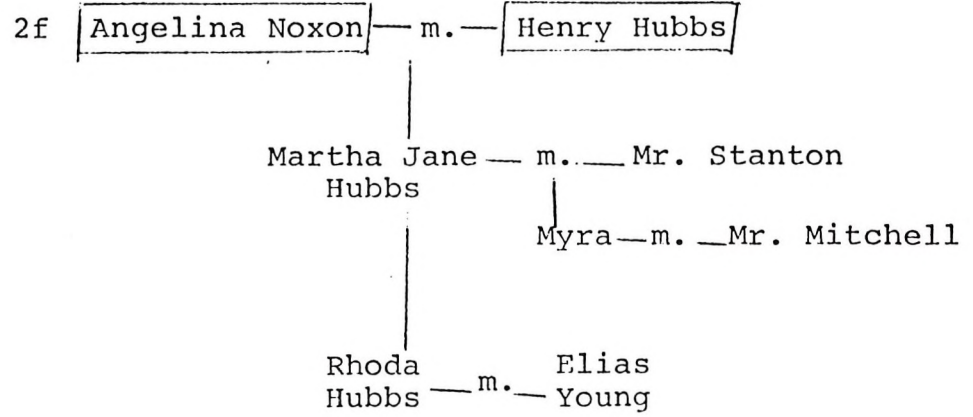
Emily J.

Marshall

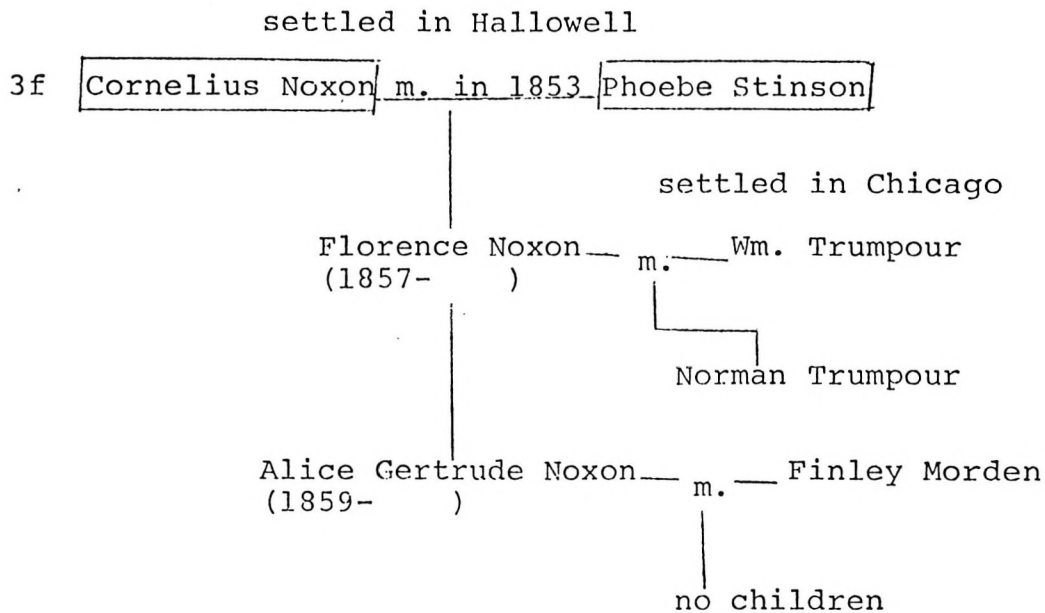
Franklin

2f Samuel Branch

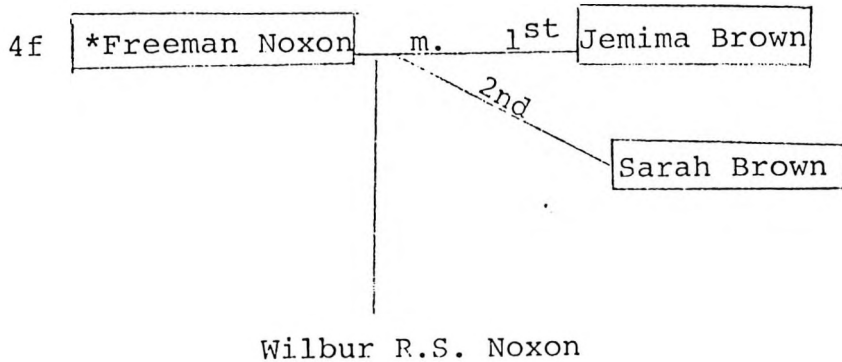
settled in Bloomfield



3f Samuel Branch

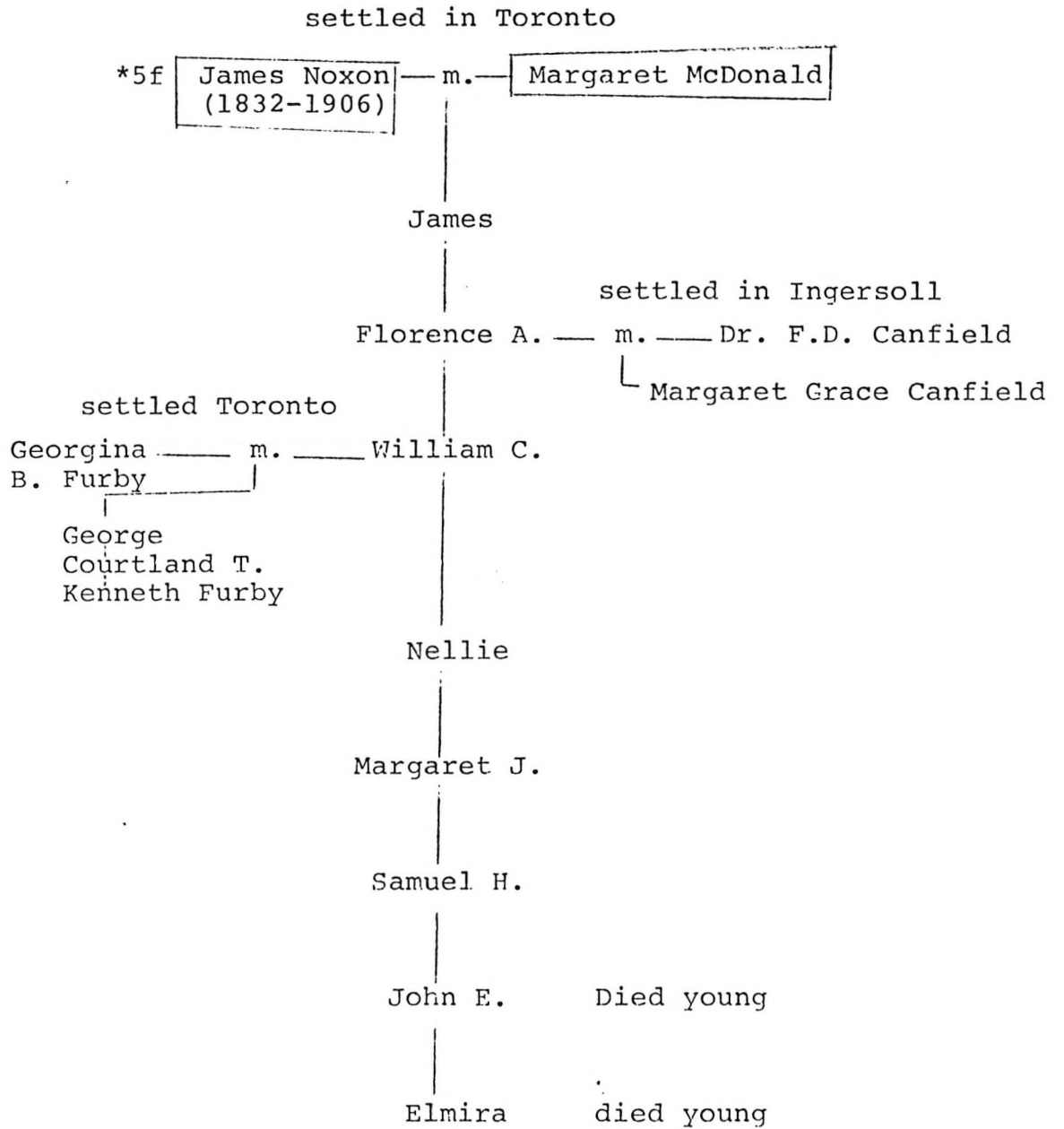


4f Samuel Branch



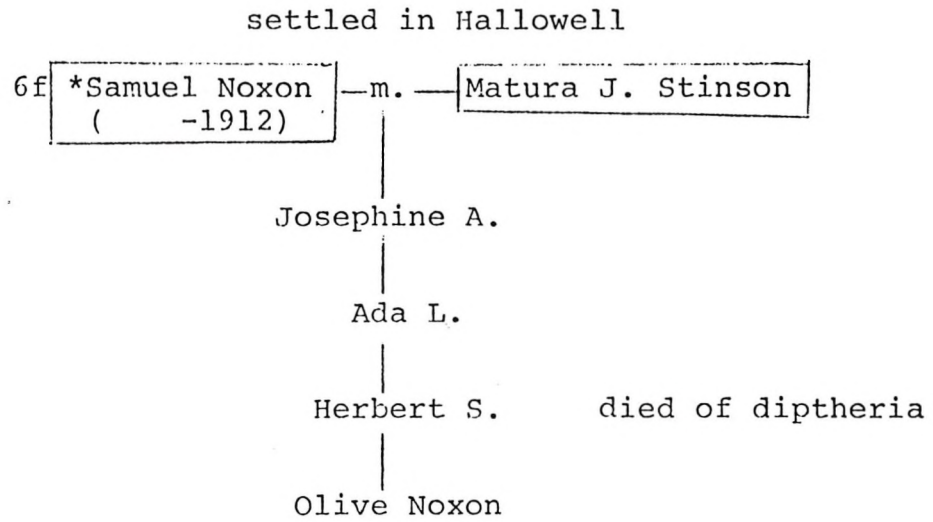
* one of the 5 brothers

5f Samuel Branch



* one of the five brothers and President.

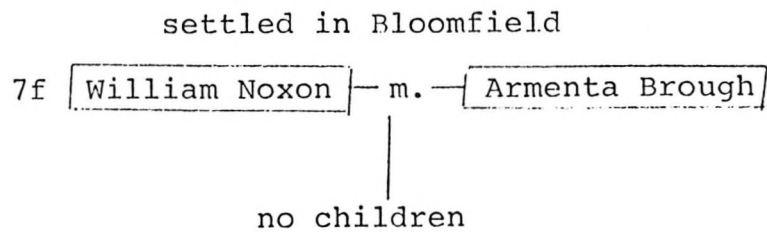
6f Samuel Branch



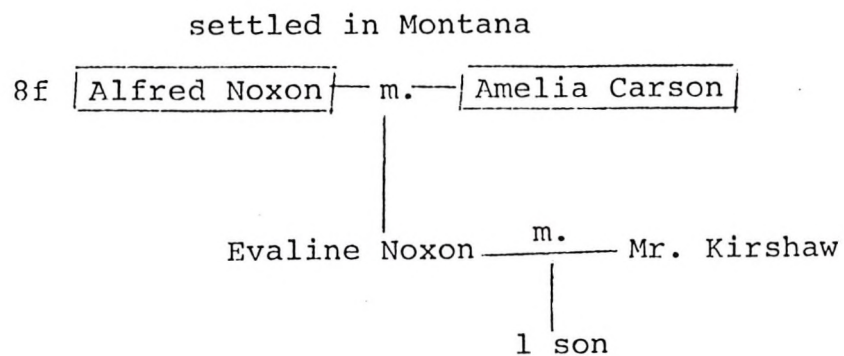
* one of the five brothers

74

7f Samuel Branch

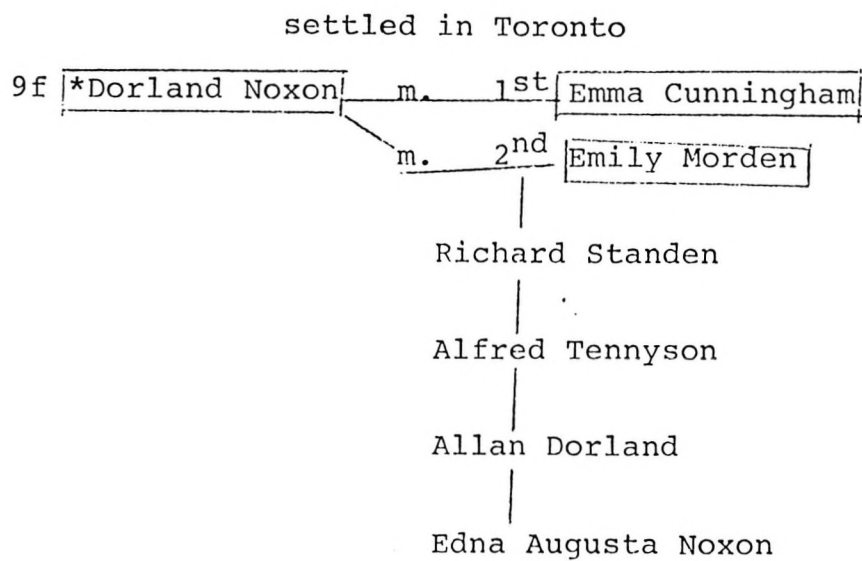


8f Samuel Branch



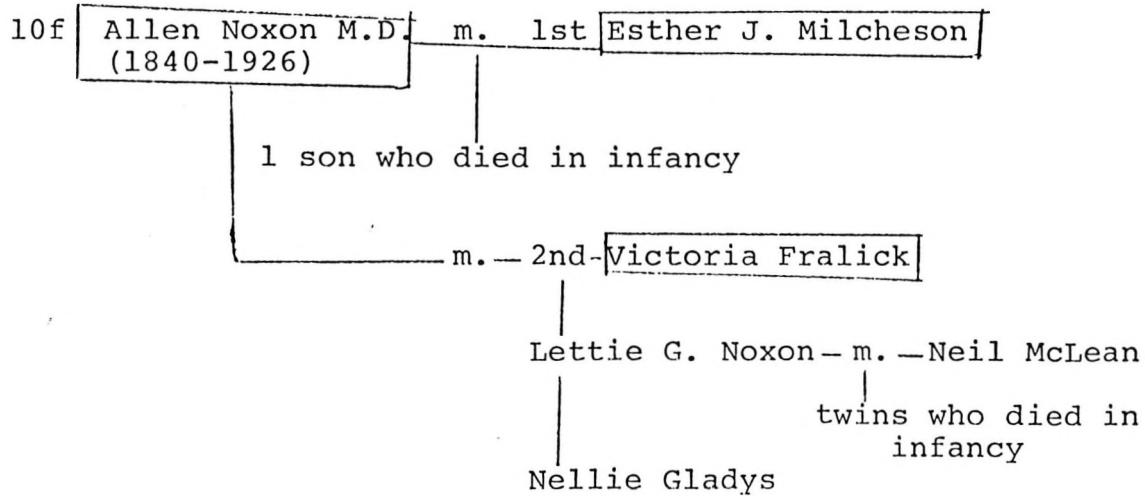
76

9f Samuel Branch



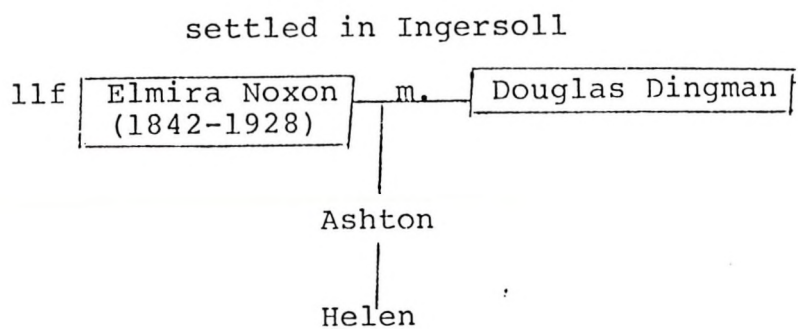
* one of the five brothers

10f Samuel Branch



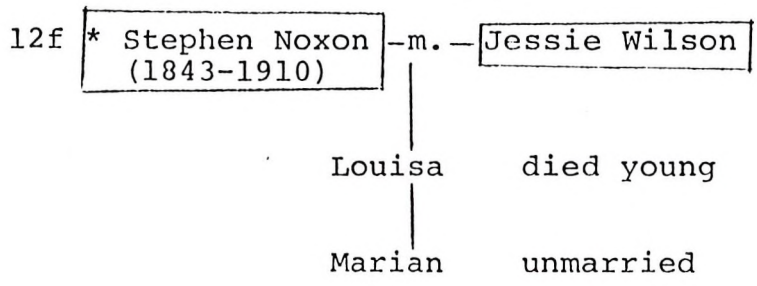
78

11f Samuel Branch



12f Samuel Branch

settled in Ingersoll



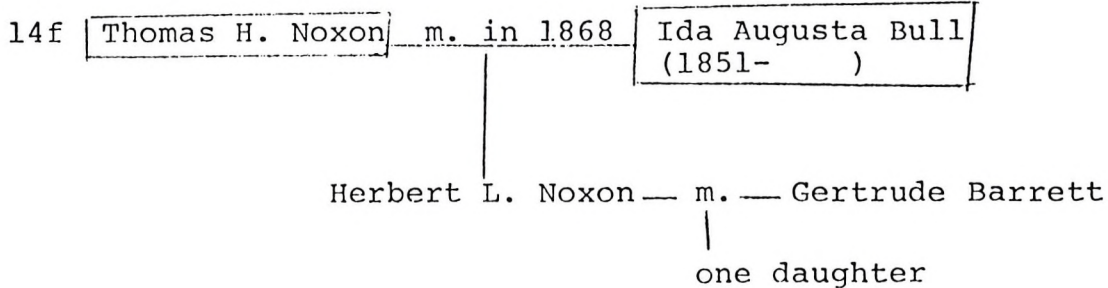
* one of five brothers

13f Samuel Branch

13f Calvin Noxon - unmarried

14f Samuel Branch

settled in California



James Noxon Branch

settled in Hillier

6a Magdalene Lanor Noxon m. 1st Richard Morden
 (1803-1898) (1824)

Lydia 1g

Jonathon 2g

Wilson 3g

Patience 4g died

Gilbert 5g

James B. 6g

Catherine 7g

Elizabeth 8g

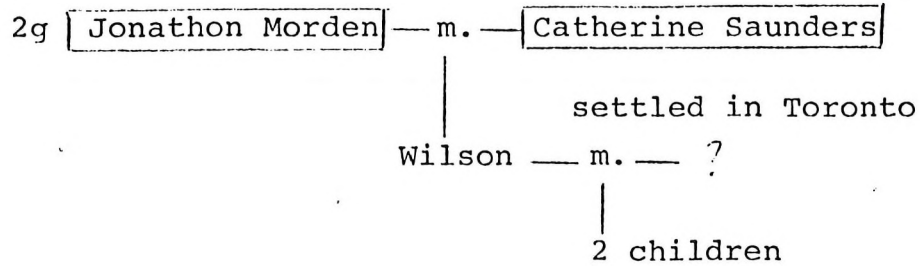
Susan 9g

Sarah 10g

David 11g

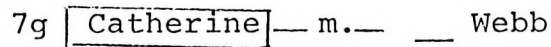
m. 2nd Joseph Hazard

2g Magdalene's Branch



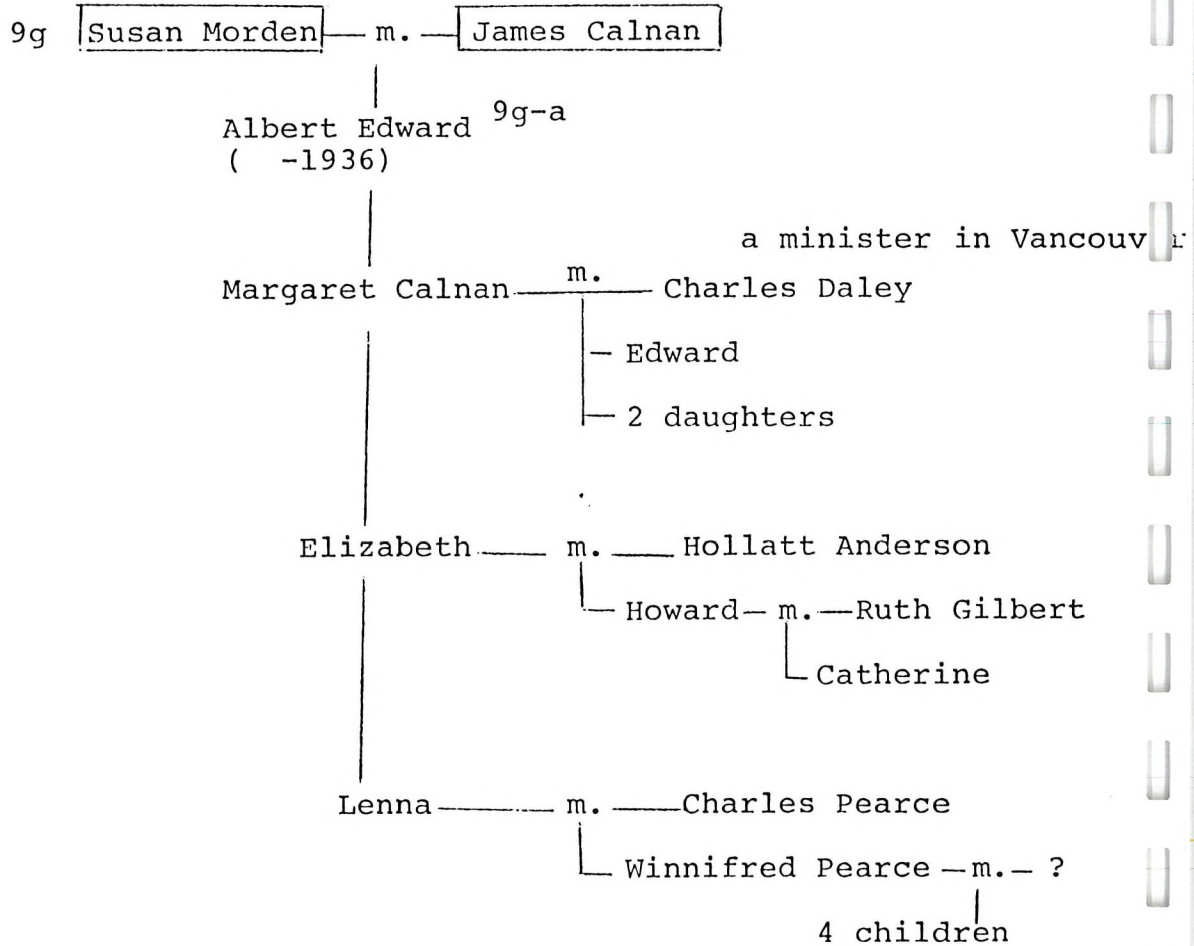
84

7g Magdalene Branch



85

9g Magdalene Branch



Magdalene Branch

9g-a Albert Edward Calnan
(d. 1936) m. Gertrude Thompson
(d. 1969)

Lindlay (1898-1972) m. in 1925 Elinor Boldrick of Texas

publisher and editor of Picton Gazette

Elinor—m.—Thomas Eberlee

Patricia—m.—David Taylor

Michael

James

Edith died young

Marjorie—m.—Edward Johns

7a James Noxon Branch

settled in Sophiasburgh

7a Lydia Noxon
(b. 1805) m. Peter Fox

James

Zilpah

John

Henry

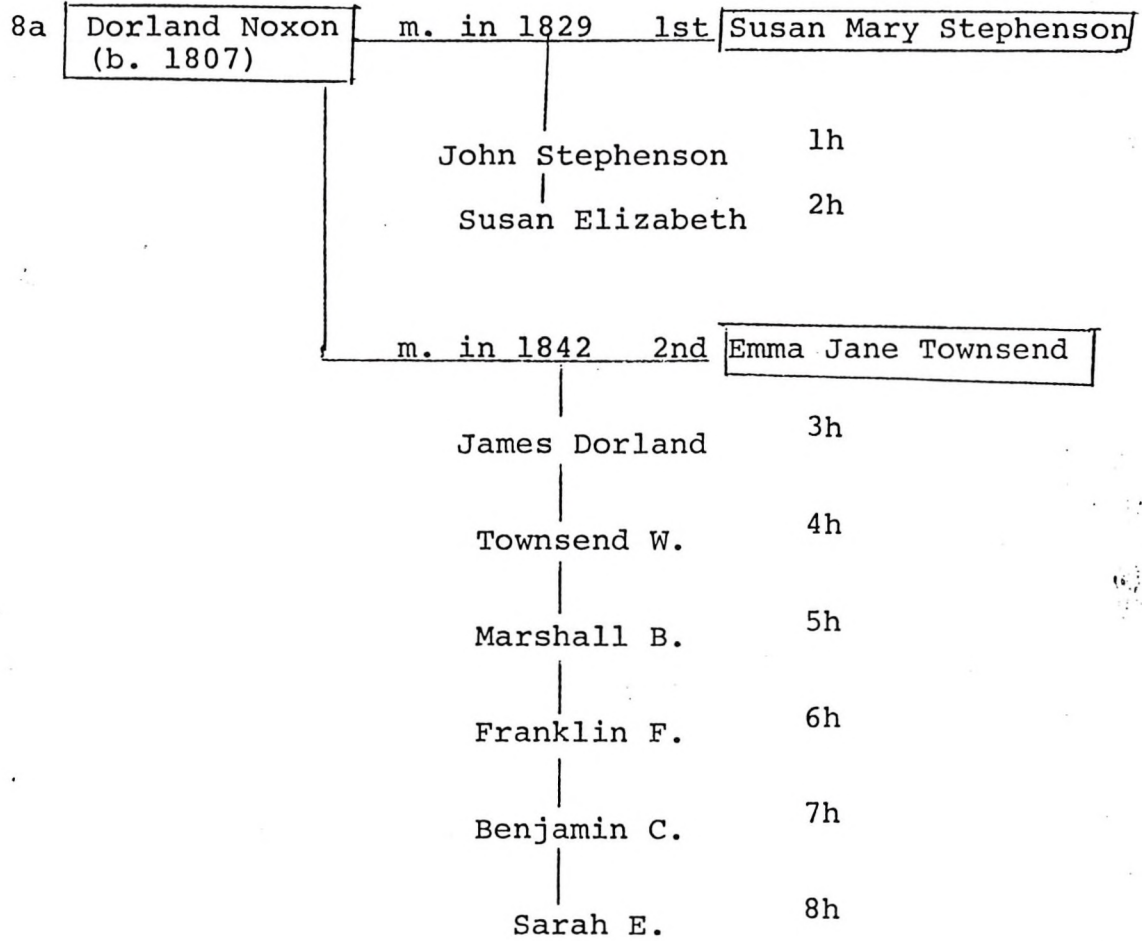
Elizabeth

Dorland

Shadrach Fox

8a James Noxon Branch

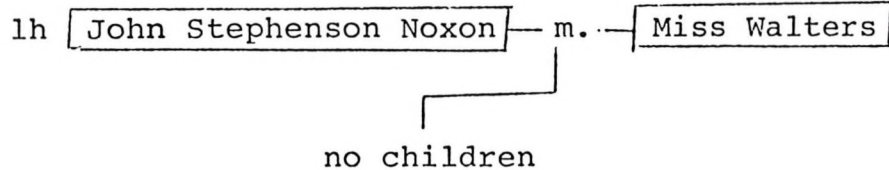
settled West Lk., Hillier



89

1h Dorland Branch

settled in Wellington



2h Dorland Branch

settled Pasadena, California

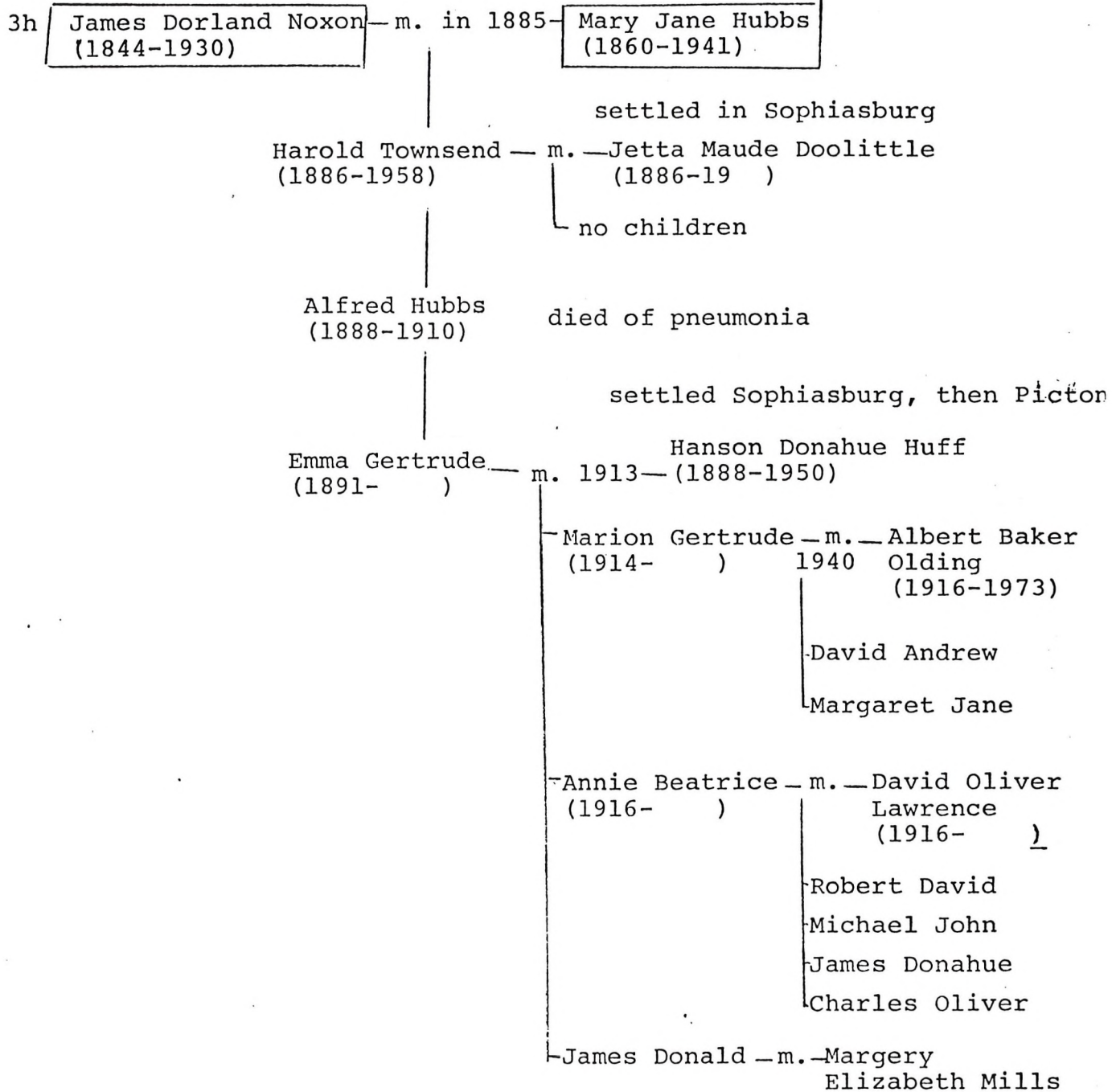
2h Susan Elizabeth Noxon (b. 1836) m. Willet Hazard

Mary M.

Lydia

3h Dorland Branch

settled in Sophiasburg, P.E. Co.



4h Dorland Branch

settled in St. Louis

Townsend W. — m. — ?

|
no children

93

5h Dorland Branch

settled in Sophiasburg

5h Marshall B. — m. — Zenana Doolittle

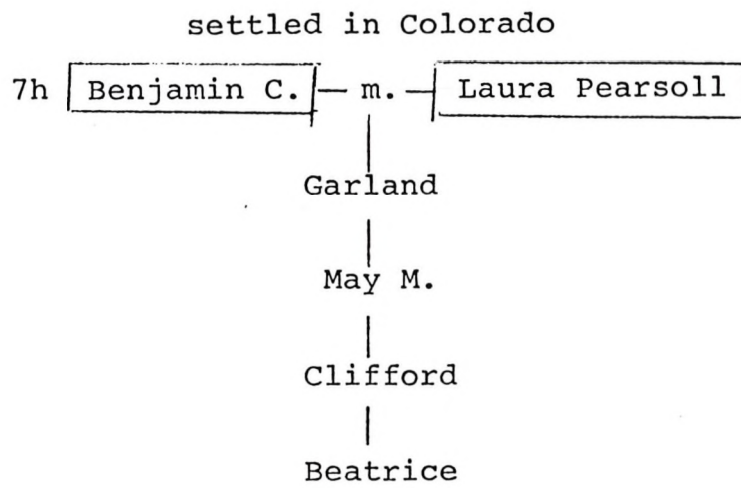
|
Stephen

94

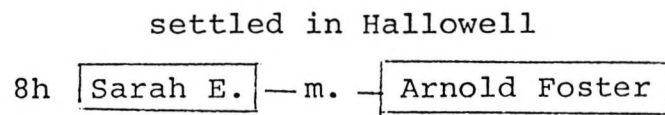
6h Dorland Branch

6h Franklin F. — unmarried
— settled in Colorado

7h Dorland Branch

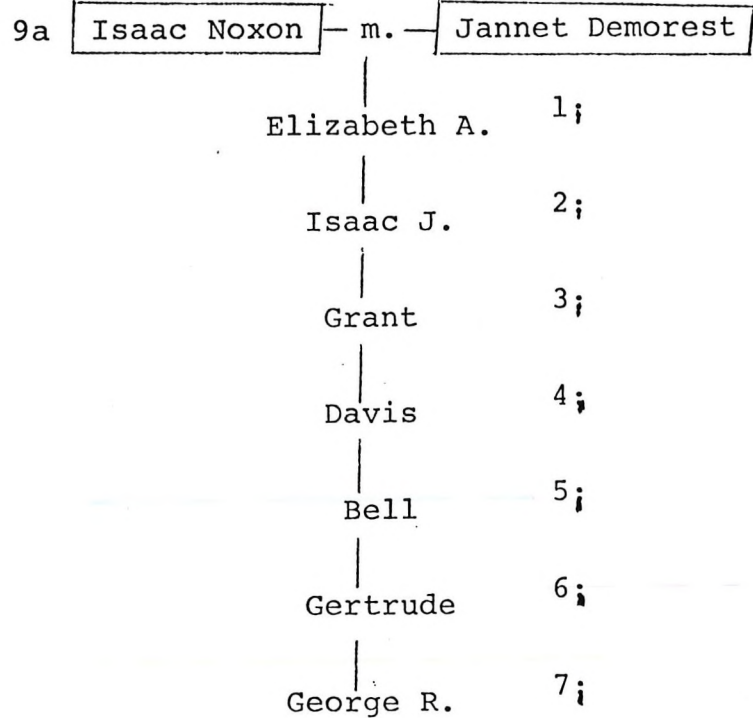


8h Dorland Branch



9a James Noxon Branch

settled in Sophiasburgh



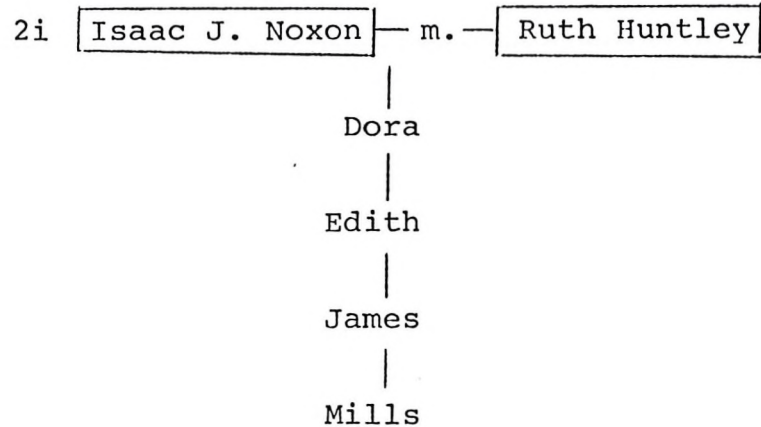
98

1: Isaac Branch

1; Elizabeth A. m. John D. Lambert

2i Isaac Branch

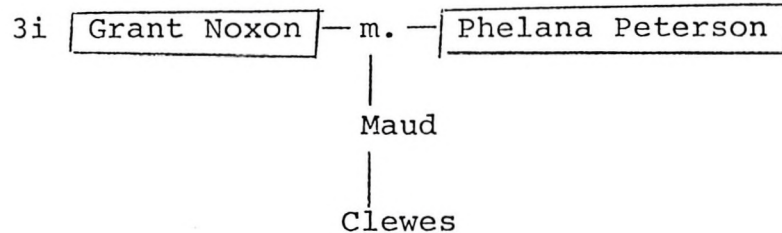
settled in Steuben Co., N.Y.



100

3i Isaac Branch

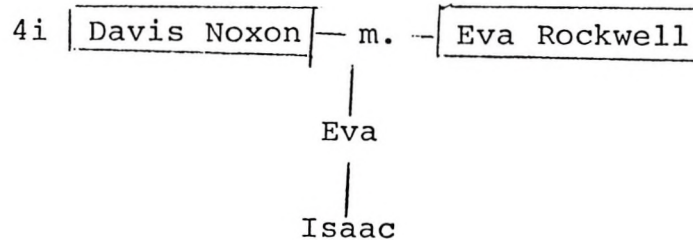
settled in Toronto



101

4i Isaac Branch

settled in Duluth



5i Isaac Branch

settled in N.Y.

5i Bell Noxon — m. — Mr. Bradley

6i Isaac Branch

settled in Picton

6i Gertrude Noxon — m. — George E. Fraser

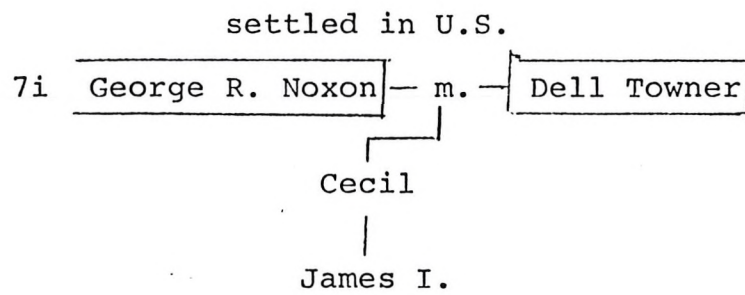
Walter

Jennie

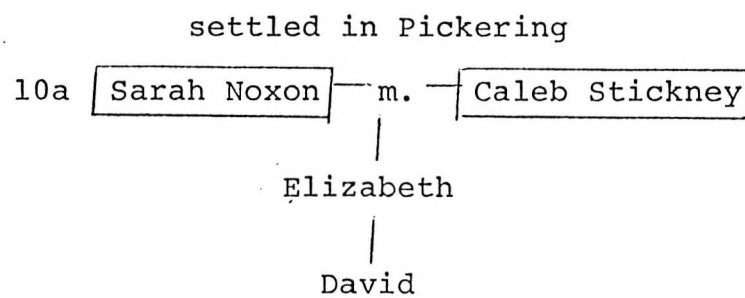
I. Frith

George

7i Isaac Branch



10a James Noxon Branch



In search of illustrious local family's history

BY CHERYL STEWART

It is the late 1800's. In a castle-like house on the hill on Noxon Street, people are dancing and laughing and in general having a good time. It is the house of James Noxon, once one of the most prominent families in the Ingersoll area.

There are no Noxon's left in Ingersoll today, but Courtland and Pamela Noxon of Don Mills are searching out the Noxon family roots, and have uncovered some fascinating facts about their family and their years in the area.

So far, they have been able to trace the Noxon's back to the late 1600's in New York State. It was Thomas Noxon's great-grandson James who came to Canada, to Prince Edward County near Belleville, in 1784. His grandson James came in 1853 with his brother Samuel and settled in the area.

James started as a clerk in the hardware business, but soon discovered because of the great agricultural business in the area, there was a need for a company to manufacture farm implements. The Noxon Brothers Company was formed in 1856 on the site of a previous company on Thames Street South. In 1872, the company moved to where Maude Wilson Memorial Pool now stands

and was incorporated as a joint stock company.

At one time, this company was Ingersoll's chief industry and it employed well over 100 men when in full production. The Noxon brothers had a reputation of making good, long-wearing dependable machinery.

During his years in Ingersoll, James Noxon was involved in many things besides his family business. He was Reeve from 1866-1867, councillor from 1864-1865, and Mayor of the Town of Ingersoll in 1884, 1885 and 1887. It was shortly after he was re-elected to his third term as Mayor, that he accepted the management of the Patterson Brothers factory in Woodstock.

James was also very involved in the cheese and dairy industry in the county and was president of the Dairymen's Association for many years. The Noxon brother's company was responsible for producing the press which made the Mammoth Cheese in 1866. That same year, James and Samuel won an award at a provincial exhibition for the best cheese press.

James was appointed Inspector of Prisons and Charities for Ontario in 1892 and held the position until he resigned in 1905.

The beautiful house on Noxon Street was built by James for \$10,000 in 1874. Such dignitaries as Sir Wilfred Laurier visited and enjoyed the premises in 1885. Dr. Angus McKay, who was MPP for Oxford County for 16 years, bought the house in 1899 and sold it to the town in 1909 for \$6,520 to be used as a hospital, named Alexandra Hospital.

Another of James' brothers, Stephen, who came to Ingersoll in 1865, was a supporter of the hospital project and a ward was named after his wife, Louise Noxon. She furnished the ward in memory of their daughter who had died very young in life.

Two other brothers also came to Ingersoll, Thomas and Freeman in 1869. Thomas moved to California in 1900 but Freeman remained in Ingersoll until his death in 1917.

According to Pamela Noxon, the Noxon Brothers Company left the Noxon hands about 1900. The downfall of the company came in 1915 with the outbreak of the First World War and three successive seasons of crop failure in 1912, 1913 and 1914. It eventually ceased operations in 1923.

Courtland and Pamela Noxon have found that James was Courtland's great-grandfather and James had a son William who is Courtland's grandfather.

All of this information fascinates the Noxon's and each little tidbit they fall upon about their family history only makes them want to seek more information.

"It's just like putting a big jigsaw together," said Mrs. Noxon. "Eventually we would like to gather all these things and have them placed in a museum," she said.

The Noxon's have travelled extensively in Ontario since they began searching out their roots about a-year-and-a-half ago. They have met many interesting people and have found relatives they had never heard of or seen before.

Hospital ever-changing

Today, Alexandra Hospital is a modern hospital with all the facilities for expert medical care. Over the past year, the hospital had several activities and projects which were ongoing and some were completed.

A new roof was installed on the 1970 addition of the hospital, the new revised Disaster Plan was tested, the Health Promotion Program for retired citizens was activated, the Ingersoll Fire Department toured the facility, the hospital was publicly inspected, and data was forwarded to the District Health Council for their bed study project.

As well, the Lions Club donated a projector for educational purposes, and a cassette recorder was donated by a community citizen in memory of a deceased family member. The Ladies Auxiliary forwarded \$11,000 to the hospital for the purchase of equipment.

The length of stay for patients in the hospital was reduced last year and it is now just over seven days. An ear, nose and throat clinic was added to the out-patient services, and Dr. David M. Smith, a specialist in this area joined the staff of the hospital.

Several new pieces of equipment were provided for the use of the hospital including a cystoscope, two new gas machines and two ventilators for the operating room, and a portable ophthalmoscope and cast saw for the emergency department.

Alexandra is now a thriving part of the community with many services available to both the patients and the community. The hospital has many programs geared to the community including its senior citizens program and its pre-natal classes.

Former Noxon home was town's first hospital

Alexandra Hospital came about as a result of the generosity of a local physician Dr. Angus McKay in the early 1900's. He purchased a beautiful castle-like home from James Noxon who had built the estate on Noxon Street in 1874, and sold the home to be used as a hospital.

In 1909, the need for a hospital in Ingersoll was growing as there were only private hospitals and private nurses available for medical service. There was a sanatorium run by a trained nurse and an assistant, but this was not what the area residents desired, so the medical people in the community rooted the idea

of a hospital in 1908.

On January 28, 1909, a group of representative citizens met in the council chamber to consider the purchase of property which might be converted into a hospital. The McKay house was not the only one considered by this group. They also looked at the George Christopher property on Thames Street North, and the Kirkwood property on Thames Street South, but Dr. McKay's seemed to be the best offer.

He told the group he would sell the home for \$8,000, reserving the stable and also the field on the east side containing the cottage. He said he would give all gas and electric fixtures, the two ranges, a 90-gallon hot water boiler, and the bookcase in the library for the use of the hospital. He also contributed \$2,000 to the building fund and said if the stable was removed, he would erect a shed sufficiently large to accommodate four horses.

His offer was accepted and a committee was selected to solicit money to buy the home including Doctors Rogers, Coleridge, and Neff; Messrs. C.C.L. Wilson, Walter Mills, W.F. Johnston, J. Anderson Coulter, A.H. Ellis and F.W. Bain.

At a meeting on April 29, 1909, Dr. McKay suggested the hospital be called "alexandra," in honor of Queen Alexandra, wife of the reigning sovereign. After the group agreed upon this, seven men were appointed as provisional directors of the hospital. As the campaign for funds continued, W.C. Forman, merchant, told the group meeting that 10 per cent of all his sales for one month would be donated to the hospital fund. June 8, 1909, Town Council made a grant of \$1,000, and Dr. Rogers reported that \$8,000 had been secured by subscription to date.

At a general meeting of subscribers June 25, 1909, the following permanent directors were appointed: George Sutherland, Raymond Hutt, Joseph Gibson, Stephen Noxon, Thomas Seldon, John E. Boles, and George Naylor. The following were also elected officers for 1909-1910: president, George Sutherland.

The work of converting the home into a hospital was well underway during the summer of 1909, and the formal opening took place September 22.