

1803 - 1992
THE CURIOUS AND REMARKABLE HISTORY OF KING HIRAM LODGE No. 37
A.F. & A.M., G.R.C.
Ingersoll Ontario

INTRODUCTION

This compilation, as in most historical writings, is something of a rehash of earlier accounts. By the nature of some sources, they too were based on writings of an even earlier time. The editor-author of this present narrative makes no apology for having had recourse to earlier accounts, to seek cross references, other sources, and to re-phrase or re-cast the obscure, and to expand on events which hitherto have been either glossed over or ignored. Some obvious errors in source material have been corrected. A great deal of new material has been added including explanatory and back-ground information.

The arrangement of material is mainly chronological, with added background information. The editorial and author's notes expand on specific items. The list of Worshipful Masters and their installation dates are headed by the grand lodge then given the Lodge's allegiance. An Addendum indicates the difficulties inherent in the process of historical research.

There may be errors of fact and in interpretation. Thus, the editor-author is unable to vouch for the absolute truth of every word. Yet readers will be better informed than has been hitherto possible. In some instances, certain judgements have been made in view of the most likely interpretation of the facts. The writer is also guilty of some editorial comment, accepting responsibility for these interpretations, right or wrong. I hope my brethren will find this presentation worthwhile.

Stewart L. Thurtell, P.G.S.
Lodge Historian
December 15th 1991

WORSHIPFUL MASTERS
NOW MEMBERS OF KING HIRAM LODGE No. 37

	W. Bro. John G. Robbins	1945
	W. Bro. Ivan R. Smith	1960
	W. Bro. Robert L. Clemens	1962
	W. Bro. Wilfred C. Garratt	1964-1965
	W. Bro. Joseph R. Barnett	1966
	W. Bro. Kenneth E. Nadalin	1968
	W. Bro. T. James Boniface	1969
	W. Bro. Malcolm W. Branscombe	1970
	W. Bro. Maxwell W. Pettit	1971
Rt.	W. Bro. Joel C. Piper	1972
	W. Bro. Robert A. Collins	1974
V.	W. Bro. Stewart L. Thurtell	1975
	W. Bro. Russell B. Piper	1976-1977
	W. Bro. Wayne E. Kaake	1978
	W. Bro. Edward G. T. van Rees	1979
	W. Bro. Kenneth A. Legacy	1980
	W. Bro. James F. Vyse	1981
V.	W. Bro. Thomas R. Parker, Q.C.	1982
	W. Bro. Robert J. Welt	1983
	W. Bro. Thomas C. Bertrand	1984
	W. Bro. Gregory F. Clemens	1985
	W. Bro. Kenneth L. Riley	1986
Rt.	W. Bro. Douglas R. Bender	1987
	W. Bro. John L. Savage	1988
	W. Bro. O. Roy Knott	1989
	W. Bro. Dennis M. Feick	1990
	W. Bro. Lawrence E. Pye	1991
	W. Bro. Donald R. Rumble	1992
	* W. Bro. Jordan R. Bowcott	
	* W. Bro. Chas. D. McDougall	
	* W. Bro. Edward E. Nadalin	
	* W. Bro. Gordon A. Titus	
	Rt. W. Bro. Fred M. Smith (Hon)	
	Rt .W. Bro. Lloyd L. Miles (Hon)	
*	King Hiram Member, a Past Master of another Lodge	

The Unique Story of King Hiram Lodge No. 37, A.F. & A.M., G.R.C.
The pioneer lodge born of the original settlement of Upper Canada

GENESIS - THE ARRIVALS

In the early spring of 1793, Major Thomas Ingersoll set out on his first journey from Niagara to Oxford. Ingersoll, an American from Massachusetts, as a friend of Captain Joseph Brant (Chief Thayendenaga of the Mohawks) was led on ancient Indian trails through the dense forests, guided by Mohawk warriors. At last, Ingersoll could inspect the lands of the 64,000 acre Crown grant he had agreed to populate with settlers in that part of Upper Canada named Oxford.

Ingersoll served the cause of the rebels in the American Revolution, yet he became disenchanted with the punitive laws passed in the New England states which effectively discriminated against and disenfranchised those American colonials who had supported the Crown during the revolution. Ingersoll had great sympathy for those who remained loyal to the Crown, including some of his own family. He admired those courageous Loyalists who chose exile from their long-settled homes and kin, and whose property was confiscated by the victorious rebels. Almost destitute, many had little choice but to emigrate to the remaining British Colonies in North America.

Ingersoll was a life-long personal friend of Colonel John Graves Simcoe, the recently appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada. Governor Simcoe encouraged many of his former rebel friends to come to Upper Canada, and offered attractive Crown grants to those capable immigrants whose wealth and prestige could support and attract suitable settlers for large tracts of Crown Lands now open for settlement and development. Major Ingersoll was one of these.

Ingersoll came to Upper Canada with his family in 1783, taking the oath of allegiance to the Crown as he crossed the frontier at Niagara. Ingersoll first lived in Niagara, at Queenstown (Queenston) where he operated a tavern, until he was granted lands to be settled. Ingersoll's oldest child, Laura, a daughter by his first wife, with her husband, Loyalist sergeant James Secord, travelled in company with her father's family, taking up lands awarded to Secord for his loyalty. They settled a few miles from the Niagara River, near Lundy's Lane.

Ingersoll set about organizing settlers to establish a successful community once his grant was approved. Early in 1793 the Crown grant was awarded, so Major Ingersoll had to choose the site for his settlement. Guided by friendly Mohawk Indians, Ingersoll was led through the dense forests and difficult trails for about 100 miles, to the banks of the Thames River (riviere la tranche), an area called Oxford-on-the-Thames. The grant was for 64,000 acres, one hundred square miles, given on condition the area would be settled within ten years.

In this wilderness, Ingersoll chose wisely. His choice was a place in the river valley where the Thames flows across a broad alluvial plain between heavily wooded hills, an area where there were eight tributary creeks flowing into the river. These creeks, dammed, could provide water-power for grist, flour and saw mills, the only alternative to human or animal power in the 18th century. This locality of Oxford-upon-the-Thames was more than a townsite, as it included most of the central part of the present Oxford County. Within a couple of years settlement began in earnest, bringing a variety of settlers.

Those recent arrivals included a number of professions and trades, of ambitious and willing refugees from America, anxious to create the beginnings of local agriculture, commerce and industry, even though they would be starting again as pioneers in a harsh land.

MASONIC BEGINNINGS - THE FIRST GRAND LODGE

Major Ingersoll was made a Freemason in his birthplace in Massachusetts. He affiliated as a member of St. John's Lodge of Friendship No. 2 at Niagara, a lodge which still continues as Niagara Lodge No. 2, G. R. C. at Niagara-on-the-Lake, the premier lodge in the Province of Ontario today. Ingersoll was the father, by his first wife, of the notable heroine, Laura (Ingersoll) Secord of War of 1812 fame. Laura was the wife of his friend and son-in-law, James Secord, also a mason and a member of the same lodge. On occasion, St. John's Lodge met at Ingersoll's Tavern, at Queenstown when the family lived in the Niagara area.

The first settler here, Thomas Ingersoll was a Freemason. Thus it is not surprising to find the successful development of his settlement brought other masons to share that success. The hamlet prospered and grew, for in only ten years there were sufficient Freemasons in the community to create the very first masonic lodge in this part of the country. Thus the success of the settlement, and the success of the lodge which became King Hiram Lodge, are forever intertwined.

The story of our venerable and historic old lodge begins in the wilderness, among swamps and forests and hills, where wild creatures shared the land with the noble and loyal but untamed Indian warriors and the few Europeans who dared to face the dangers, hardships and toil of building a home in a harsh new and remote country.

Many of the new arrivals were masons of varying origins and allegiances, anxious to continue in the Craft they held dear. The more ardent ones gathered together in this new centre of commerce, here at Oxford, and petitioned for a warrant. The sum of "two guineas" was forwarded to the Provincial Grand Lodge, of the "Atholl" Grand Lodge of England (Ancients), at Niagara. The warrant was granted by Grand Master Forsyth on April 12th, 1803, and numbered as Lodge No. 21 on the register of the Provincial Grand Lodge.

It is unlikely the masons assembled for the institution of the new lodge were aware the Provincial Grand Lodge at Niagara was "irregular," with the new lodge as the first of several to be instituted under these auspices. It is beyond the scope of this narrative to delve into the confused and complicated manoeuvrings involved, except to state that ultimately this irregularity was healed.

The new Lodge was instituted on the Feast of St. John the Baptist, on Friday June 24th 1803, and was held in the cabin of Bro. Robert Sweet, just south of the river, on the east side of the now Thames Street, which at the time was an ancient Indian trail, a ford crossing the river. It was a traditional and historic native trade route between Niagara and Lake Huron, and a branch to the north from the Niagara-Detroit trail. This was the route of the Iroquois Confederacy tribes to their main source of weapon flints from the Neutral Indians, (Chippewas?) at Stony Point, on the Lake Huron shore.

The beautifully hand-written minutes of the first meeting still exist, a prized possession carefully preserved in the archives of the Lodge. They read as follows:

"1803 - 24th June. Grand Lodge opened at Oxford at 11 o'clock, by virtue of a dispensation from the Grand Master, dated April 12th, 1803. Proceeded to install Bro. James Burdick, Master; Enoch Burdick, Senior Warden; Samuel Canfield, Junior Warden; Grand Lodge closed at 1 o'clock, P.M."

"Master's Lodge opened at 2 o'clock, closed at 3 o'clock in good harmony."

The other members present were: Robert Sweet; Arial Tousley; Asakel Lewis, Joel Piper, and Harmon Laurence.

A visitor, Wor. Bro. William Sumner of Burford Lodge No. 11 was appointed as Secretary, Pro Tempore, for the opening of the "Grand Lodge."

The installation was conducted by Wor. Bros. Thomas Horner and D. Parmer of Burford No. 11, (The Lodge of the Mohawk Village). The other visitors were a Bro. Graham of Burford Lodge; Bros. I. Merrick and Caleb Stafford of Grimsby Lodge No. 15; and Bro. Sikes Townsley of New York Lodge No. 58, (an early pioneer settler here and later a Worshipful Master of the lodge).

The first candidate was Isaac Burdick, initiated on Tuesday July 5th 1803, with the fee for the "makings" of "eight dollars, New York money."

The early "Bye-Laws" inform us each visiting brother had to contribute one shilling for an ordinary meeting, but two shillings for the "Lodge of St. John," the semi-annual festivals which also included the elections to office, as the term of office in those days was for six months only. The regular meetings were held on "the first Tuesday of each month, next after the full moon" so the brethren would have the illumination of moonlight in their journeys to and from lodge over the forest trails and the wretched roads of the time.

The old by-laws make it clear human nature was not neglected as the Master appointed the Senior Warden: "but that the Master not have too much authority in this respect, the Senior Warden may appoint a Junior Warden." Another by-law provided: "Every member shall come into the lodge decently clothed and in such attire as is suitable to his rank, quality and condition of life, always remembering that he can never associate with better company than Brethren and Fellows," a statement which after 189 years is still valid.

The morals of the brethren were looked after in those days. Among other things, one of the rules stated, "If any brother became intoxicated in or out of the Lodge, he should be fined 8 shillings and sharply reprimanded by the Master." It was a custom of the times for each meeting, one brother would be responsible to pay for and supply the candles for illumination, while another was responsible to furnish "the liquors" for the refreshment of the brethren. It is curious to note the cost of the candles was generally greater than the cost of the locally made spirits.

The call for help and for fraternal charity was not neglected either, as one entry discloses, "two dollars were to be paid out of the Lodge funds to pay for a doctor for Bro. Robert Sweet."

There can be few lodges in Ontario with records as full and continuous and complete for one hundred and eighty-nine years; the old by-laws and proceedings having been compiled and securely bound, so they are safely preserved. The Lodge is justifiably proud to have these ancient and interesting records available to the members and to masons generally.

INVASION - THE WAR OF 1812

Fears were abroad in the land as American President James Madison pursued a policy leading to war with Britain while the British were preoccupied in the war against Napoleon in Europe. Madison was the leading "war-hawk" in America, and was looking for an excuse to invade and annex Canada at a time when the possibility of a weak British response seemed likely. The political pot was boiling between Britain and the United States; a minor incident was just the excuse needed! . . . and the war erupted!

The people of Upper Canada feared the worst, and so it is no surprise to read a motion recorded in the Lodge minutes of June 12th 1812 that: "Bro. David Curtis take charge of the regalia and working tools for safe-keeping until the War be over."

This precaution was prophetic, as an American force under General Duncan McArthur crossed the St. Clair River on September 26th 1814 with 750 mounted men and five field pieces in an attempt to outflank the beleaguered British-Canadian forces defending the Niagara frontier. McArthur was guided in his depredations by a blood-thirsty renegade, one Andrew Westbrook.

Westbrook, an American, had bought and operated the combined lumber and grist mills at Centreville from Wor. Bro. James Burdick, early in 1810. As the war loomed, his loyalty to the American cause sent him back across the border, where Westbrook offered his services to General McArthur as a scout and patrol leader, to be known as the notorious "Westbrook Raiders."

On his return here, Westbrook, with much local knowledge, guided the raiding-party to hunt down known militia-men, razing their homes and farms. He repaid the kindnesses of the George Nichols family by burning down their homestead and the Centreville mills on Tuesday October 4th. This was within a mile of where the regalia lay hidden.

The next day McArthur's force journeyed toward Burford. He destroyed everything which might be useful to the British, killed or disarmed and paroled the militia, threatening to hang any opponents, destroying farms, homes, mills and storehouses as he tried to move on Burlington Bay to encircle and outflank the defenders. When he was opposed and outnumbered by the loyal Indians of the Six Nations near Brantford, he began to withdraw back toward the border from whence he came, leaving devastation in his wake.

McArthur defeated the militia and a few British regulars in skirmishes in the Oakland-Waterford area, moving to Simcoe, Vittoria and the Lake Erie shore, ravaging the land as he went. Harassed by hidden Canadian sharpshooters and ambushes, McArthur retired toward the U.S. border by way of the Talbot Trail, St. Thomas and Chatham on his devastating way to the Detroit frontier to find safety across the river.

Wor. Bro. Major Sikes Townsley of the militia, an experienced old soldier, a member of the Lodge, distinguished himself in the battle at Malcolm's Mills near Waterford. Perhaps only a minor battle, which brought little success to the defenders, yet the devotion and stubbornness of the Canadians convinced McArthur that it was time to retreat. Bro. Townsley had also served at Fort Detroit with General Brock, at Fort Erie and at Lundy's Lane with some distinction.

THE BUILDING CONTINUES

After the War ended in 1815, the condition of the Craft in Upper Canada was shaky, as the Provincial Grand Lodge was very ineffective, and its parent, the English Grand Lodge seemed very indifferent to the needs of the Canadian masons. A strong feeling began to develop that somehow there ought to be a Canadian grand lodge. Sentiment stopped short of demanding complete independence, as decided at the Grand Masonic Convention held at Kingston, with Rt. Wor. Bro. Ziba M. Phillips as President, in the years from 1817 to 1822.

The Lodge minutes of Thursday, March 1st 1821 speak: "Grand Convention assembled at Bro. David Curtis' homestead in Oxford, and opened in the third degree of masonry. Proceed to the installation of the officers of King Hiram Lodge." This is the first reference to the name, King Hiram Lodge.

In 1822, Rt. Wor. Bro. Simon McGillivray arrived from England with a warrant as Provincial Grand Master of the recently combined United Grand Lodge of England (1813). The brethren were impressed by the zeal of McGillivray, as our minutes attest: "October 1st 1822 - voted that this lodge come under the Grand Lodge of York, and to acknowledge the government thereof to be legal."

McGillivray had interviewed our Bro. David Curtis, a delegate to the first meeting of the revived Grand Lodge, then issued a new dispensation confirming the Lodge was in every respect regular. Thus was healed the continuing question of the "irregularity" of the institution of the Lodge by the "schismatic" Provincial Grand Lodge of Niagara in 1803.

REGENERATION - THE SECOND GRAND LODGE

Later, the list of the United Grand Lodge of England showed, among the contributory lodges in Upper Canada, "No. 765, King Hiram Lodge, Oxford, Upper Canada", listed on the Provincial Grand Register as: "King Hiram Lodge No. 12, Provincial Grand Lodge of Upper Canada, English Register." The dispensation giving allegiance to the Provincial Grand Lodge at York was approved on Tuesday, August 10th 1824.

King Hiram Lodge prospered for some years. The Provincial Grand Master, McGillivray, was engaged in the fur trade, and in this endeavour he was the founder of the fur-trading post of Fort William, now Thunder Bay. With the constant travel demands of his work, McGillivray was unable to keep up his close contacts with the lodges. After the P. G. M.'s recall to England in 1825, there was no leader left to rule. The United Grand Lodge of England did not permit its provincial grand lodges to elect their own grand master, and were quite indifferent to the health of the Craft in Upper Canada. The Provincial Grand Lodge last met in 1829, leaderless and ineffective. Freemasonry faced severe challenges, as far too many lodges failed to survive.

The Canadian lodges were adrift, under pressure from the spillover of "anti-masonic" sentiment from the American "Morgan Affair," at a time the "reform" movement began to disrupt the political stability of the province. These two concurrent events directly affected our Order and King Hiram Lodge. The political upheaval began to increase in an attempt by the reformers to overthrow the corrupt and autocratic "Family Compact," the derisive name given to the self-seeking power-brokers in the Provincial capital at York, culminating in the Rebellion of 1837. Here, in Oxford, the effects of the rebellion were immediate; a danger to members of King Hiram Lodge.

REVOLT AND REFORM

From 1829 the Grand Lodge ceased its leadership, as King Hiram Lodge suffered in the turmoil, with no lodge meetings recorded between May 1831 and January 1835. Many masons were prominent in the reform movement, being considered suspect by the authorities. A leading citizen, Wor. Bro. Elisha Hall, Junior, an early pioneer and Lodge Master in 1856, was an ardent reformer and an active rebel. (Elisha Hall built the first brick house in Oxford, a house which still stands as 170 King Street East, the home of Mrs. James W. Fergusson).

After supporting "MacKenzie's Rebellion," Hall was under house arrest, guarded by a militia detachment. By a daring subterfuge he was able to escape and flee for his life to Michigan, where he remained until the amnesty was granted by Queen Victoria in 1841. Some of the rebels were hanged, many were transported as convicts to Australia, until finally the amnesty was granted, allowing the survivors to eventually return to their homes. Even though the rebellion fizzled, the result brought real reform, and eventually established responsible government in the country.

Between 1835 and 1851 there is no official record of Lodge activity. Yet there is a local tradition of sporadic meetings held during that era. Whispered talk is of the lodge records being either hidden or destroyed to protect masons who were either rebels or active reformers during the rebellion period and after, until the amnesty was declared. If so, such records are lost and we have no written records of this period. (Source: conversations with the late Rt. Wor. Bro. Harry Bower, author of much of this historical record).

INTERREGNUM - THE THIRD GRAND LODGE

Many concerned masons were casting about for ways to regenerate the Lodge, and approached the Grand Lodge of Ireland, then active in granting warrants to a number of lodges in Canada. A petition for a warrant was requested by a number of the local brethren, supported by St. John's Lodge No. 209, Irish Constitution, of London, now St. John's Lodge No. 209-A, G.R.C. The warrant was granted on Saturday, August 30th 1851, as "King Hiram Lodge No. 226, Irish Constitution," with Wor. Bro. David Curtis as the first Worshipful Master.

It soon became apparent the Grand Lodge of Ireland also had a communication problem with their Canadian lodges. Among many of these lodges there was a growing sentiment for an independent Canadian grand lodge. In May 1854 a stillborn attempt was made by a number of the Irish lodges, including King Hiram, to establish another provincial grand lodge in a meeting held at London.

INDEPENDENCE - THE FOURTH GRAND LODGE

The indifference and neglect of the various British grand lodges had kept the pot boiling for a great many years. In 1844, the United Grand Lodge of England had appointed Sir Allan MacNab of Hamilton as Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Canada West, E.R., even though MacNab had only just become a Master Mason in 1842.

MacNab was a powerful political leader, and not very much interested in the Craft. Sir Allan attended his first meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge, where, to the consternation of those present, he produced his warrant as the Provincial Grand Master. Knowing MacNab's indifference, many masons began to scheme to create an indigenous grand lodge, independent and sovereign in Canada. This faction was led by Rt. Wor. Bro. Colonel William Mercer Wilson of Simcoe, a fellow lawyer, soldier and an old colleague of MacNab.

The Wilson supporters were unable to gain majorities in the meetings of the Provincial Grand Lodge to answer the demands for Canadian control over the Craft. All appeals to England for help were unanswered. Finally, the frustrations gave rise to a demand for independence, culminating in a meeting called by Wilson at Hamilton, on October 10th 1855. Here, at last, courage and zeal, ably led by Wilson, brought the delegates to establish the Most Worshipful the Grand Lodge of Canada, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, Grand Register of Canada, as an independent grand lodge. Most Worshipful Brother William Mercer Wilson was elected as the first Grand Master.

Wilson was installed as Grand Master by the ruling Grand Master of Michigan, who immediately recognized the new Canadian Grand Lodge as regular and legitimate. A large number of lodges throughout Canada supported this effort, leaving a few lodges of the Provincial Grand Lodge of England and of the Grand Lodge of Ireland still loyal to their warrants. King Hiram was one of these hold-outs.

On Tuesday, March 4th 1856, four brethren withdrew from King Hiram Lodge No. 226, I.C., being Bros. John Galliford, G.A. Cameron, John Patterson and John Furzman. They petitioned the new Grand Lodge of Canada for a warrant, granted as St. John's Lodge No. 36, G.R.C., with Wor. Bro. John Galliford as the first worshipful master. The institution of the new Lodge and the installation of the officers was held in the Jarvis Hall Saturday, March 14th 1856, with the ceremonies conducted by Most Wor. Bro. Col. William Mercer Wilson, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada aided by his Grand Steward, Bro. T.B. Harris. Several members of King Hiram Lodge, being Bros. Bennett, Cameron, Hoyt, Doty, Evans, Blanchard, McDonald, Wonham and Garnet assisted in the installation. The minutes of King Hiram reveal their loan of the Lodge jewels and regalia to St. John's for the occasion.

The remaining King Hiram brethren believed the number of failed attempts having been made to form a sovereign grand lodge in years gone by gave no assurance of success this time either. They were loyal to their Irish warrant, deciding to wait and see what might befall.

One of William Mercer Wilson's most delightful virtues was his ability to reconcile differences of opinion, and to soothe ruffled feathers. His efforts were successful, and in 1858 he had convinced the reluctant ones, and so the former Provincial (Ancient) Grand Lodge

and many of the Irish lodges, including King Hiram Lodge, agreed to submit to the new grand lodge of Canada. Thus was born on July 14th 1858 the present Grand Lodge of Canada, A.F. & A.M., G.R.C.

King Hiram surrendered its Irish warrant, yet continued to work even before being granted its new Canadian warrant. The independent-minded King Hiram brethren borrowed the new St. John's Lodge warrant for the purpose, still displaying the old original warrant of 1803 in the lodge room, with the claim this would ensure the legality of the degrees conferred. (A questionable practice, apparently unchallenged).

In 1858, the Grand Lodge began a massive re-numbering program, King Hiram emerged as No. 37, and St. John's as No. 68, as they continue today.

STABILITY

Though the Grand Lodge of Canada was finally a reality, it was not universally recognized as a true grand lodge. By December, 1858 the United Grand Lodge of England reluctantly accepted the existence of an independent and sovereign grand lodge in Canada, and concluded an agreement which protected the few English Register lodges which remained and wished to continue as such. This agreement was a triumph for Grand Master William Mercer Wilson and the new Grand Lodge, for it forever established its legitimacy and regularity.

The new Canadian Grand Lodge brought several benefits to the lodges, including regional groupings of lodges, termed "Districts" by which the election of the District Deputy Grand Master as the direct representative of the Most Worshipful the Grand Master might extend the grand master's influence, and be able to guide and instruct the several lodges in their responsibilities to the Grand Lodge.

In 1859 it was decided "the work" to be followed by the lodges would be an English ritual, and must be used by all subscribing lodges. It became the duty of the DDGM's to teach and exemplify this form of ceremony, with great uniformity of presentation required. King Hiram Lodge conformed without dissent, and so the new "Canadian" ritual began. And today, our rites and ceremonies closely conform to the famous "Emulation Ritual," one of the several authorized rituals currently in use in England.

But in 1859 some of the brethren were upset by the ritual change; and we can feel some sympathy for those brethren, saddened at the passing of their time-honoured practices, which were, perforce, discarded.

We have no clear idea of the rituals followed by King Hiram Lodge over its first 56 years, as it was generally the custom in those days for all ritual to be given entirely by word-of-mouth. There may have been some sort of "monitors" available to senior brethren as guides to "the work," but we are not sure if such guides were used, and if so, whether they were official or not.

Masonic scholars are still trying to assemble the details of the "old rituals," as followed under the earlier grand lodges. It will be of great interest to present-day masons if such a difficult masonic research challenge should succeed in revealing the details of this "ancient" ritual.

While we are aware of, and continue to honor the ancient landmarks and the old constitutions, we have little specific detail on the "rubrics" or mechanics of conducting the various degrees in the earlier years. The minute books and other records of the Lodge are totally mute regarding the details and "particulars" of the actual rites and ceremonies followed, for, in the name of secrecy, nothing could be revealed or written, as practiced in lodges of the time. Now, we can only speculate on the exact details.

THE JURISDICTION DEFINED

The proclamation of Confederation on Monday, July 1st 1867 created the Dominion of Canada, with four provinces, being the colonies renamed as Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Among masons there began a long series of arguments and controversy, culminating in the defection from our grand lodge by many of those lodges resident in that part of the former province of "Canada East" now politically separated as the Province of Quebec.

The dissidents formed a new, and to them, a sovereign grand lodge, which was self-styled as: "The Grand Lodge of Quebec" in the new province. There was certainly justice involved in their cause, finally resolved in good faith and joy on both sides. In 1874 harmony was established between the "Grand Lodge of Canada, in the Province of Ontario," and the newly spun-off "Grand Lodge of Quebec." So these were the final steps in establishing our grand lodge very much as we have it today. A remarkable achievement in a relatively short span of time.

Rejoicing greatly, the hurdles of distance, indifference and neglect had been overcome. Now, at last, the Craft could develop in stability, and look forward to growth and prosperity.

PROGRESS

Despite the advent of St. John's Lodge in 1856 under the new grand lodge, the brethren of King Hiram maintained their allegiance to the Grand Lodge of Ireland. Yet, King Hiram extended its charity to the new lodge, by allowing St. John's to use their facilities and regalia until the new lodge could provide for itself. The first Worshipful Master of St. John's Lodge was Wor. Bro. John Galliford who had been master of King Hiram between June 1853 and mid-1854. It is pleasant to confirm while each lodge was faithful to a different grand lodge, they both were willing to give mutual support to each other in favour of their Fraternity, despite taking different routes.

King Hiram Lodge was very active after 1859, as men continued to seek "the light" of our Order. Now, under slightly different rules, with annual elections held in December and installations in late December or early January, one year terms of office became the norm. The brethren enjoyed their lodge until Tuesday, May 7th 1872, when a fire gutted the lodge rooms, and some of the very old regalia was lost forever, although the warrant was saved as were most of the old records.

For the next year, the lodge met in the dining room of the Royal Exchange Hotel until King Hiram and St. John's arranged for a new masonic hall on the third floor of a building on the east side of Thames Street, meeting there the first time in February 1873. This was the masonic home for the next 83 years, and was dedicated by the Grand Master, William Mercer Wilson, on Thursday, October 30th 1874.

Reference to the lodge minutes shows many of the visiting masons were called on to assume a chair for the evening, and so, even now, representatives of many of those same lodges which attended in the 1870's and 1880's are still being welcomed into King Hiram Lodge. As always, masonic works of charity were performed during this time, . . . seemingly it was not uncommon for mothers in distress to write the lodge for assistance, which was sometimes granted. It is not too clear, but it appears that such relief and help was often granted to applicants who had no direct masonic connection.

CENTENNIAL - THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS

The year 1903 marked the end of the South African War, the first overseas war in which Canadian troops were involved as military units, and a relief to all Canadians when it was over. Perhaps this was a factor in the failure of the Lodge to organize special observances of the 100th Anniversary Year of the Lodge. Subsequently, Grand Lodge honored 100 year-old lodges, authorizing gold braid on regalia with gold fringe on the apron. King Hiram is one of a very few old lodges preserving the gold fringe, as a mark of distinction.

Sometime later, the Grand Lodge made a ruling to forbid fringe on non-grand lodge regalia. The then Grand Secretary took it upon himself to challenge those lodges to which this distinction had been granted, persuading many to remove the fringe from their aprons. But when this rather self-important autocrat tried to coerce King Hiram, . . . he was informed, "as Grand Lodge granted it, only Grand Lodge can take it away, . . . and the Grand Secretary is NOT Grand Lodge!" Now there are only a handful of lodges, King Hiram included, honoured by this mark of antiquity. King Hiram wears our fringed apron with great pride. When visiting in other lodges in this grand jurisdiction, King Hiram brethren respond to questioning "busy-bodies" in a similar vein. Let each King Hiram brother remember and honour this unique tangible symbol of our long and glorious history.

TRAGEDY

The Lodge prospered until the tragedy of the First World War claimed so many of Canada's finest young men, among them friends, family and brethren. After 1918, again there was a season of growth, until the economy was shattered by the great depression. Many men found themselves unable to afford even the rather modest dues of the times. Often a brother would offer produce to pay his dues in lieu of cash, in order to maintain his good standing. Sadly, in too many cases, brethren would feel it necessary to ask for their demit. The records speak of many attempts made to support brethren who had fallen on hard times, and in King Hiram, few members were lost in this time of national disaster. But just as economic conditions began to improve, a new calamity struck. In September 1939, World War II began.

The Lodge again faced the tragedy of war, - many masons offering their services in the defence of Canada. Too many of them were lost forever. But, with victory came petitioners to the Craft from many young men, including war veterans. Many veterans had gone into the military services at a younger age than 21 years, the minimum age to become masons. In any case, the ranks of our Order grew considerably, and King Hiram was no exception.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

The immediate post-war period saw great growth well on into the 1950's. The Feast of St. John the Baptist, held Friday, June 26th 1953, King Hiram Lodge No. 37 celebrated the 150th Anniversary of its beginnings, with much good-fellowship, and conferred a Third Degree by candle-light. Bro. Walter H. Burton was raised to the degree of a Master Mason. When the Worshipful Master called for the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting, Wor. Bro. Walter F. Winlaw read from the original minutes of the first meeting of 1803. The lodge officers, as costumed performers, worked the degree to a packed lodge room and great applause. A memorable and very fine masonic evening.

DISASTER REDEEMED

Only three years later, disaster struck! . . . it was Friday, November 23rd 1956 when the Masonic Temple was destroyed by fire! Thus was lost our masonic home since 1873, and the treasures gathered over those 83 eventful years were lost. Included in the loss was the original warrant of 1803, of which only a photograph remains; also the wonderful murals which adorned the East and the two wardens' chairs, together with several other unique masonic paintings which were a delight to all who saw them. A few minor items were salvaged, but fortunately, the old records and minute books were safe in a bank vault; many mementos, photographs and memorabilia were lost. Among the treasures lost were the beautiful and reverent memorial tablets erected in the lodge room in honour of those brethren of the Lodge whose lives were lost in the two World Wars.

The rubble sold, a joint committee was formed with St. John's Lodge and eventually a new Masonic Temple was built a block south of the old site. After meeting in the Odd Fellows Hall for nearly three years, courtesy of Samaritan Lodge No. 35, I.O.O.F., the brethren of King Hiram and St. John's rejoiced in being able to again meet in their own new and modern lodge room in the new Temple, dedicated by the Grand Master, Most Wor. Bro. Clarence M. Pitts and his Grand Lodge Officers on Thursday, March 31st, 1960. The Worshipful Masters of the two Lodges, W. Bro. Ivan Smith of King Hiram, and W. Bro. George Beavis of St. John's welcomed some four hundred masons, who enjoyed a magnificent dinner in a nearby church before proceeding to the dedication of the lodge rooms. An occasion of great rejoicing and celebration.

The great effort of the brethren of both Lodges to design, build and dedicate the new Masonic Temple had created a wonderful group effort, involving a great many masons. Members of both Lodges bought non-interest bearing certificates, mostly in \$ 100.00 denomination, to provide funds for the construction. Also, there were many fund-raising events, including bingos and draws organized under the "composite club," a support group of dedicated masons.

The new building was opened under dispensation in late 1959 and was dedicated the following spring. The new building was valued a bit over \$ 60,000, but finances required very little outside borrowing necessary, . . a tribute to the resolution and effort of the local masons.

During the development stages there were plenty of problems to be solved, not the least of which was the perversity of the human kind. And unfortunately, it is even true masons are not immune from such lapses from the ideals of fraternity and brotherhood. Even so, a very fine building was built by the fruits of their labours. A great success we will enjoy for decades to come.

ECHOES OF THE PAST

On Wednesday, June 24th 1964 a rather unique event was set in motion within the Lodge, one that can never be duplicated. A petitioner for initiation had unknowingly caught the eye of some of the more historically-minded brethren, who realized this was an opportunity for a different sort of masonic event; a dispensation was sought to convene the Lodge in an emergent meeting on this special date. A past masters degree team was organized with V. W. Bro. Thomas E. Jackson in the Chair to confer the degree, with special invitations to many distinguished masons, including Rt. Wor. Bro. Dr. James J. Talman, Professor of History Emeritus and Chief Librarian of the University of Western Ontario as a guest speaker.

On this date, a namesake great-great-great-grandson of one of our original members from 1803 was initiated exactly 161 years to the day after the Lodge was instituted, with Mr. Joel Charles Piper as the candidate.

The candidate had no foreknowledge of the significance of this day, but it is very certain he can never ever forget it. A foretaste, perhaps, of the good service this young man would later render to his "mother Lodge." A marvelous evening of fine degree work, followed by an inspiring address on masonic history in general, and this Lodge in particular by our Bro. Talman. A crowded lodge room echoed the appreciation of the brethren for a wonderful evening.

SHOALS AHEAD

In the mid-sixties, an unfortunate incident occurred, involving a senior officer of the lodge whose indiscretion outside the lodge offended the sensibilities of those masons aware of this lapse from grace. Under non-masonic terms, this was a very minor error indeed. It is to the eternal credit of the past masters and the lodge for the discreet means used to prevent it from becoming common knowledge and a slur on the integrity of the lodge. The offending officer quietly resigned his office, keeping his own counsel, sparing the lodge from further action.

We can now view this episode as something of a "tempest-in-a-teapot." It is a warning for us to guard our values from dangers inside or outside the Craft. The cost of losing a talented mason over a moment of self-indulgence was a high a price to pay. Yet failure to act might have been even more costly. We can take pride in King Hiram wisely solving a problem with low-key tact.

THE "OTHER" KING HIRAM LODGES

In late 1975 the Lodge was pleased to welcome brethren from King Hiram Lodge No. 566 of Toronto District No. 1. Wor. Bros. Douglas Kellman and Lou Crocker arrived unexpectedly on a fraternal visit, to the delight of our brethren. From this modest beginning, a continuing relationship has been established, and together with King Hiram Lodge No. 78 of Tillsonburg, the three lodges who share our name, we have made regular visitations among us over the ensuing years. The "friendship gavel," given by Wor. Bro. Stew Thurtell the 1975 Master, has been carried from King Hiram Lodge to King Hiram Lodge and formally delivered on fraternal visits between the three lodges on a regular basis ever since. A delightful tradition, celebrating our enduring masonic friendships.

TRIUMPH

In anticipation of the 175th Anniversary of the Lodge, the brethren felt such a milestone ought to be celebrated with great flair. Thus, in 1974 a "planning committee" was appointed, with a distinguished past master selected to run for the office of District Deputy Grand Master of Wilson District during the year of celebration. Thus, Wor. Bro. Joel Piper, namesake of his grandsire and a founding member of the Lodge in 1803, was nominated at Grand Lodge 1977, and was successful in being elected to this high and important office. Joel Piper was the first D.D.G.M. of the Lodge in 30 years, the last being our late brother, Rt. Wor. Bro. Harry T. Bower, our District Deputy in 1947.

The celebration began on Saturday, June 24th 1978, one hundred and seventy-five years to the DAY after the institution of the Lodge. Shortly after lunch, a number of distinguished brethren were present, including those from our sister King Hiram Lodge No. 566 of Toronto. The Worshipful Master, Wor. Bro. Wayne Kaake welcomed the distinguished visitors after he opened the Lodge in the First Degree. In a moving ceremony, a plaque was unveiled to the memory of the founding members of the Lodge. The four members of the Piper family who made the presentation of the beautiful bronze tablet were all great-great-great-grandsons of the original Joel Piper, a founding member. It was most fitting for this generation of the Piper family, brothers Joel and David with cousin Russell and cousin Ralph to continue the long-standing family tradition as present members of King Hiram, to do honour to our founders and to their ancestor in this way.

Following this dedication, the anniversary committee presented a beautifully framed new Third Degree Tracing Board to the Lodge, and a framed photograph of the "original warrant of 1803."

A short memorial service was led by the Lodge Chaplain, Wor. Bro. Edward Johnson, aided by the District Chaplain Wor. Bro. Joseph Barnett, a member of the Lodge. The Lodge closed in harmony and the brethren retired to the churchyard of the West Oxford United Church, a couple of miles east of the Town, where lie the mortal remains of Bro. Joel Piper, one of our founding members. In the lovely setting of the oldest (1804) continuing church congregation in the County of Oxford, our Bro. Piper's grave was decorated by the family members, and by the Wor. Master of the Lodge. A prayer of thanksgiving was followed by a beautiful lament played by Wor. Bro. Pipe Major Robert Collins, a member of the Lodge. The visiting brethren were much taken by the beautiful setting and the quiet emotion of the moment.

Later in the day, a Wilson District Reception and Banquet was held in the Ingersoll District Collegiate Institute in celebration of our 175th anniversary and in honour of Most Worshipful Brother Robert E. Davies, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada, A.F. & A.M., in the Province of Ontario. Each person received a complimentary souvenir glass displaying the Lodge badge, and the souvenir program. The published program included the menu of a most delicious and sumptuous repast, and included an outline of the Lodge history.

The program cover included a photo-copy of the hand-written minutes of the first Lodge meeting of 1803, and the recently adopted Lodge Badge published on the cover for the first time. Welcoming the many visitors from the Grand Lodge, from across the District and beyond were Wor. Bro Wayne Kaake, Worshipful Master on behalf of the Lodge and Rt. Wor. Bro. Joel Piper, District Deputy Grand Master on behalf of Wilson District. In all, some three hundred-and-fifty masons enjoyed the celebration and the gracious words of our Grand Master. A most memorable occasion, long remembered and cherished by all who attended.

MUTUAL EFFORT

The progress of masonry has rarely been smooth. Constantly, new challenges have had to be met. From a simple "board of trustees" originally organized for the new temple, the management has been upgraded, and since 1976 has been managed by The Ingersoll Masonic Temple Corporation, a no-share-capital non-profit corporation, as approved by Grand Lodge and authorized by Letters Patent from the Province of Ontario. The Corporation owns the temple, but the corporation is owned by the members in good-standing of King Hiram Lodge and St. John's Lodge. The two lodges share equally in providing the directors of the Corporation.

Realty taxes continued to increase alarmingly. It was recognized our temple was assessed as "commercial", which the building most definitely is not! The directors were concerned about the high "temple assessment," thinking there ought to be a way to get the assessment to be more realistic. The continuing and consistent willingness of the Temple Board to pursue this question, after several frustrating years of effort, was finally brought to a very successful conclusion. For it resulted in a personal directive from the Provincial Minister, as a "political" ruling, at our behest, to require the Provincial Assessment Commission to change their definition from commercial assessment to residential, resulting in significantly lower taxes.

This achievement here in Ingersoll initiated the same benefit for every masonic temple in Ontario. No small victory, when the grand lodge committee on lodge assessment were unable to produce results. Which again proves the value of personal commitment.

And, with initiatives from this and other temple managers across this grand jurisdiction, the Grand Lodge in 1983 amended the Grand Lodge Constitution to alter its rules on the use of Craft lodge rooms by other bodies. Thus, in 1984, Avalon Chapter No. 220 of the Order of the Eastern Star has joined Harris Chapter No. 41 of the Royal Arch Masons in permission to use the lodge room for their rites and ceremonies. Not to mention the increased revenue and support this has generated for the mutual benefit of all the tenant bodies.

In support of the Temple, led by the Temple Board, the brethren of both lodges have taken over the former Ingersoll Shriners' event, the annual beef barbeque and dance, as a fund-raiser for the masonic temple, held in Thamesford until 1990, and in 1991 the venue was again changed to the Mount Elgin Community Centre. A very successful and rewarding project which raises useful extra revenue for the benefit of all. It is a large project, to be sure, but one which expresses great fraternity and is a lot of fun for those who organize, serve or attend. It provided funds for installation of all-season airconditioning installed in 1991 for the comfort of our members.

June 4th 1991 saw another disastrous fire on the east-side of Thames Street. Two long-established furniture stores were burned to the ground. Firefighters from several area communities kept total loss to these two premises, yet buildings to the south were heavily damaged and unsafe. We have been pleased to offer the use of our building to Samaritan Lodge. No.35, I.O.O.F. in recognition of the generosity of the Odd Fellows when our building was destroyed by fire in 1956. It is recognition of mutual support and respect between fraternities.

KING HIRAM'S DAUGHTERS

In its long history, King Hiram Lodge has made a mark in the Craft in other places. In 1881 a number of brethren from both King Hiram Lodge No. 37 and St. John's Lodge No.68 living in or near to the nearby village of Thamesford withdrew with the blessings of their respective lodges, then petitioned Grand Lodge for a dispensation to form a new lodge there. This was granted, with the new lodge warranted as King Solomon's Lodge No. 394.

In 1924 a number of King Hiram brethren became charter members of the new "baby" lodge of Wilson District, warranted as Dereham Lodge No. 624 of Mount Elgin. Our eminent brother, Rt. Wor. Bro. Harry Bower served as the first Worshipful Master.

In 1974, the 50th anniversary of Dereham Lodge, their proud parent King Hiram was pleased to present a new set of deacons and stewards wands to its daughter lodge. As an expression of regard, we presented an Honourary Life Membership in King Hiram to Rt. Wor. Bro. Lloyd Miles of Dereham, the D.D.G.M. of Wilson District, 1974, in honour of Dereham's fifty years of masonic service. Bro. Miles was pleased.

DESIGNS FOR THE FUTURE

New directions are planned by Grand Lodge. Some will cause a bit of pain to those who resist change. For the brethren of King Hiram Lodge, our own chequered history convinces us to appreciate a Grand Lodge which is progressive and sincerely trying to initiate programs for the better government of the Craft in Ontario.

In July 1990, the venerable Wilson District was split in two, as Wilson South and Wilson North, with Highway 401 (the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway) the dividing line. Wilson North District was cre-

ated with Tavistock Lodge No. 609 added from South Huron District to equalize the number of lodges at 12 in each of the newly created districts. Rt. Wor. Bro. J. Donald Pattinson of Woodstock was elected first D.D.G.M. of Wilson North, and Rt. Wor. Bro. Norris W. Lennox, Jarvis, elected as first D.D.G.M. of Wilson South.

At Grand Lodge 1991, King Hiram rejoiced in the election of our eminent past master, Rt. Wor. Bro. Douglas R. Bender as the second District Deputy Grand Master in Wilson North District. Bro. Bender has been very active within King Hiram and in the Past Masters and Wardens Association of the combined Wilson District, where his election was warmly greeted by the brethren. Bro. Bender will likely be our last DDGM until our 200th anniversary in 2003.

Yes, King Hiram has seen a number of situations where the powers of the grand ruling body were seemingly wasted on trifles, at a time when strong leadership might have been appropriate. We, of all lodges, have been aware until just a few years ago, our grand lodge was, in a sense, far away. Much of its efforts were on ritual, at a time the lodges were having difficult times, needing firm guidance in lodge management, finance and organization help.

Fortunately, only a few grand masters have been guilty of failing to "leave footprints in the sands of time!" There are good men among the senior masons in Grand Lodge who have taken an objective look at our Craft, and have decided serious reform is long overdue. With much study, the time for positive action has come.

The Grand Lodge agenda offers us a number of clues to the direction the Craft will follow:

- 1) the Grand Lodge offices have packed away their "quill pen and green eyeshade," and installed a suitable computer!
- 2) masonic charity has been upgraded by new initiatives; to make the charitable Masonic Foundation much more relevant to society and appealing to masons to give more than lip service to the word "charity!"
- 3) new masonic education materials of books, pamphlets, video tapes, seminars, workshops, a correspondence course in masonic lore, all supported by active committees to provide dedicated expertise in almost every phase of lodge operations;
- 4) new and more accessible communication materials, making the function of the Grand Lodge and its interests available to, and in support of the ordinary brethren in the several lodges;
- 5) a massive program of re-structuring the districts, by adding more districts, and by limiting the number of lodges in any district to a maximum of 15 lodges. This will make election to high office more accessible and much fairer, and reduce the distances and time in the administration of the districts;
- 6) a more open and visible Masonic Order, with public relations considerations of great importance for future progress;
- 7) a plan to secure the cooperation of the lodges to change their "masonic year" to coincide with the Grand Lodge year, and to have all installations in the late spring. Thus all reporting between the lodges and the grand lodge will cover the same time periods. There are economies to be derived by having all financial years coincide, as well as to improve communications;
- 8) a significant move away from self-congratulatory and non-controversial "pabulum" speeches by senior masons, and a more aggressive and positive approach to solving problems.

AFTERMATH

If King Hiram Lodge is true to its own traditions and history, these initiatives will be welcomed and given expression in positive and progressive support of the vision now before us. We have now seen the first fruits of this policy, as venerable Wilson District has been divided (1990) into Wilson North and Wilson South districts of twelve lodges each. So, again, King Hiram is involved in change, one of the first areas of the province to welcome this evidence of growth and progress in the Craft.

King Hiram Lodge, with its 189 years of history, is yet ever new, generation after generation. Initiative and progress are no less active sentiments in the computer age than in the wilderness of Upper Canada, almost two centuries ago.

When we understand and appreciate our incredible history, we can look at our present problems much more objectively, and realize there are solutions! Nothing we may face in the future can be in any way as tough as faced by our ancient brethren. Therefore we can, like them, win through! With pride in our Past! Hope in our Future! Friendship in our Hearts!

Bravo, King Hiram Lodge No. 37!

A REMINDER

The year 1993 will mark the 200th anniversary of Major Thomas Ingersoll coming to Oxford-on-the-Thames, as well as the provincial recognition of the original settlement of the then Upper Canada. It is expected the Government of Ontario will organize bi-centennial celebrations across the province to recognize this milestone.

Thomas Ingersoll was one of the first organizers of settlement in Southwestern Ontario, and we of King Hiram Lodge can take pride in our origins as one of the very few continuing organizations in the province whose beginnings were directly connected with this first settlement. Therefore, the brethren of the lodge could very well join with the community of Ingersoll in celebration of these ancient origins.

No other organization can make our claim as the oldest continuing fraternity or society in Southwestern Ontario. Our community and the public generally should be aware of King Hiram Lodge as an important social and moral force for good, in this vicinity since 1803.

December 15th 1991

Compiled, edited and written by:
Stewart L. Thurtell, P.G.S.
Lodge Historian

AUTHOR'S NOTES

1) This narrative has been written with a lot of detail, as desirable to inform the brethren of the intricate windings in the story of our venerable old Lodge. Perhaps even our youngest Entered Apprentice may be inspired by the glorious traditions we have inherited from our ancient brethren. It tells of the struggle of our brethren to maintain the Lodge, even in tough times. As inheritors of its values, we know our bounden duty is to transmit our Lodge to succeeding generations. Again, this story, begun in the wilderness, proves all difficulties are really challenges and victories to be won!

2) Our community was originally called Oxford-upon-the-Thames, being given the unofficial name of Ingersoll early in the 1820's, in honour of Charles Ingersoll. Charles was a son of the founder, the elder of two sons of Bro. Thomas Ingersoll's third wife, Sarah (Whiting). Charles Ingersoll was a very eminent citizen, widely respected and honoured in his short lifetime, felled, a victim of the dread cholera in the fall of 1832. His memorial was assured when his name was given to the community he served, officially recognized when the Village of Ingersoll was incorporated in 1852.

3) The notable mason, Wor. Bro. David Curtis was an early pioneer in Oxford, arriving here in 1802, taking up land, Lot 12, Con. 1 (the Old Stage Road - King Street East) of the later West Oxford Township. He was a Captain in the loyal army during the American Revolution and in the local militia here in Oxford. His brother, Hull Curtis settled on Lot 11, a lot beside that of David. In 1850 David Curtis was Clerk of West Oxford Township, and in 1856 was a trustee of the Baptist Church at Piper's Corners.

As Captain Curtis, Upper Canada militia, he was captured by the "Westbrook Raiders" in 1814, surviving the experience as a prisoner of the Americans. He was also a well-known reformer, and was a "rebel" in the Rebellion of 1837, but was able to avoid capture, and remained "under cover" until the amnesty was granted in 1841.

Bro. Curtis was a delegate to the Masonic Convention, held at York by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Upper Canada under Provincial Grand Master Simon McGillivray, as the Lodge agreed on October 1st 1822 to pay his expenses of 2 pounds, 13 Shillings. Curtis was successful in convincing the newly re-born Provincial Grand Lodge to issue a dispensation declaring King Hiram as legitimate and regular. No small achievement.

An early member of the Lodge, Bro. David Curtis was elected eleven times (equal to 7 years) as Wor. Master of the Lodge. He was first installed December 1808 as Worshipful Master of Lodge No. 21, Provincial Register Upper Canada, Ancient (Atholl) Grand Lodge of England. He was installed in June 1827 as Worshipful Master of King Hiram Lodge No. 12, Provincial Grand Lodge of Upper Canada, of the United Grand Lodge of England. David was the first Wor. Master of King Hiram Lodge No. 226, Irish Constitution, installed in August 1851. He was a member of the lodge when it became King Hiram Lodge No. 37 of the Grand Lodge of Canada, A.F. & A.M., G.R.C. in 1858. Thus our brother faithfully served all four grand lodges in our history, - and was over 50 years a past master. A remarkable masonic career in the service of King Hiram Lodge and the Masonic Craft.

4) The Piper family has been very frequently mentioned in this narrative, the only directly connected family remaining from the first day back in 1803, . . . and still continues. Rt. Wor. Bro. Joel Piper was elected District Deputy Grand Master of Wilson District in 1977, as Wilson District honoured the 175th anniversary of the Lodge, celebrated in June 1978. At this writing, Bro. Joel retired last year as an appointed member of the Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes where he distinguished himself for five years, particularly on the Grand Lodge Long Range Planning Committee. He has also continued his responsibility in the Lodge by having been elected as Lodge Secretary for the fourth time, including 1992.

Wor. Bro. and cousin Russell Piper, twice Worshipful Master of the Lodge is still very active in the Lodge. He has delighted the brethren as he has added a seventh generation of the Piper clan, with the initiation of his two sons, Richard and Clifford, in 1987.

It is very rare to find a lodge with so many generations in direct connection. And for over 189 years the lodge and the family are alive and well. Here the great-great-great-great-grandsons are members where Brother Joel Piper, their ancestor, sat in this Lodge's first meeting on June 24th, 1803.

The brethren of King Hiram mourned the loss to this notable family and to the Lodge, on the tragic deaths of our Bro. Ralph Piper in October 1988, and of his cousin, Bro. David Piper who died in January 1989. They faced their fate with courage and trust. As just and upright men, . . . and masons.

5) The Lodge Seal of King Hiram Lodge, as is customary, was obtained to be embossed on all "official documents" of the Lodge, and is still being used for this purpose after some 130-odd years. It was purchased in 1858, as required to confirm official documents submitted to the new Grand Lodge, some nine years before Confederation. This was at the time this part of the country was styled as the province of "Canada West" with an impression of the imprint as shown here.

Not only is this a valuable historical memento, it is used today by the Lodge Secretary to certify all documents which may need to be authenticated, including all Membership Cards.

6) In 1992 we masons enjoy great opportunity, with pleasant and comfortable accomodation. Our Grand Lodge provides much guidance and fine supporting programs and policies for our benefit. But in faithful support of our Lodge and our Order, it is doubtful that we are in any way superior to our brethren of 1803 and the years after:

"We 'adn't good regalia,
An' our Lodge was old and bare;
But we knew the Ancient Landmarks,
An' we kep' 'em to a hair!"

from Rudyard Kipling's "The Mother Lodge, 1896"

Let their example be ever in our hearts.

SLT*

LIST OF WORSHIPFUL MASTERS FROM 1803 TO 1992,
with the Grand Lodges to which allegiance was given at the time.

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Upper Canada at Niagara was in a sense "irregular" when the Lodge was instituted in 1803, but was "healed" in 1822 under the revived Provincial Grand Lodge of Upper Canada, English Register, a province of the United Grand Lodge of England, under the appointed Provincial Grand Master, Rt. Wor. Bro. Simon McGillivray.

Lodge No. 21, Provincial Grand Lodge of Upper Canada,
"Atholl" Grand Lodge of England, (Ancients)

Names marked with a star (*) are original members

Name	When Installed	
W. Bro. James Burdick *	June 1803	
W. Bro. Enoch Burdick *	December 1803	
W. Bro. Samuel Canfield *	June 1804	
W. Bro. Harmon Laurence *	December 1804	See Note (a)
W. Bro. Robert Sweet *	December 1807	See Note (a)
W. Bro. David Curtis	December 1808	
W. Bro. Caleb Stafford *	June 1809	
W. Bro. David Curtis	December 1809	
W. Bro. Sikes Townsley*	June 1810	
W. Bro. Sikes Townsley	December 1810	
W. Bro. Sikes Townsley	December 1811	
W. Bro. David Curtis	June 1812	See Note (a)
W. Bro. David Curtis	June 1813	
W. Bro. Ichabod Hall	December 1813	
W. Bro. Elisha Hall	June 1814	
W. Bro. Calvin Martin	December 1814	
W. Bro. Calvin Martin	June 1815	
W. Bro. David Curtis	December 1815	
W. Bro. David Curtis	June 1816	
W. Bro. Calvin Martin	December 1816	
W. Bro. Calvin Martin	December 1817	
W. Bro. Archibald Burch	June 1818	
W. Bro. Archibald Burch	December 1818	
W. Bro. Gordon Merrick	June 1819	
W. Bro. Reuben Hambleton	December 1819	
W. Bro. Reuben Hambleton	June 1820	
W. Bro. Reuben Hambleton	December 1820, 1821	See Note (a)

Note (a): No Elections were held June & December 1805 & 1806,
June 1807, June 1808, December 1812, 1821 and 1822.

King Hiram Lodge No. 21, Provincial Grand Lodge of Upper Canada, E.R.
Name King Hiram Lodge was first recorded early in 1821.

King Hiram Lodge No. 12, Provincial Grand Lodge of Upper Canada and
listed as No.765, E.R., United Grand Lodge of England, 1822.

W. Bro. Reuben Hambleton.....	(Healed, October 1822)	See Note (a)
W. Bro. Reuben Hambleton.....	December 1823	
W. Bro. Solomon King	August 1824	
W. Bro. Solomon King	December 1824	

W. Bro. S. Williams	.....June 1825
W. Bro. Solomon King	.....December 1825
W. Bro. Ira Carroll	.....June 1826
W. Bro. David Curtis	.....June 1827
W. Bro. Solomon King	.....December 1827
W. Bro. David Curtis	.....June 1828
W. Bro. Solomon King	.....June 1829
W. Bro. Levi Warren	.....July 1830

The Provincial Grand Lodge ceased to be effective about 1830, at the peak of the "anti-masonic" reaction to the "Morgan Affair" in the U.S. which directly affected Upper Canada. This was during the same time the political turmoil of the "reform" movement led to the Rebellion of 1837. Many masons were reformers, and branded by the authorities as disloyal. Some lodges suspended their activity in fear of being labelled treasonous; perhaps Hing Hiram may have been one of these.

A number of King Hiram brethren were "rebels" and forced to flee to America. The local oral tradition says the Lodge did meet sporadically during this period, but we can find no minutes to confirm it.

King Hiram Lodge No. 226, Irish Constitution, Grand Lodge of Ireland

W. Bro. David Curtis	....as 1st W.M. Aug. 30th 1851
W. Bro. David Curtis	.....January 1852
W. Bro. David Curtis	.....June 1852
W. Bro. Dr. John Jay Hoyt, M.D.	.....December 1852
W. Bro. John Galliford	.....June 1853
W. Bro. John Galliford	.....December 1853
W. Bro. Dr. John Jay Hoyt, M.D.	.....June 1854
W. Bro. John Patterson	.....December 1854
W. Bro. Burton Bennett	.....June 1855
W. Bro. Burton Bennett	.....December 1855
W. Bro. Burton Bennett	.....June 1856
W. Bro. Elisha Hall, Jr.	.....December 1856
W. Bro. Elisha Hall, Jr.	.....June 1857
W. Bro. Elisha Hall, Jr.	.....December 1857
W. Bro. John Poole	.....June 1858

King Hiram Lodge No. 37, Grand Lodge of Canada, A.F. & A.M., G.R.C.

W. Bro. James Vine	.....1859
W. Bro. George W. Allen	.....1860
W. Bro. Richard Chambers	.....1861
W. Bro. Elisha Hall, Jr.	.....1862
W. Bro. Hy Taylor	.....1863
W. Bro. James Gustin	.....1864
W. Bro. James W. Chambers	.....1865
Rt. W. Bro. P. J. Brown	.....1866-1867/Gd.Sr.War 1869/DDGM 1870-71
V. W. Bro. James Canfield	.....1868-1869 Gd.Stew'd 1871
W. Bro. Dr. I. R. Walker, M.D.	.....1870-1871
W. Bro. C. H. Sorley	.....1872-1873
Rt. W. Bro. Charles H. Slawson	.....1874-1875 Gd.Regsr. 1877
V. W. Bro. W. A. Woolson	.....1876-1877 Gd.Swd.Br 1883
Rt. W. Bro. Charles H. Slawson	.....1878-1879
W. Bro. Robert Vance	.....1880-1881
W. Bro. William Thompson	.....1882-1883
Rt. W. Bro. M. Walsh	.....1884-1885 Gd.Jr.War 1889
W. Bro. W. L. Underwood	.....1886-1887

	W. Bro. John Podmore	.....1888-1889	
	W. Bro. J. Fred Choate	.....1890	
V.	W. Bro. James P. Boles	.....1891-1892	Gd.Pursvt 1899
	W. Bro. James Vance	.....1893-1894	
	W. Bro. B. Patterson	.....1895-1896	
V.	W. Bro. James P. Boles	.....1897	
	W. Bro. J. M. Curry	.....1898	
	W. Bro. Charles A. Choate	.....1899	
	W. Bro. H. Rowland	.....1900	
	W. Bro. George J. Phillips	.....1901	
	W. Bro. Austin Miller	.....1902	
	W. Bro. Dr. J. A. Neff, M.D.	.....1903	
	W. Bro. J. W. Patterson	.....1904-1905	
	W. Bro. Richard N. Thurtell	.....1906	
V.	W. Bro. Dr. J. B. Coleridge, M.D.	.....1907	Gd.Stew'd 1911
Rt.	W. Bro. George Naylor	.....1908	DDGM 1910
	W. Bro. W. H. Thompson	.....1909	
	W. Bro. MacDonald Wallace	.....1910	
Rt.	W. Bro. Roger Miller	.....1911	G.Jr.War 1912
	W. Bro. Arthur S. Crawford	.....1912	
	W. Bro. Rev. R. J. M. Perkin	.....1913	
	W. Bro. Dr. W. J. MacMurray, M.D.	.....1914	
V.	W. Bro. G. Marshall McKay	.....1915	Gd.Stew'd 1922
Rt.	W. Bro. Robert B. Hutt	.....1916	DDGM 1921
	W. Bro. A. R. Burrows	.....1917	
	W. Bro. A. T. Lowe	.....1918	
	W. Bro. Rev. John Pollock	.....1919	
Rt.	W. Bro. Robert B. Hutt	.....1920	
Rt.	W. Bro. Harry T. Bower	.....1921	DDGM 1947
	W. Bro. R. T. Pemberton	.....1922	
	W. Bro. Dr. Charles C. Cornish, M.D.	.....1923	
	W. Bro. Roy W. Green	.....1924	
	W. Bro. Clarence Grieve	.....1925	
	W. Bro. David H. McGill	.....1926	
	W. Bro. R. Sterling Clark	.....1927-1928	
	W. Bro. Charles W. Riley	.....1929	
	W. Bro. Dr. Herbert B. McKay D.D.S.	.....1930	
	W. Bro. Arthur Angood	.....1931	
	W. Bro. Walter F. Winlaw	.....1932	
	W. Bro. J. Ferris David	.....1933	
V.	W. Bro. Thomas E. Jackson	.....1934	Gd.Stew'd 1948
	W. Bro. William Moggach	.....1935	
	W. Bro. George H. Fraser	.....1936	
	W. Bro. Archie McCoombs	.....1937	
V.	W. Bro. Joseph A. Watmough	.....1938-1939	Gd.Stew'd 1947
Capt.	W. Bro. Howard S. Wright	....1940	RAF Ferry Command, killed 1945
	W. Bro. John J. C. Little	.....1941	
	W. Bro. Dr. Cecil A. Osborn, M.D.	.....1942-1943	
	W. Bro. Harry R. Cornell	.....1944	
	W. Bro. John G. Robbins	.....1945	
	W. Bro. Clifford A. Love	.....1946	
Police Chief	W. Bro. Alexander S. Callander	.....1947	
	W. Bro. George H. Goffin	.....1948	
	W. Bro. Allister G. Murray	.....1949	
	W. Bro. G. Howard Chamberlain	.....1950	
V.	W. Bro. Harold J. Upfold	.....1951-1952	Gd.Stew'd 1975
	W. Bro. Leonard G. Diggs	.....1953	
	W. Bro. Ernest E. Buck	.....1954	

	W. Bro. Harry R. Nagle	1955	
	W. Bro. Ben A. Holland	1956	
	W. Bro. William Robertson	1957	
V.	W. Bro. Charles E. Rudd	1958	Gd.Stew'd 1966
	W. Bro. Edward C. Johnson	1959	
	W. Bro. Ivan R. Smith	1960	
	W. Bro. Cecil W. Wilson	1961	
	W. Bro. Robert L. Clemens	1962	
	W. Bro. Harold C. McRoberts	1963	
	W. Bro. Wilfred C. Garratt	1964	
	W. Bro. Ronald L. Innes	1965	(Part Year)
	W. Bro. Wilfred C. Garratt	1965	(Balance Year)
	W. Bro. Joseph R. Barnett	1966	
	W. Bro. Albert Powell	1967	
	W. Bro. Kenneth E. Nadalin	1968	
	W. Bro. T. James Boniface	1969	
	W. Bro. Malcolm (Mac) W. Branscombe	1970	
	W. Bro. Maxwell W. Petit	1971	
Rt.	W. Bro. Joel C. Piper	1972	DDGM 1977
	W. Bro. Charles (Buck) Johnston	1973	
	Pipe Major W. Bro. Robert A. Collins	1974	
V.	W. Bro. Stewart L. Thurtell	1975	Gd.Stew'd 1978
	W. Bro. Russell B. Piper	1976-1977	
	W. Bro. Wayne E. Kaake	1978	
	W. Bro. Edward G. T. van Rees	1979	
	W. Bro. Kenneth A. Legacy	1980	
	W. Bro. James F. Vyse	1981	
V.	W. Bro. Thomas R. Parker, Q.C.	1982	Gd.Stew'd 1992
	W. Bro. Robert J. Welt	1983	
	W. Bro. Thomas C. Bertrand	1984	
	W. Bro. Gregory F. Clemens	1985	
	W. Bro. Kenneth L. Riley	1986	
Rt.	W. Bro. Douglas R. Bender	1987	DDGM 1991
	W. Bro. John L. Savage	1988	(Past Grand Master I.O.O.F.)
	W. Bro. O. Roy Knott	1989	
	W. Bro. Dennis M. Feick	1990	
	W. Bro. Lawrence E. Pye	1991	
	W. Bro. Donald R. Rumble	1992	

THE BADGE OF KING HIRAM LODGE No. 37, as adopted by the Lodge in 1978

The Lodge Badge reflects the close connection of the Lodge to its home community of Ingersoll. Thus the Lodge Badge design is readily identified with the badge of the Town of Ingersoll, a relationship which is no mere coincidence, as the fate of both are forever intertwined.

The design of both badges are directly linked to the first European settler here, our notable masonic brother, Major Thomas Ingersoll, who arrived in the spring of 1793. Bro. Ingersoll deliberately chose this particular townsite for his 64,000 acre Crown land grant, where he was required to bring in permanent settlers of quality. His choice was dictated by practical reasons. The growth of the community was so successful, the Lodge was instituted within a mere 10 years. Thus, the success of the settlement and that of the Lodge are forever directly connected.

Both badges were drawn by the same professional artist.

A explanation of the symbolism in these badges follows:

Both badge designs depict a "dexter" band across the shield, representing the Thames River lying in an wide alluvial valley between high hills. Bro. Ingersoll chose this unique site as there are no less than eight creeks entering the Thames within the townsite area. Therefore waterpower was available, a very important energy source in the far-off days of the 18th century. The high hills to the north and south were heavily wooded, indicating fertile soil for farmsteads, and being elevated, were therefore well drained, no small concern for successful agriculture. The forests, mainly hardwoods to the north, and pine and spruce to the south would provide timber for construction and lumber for commerce. The main east-west road, to be built by Major Ingersoll from Burford to Westminster (London), was to follow the river valley. Also, the well-travelled ancient north-west by south-east Indian trail from Lake Erie to Lake Huron forded the river about where the Thames Street bridge now stands.

The first meeting of the Lodge in 1803 was held near this crossing place. The shield therefore clearly depicts Bro. Ingersoll's choice.

In the Lodge badge, a "roundel" or circle surrounds and supports the shield, displaying two Canadian maple leaves "slipped". The titles are shown within the circle. Within the shield, the upper quarter shows a readily identified and bold "square and compass", and in the lower quarter, a circular panel displays "three steps, representing the three Craft degrees, supporting an altar, and on the altar, an open book between two pillars surmounted by an arch and keystone", well-known masonic symbols which illustrate and identify our traditions.

Therefore, the Badge of King Hiram Lodge No. 37, A.F. and A.M., G.R.C. was adopted to show the historical, geographical and masonic heritage values of this Lodge, and its place in this community. And specifically, to proudly represent this historic and venerable old Lodge. In displaying this badge, we respectfully honour our past, take pride in our present, look to our future in hope, as we hand on our lodge traditions to those we trust will continue them for generations yet to be.

EDITORIAL NOTES

1) It is interesting to note it was customary in the early years for a Worshipful Master to be elected for a six-month term of office. In some cases the term seems to have been extended to one or more years between elections. Perhaps this indicates difficulty in having qualified masons available, or the current master was giving satisfaction to the brethren. Or perchance there was a more casual attitude toward lodge rules in those days, due, in part to the lack of oversight by the Provincial Grand Lodge of the time.

Among those serving more than two terms are the following brethren:

- W. Bro. David Curtis, 11 terms equal to seven years
- W. Bro. Solomon King, 7 terms equal to five years
- W. Bro. Reuben Hambleton, 7 terms equal to four-and-a-half years
- W. Bro. Sikes Townley, 3 terms equal to four years
- W. Bro. Elisha Hall Jr., 4 terms equal to two years
- W. Bro. Harmon Laurence appears to have served for one term of three years, December 1804 to December 1807. See Note (a) Page 20

2) Elections to office were held twice a year, on June 24th the Feast of St. John the Baptist; and on December 27th the Feast of St. John the Evangelist. The two feast days were called the "Lodge of St. John," where the semi-annual festivals of the name included the elections to office. These were occasions for celebration of the social virtues with good cheer and fellowship. Admission required a one shilling admission fee for members, and two shilling for visitors. Such occasions were sometimes made into very tame affairs or even omitted during hard times, not unknown in early Upper Canada.

References to a St. John as a patron saint of masonry are found in very old masonic writings from the 14th century, and are generally thought to refer to St. John the Baptist. Later writings include St. John the Evangelist. These traditions are very much Christian in character, and very evident in the days of the purely "operative masons." The rise of "speculative masonry" continued the practice of maintaining the "saints' days" traditions even though masonry had become more universal, defined in the early 18th century as belief in the Great Architect of the Universe. This distinction was made clear in Anderson's first Book of Constitution of 1723. Thus a mason's religion, specific faith or mode of worship was a personal choice and each man's own responsibility.

There are masonic references to another St. John, St. John the Almoner, born in the sixth century, said to be a son of a King of Cyprus and particularly revered by the masonic Knight Templar orders.

3) See Page 6 & Page 21. "The Morgan Affair" refer to:

- (i) CMRA Papers, published by The Heritage Lodge No. 730, (1986) Vol II, Page 799: "The Great William Morgan Mystery" by R.V. Harris.
- (ii) "Whence Come We" published by the Grand Lodge of Canada, Ontario Page 52: "The Morgan Affair and its Aftermath" Edited by The Committee on the History, Wallace McLeod, Chairman

4) See Page 10. "The Royal Exchange Hotel" located on east side of Thames Street South, later converted to a multi-store building between the dry cleaners and the present Chinese restaurant. It was the finest hostelry in Ingersoll in the 1870's. Falling on evil days, it ultimately became known as the "Bummer's Roost."

ADDENDUM - NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF KING HIRAM LODGE

Curtis 'A'	Curtis 'B'
King Hiram (now #37)	Brant Lodge (now #45)

(From various published records)	(From V. Wor Bro. Gerry Wright,
Secy (if W.M. 1808 had to be 21, 1807,	of Brant Lodge #45, from
their then born no later than 1786,	records)
latest date possible)	The Lodge:
David Curtis First Ref. 1808-1852	Brant #323 I.R. Inst 6 June 1853
(as W.M.)	22 G.R.C. 1855
Arrived as settler 1802	re-numbered as #45, 1858
Lot 12, Old Stage Rd (King St E)	David Curtis, first references in
Oxford-on-Thames (West Ox Twnshp)	Brant Lodge records:
1808 (see Oxford County	From Amity Lodge #29 P.R., later
Gazeteer Shenstone, 1852)	as: Amity #32, Dunnville,
W. Oxford History, in 1827.	
G.R.C.:	
Children of David or Hull Curtis	Curtis 'B' initiated 1852.
pupils in Piper's School?	affiliated in Brant Lodge on
Phoebe and Daniel Curtis	6 June 1853 age 31 yrs
(Curtis A born 1786, 1853 = 67?)	(Born 1822)
1850 Clerk West Oxford Twnshp	W.M. of Brant for years:
(Taxes levied = 112 Pound Sterl,	1859; 1860; 1861;
1864	
125 s, 11 d;)	Appointed as:
(see Shenstone, Ox Gazeteer)	Gd.Jr.Deacon 15 Jul 1858
On union of GRC & Anc Prov Lodge	("B" Grd. Jr. Deacon, (V. W. Bro.)
if born 1786, then at least aged	before he was a Wor. Master? on
72 yrs in 1858 at that time	union of GRC & Anc Gd Lodge
	(see Robertson, Vol. II)
1856, Curtis a trustee of Baptist	1991 Proceedings of G. Lodge:
Church at Piper's Corners	D. Curtis, Jr.: Gr. Registr 1861
(W. Ox Hist)(min age = 70?)	(Rt. Wor. Bro.) Is Jr. same man?
As on Wilson Trestle Bd, 1889:	As in Brant Lodge Records:
DDGM: 1863-1869)------(How So?)	--DDGM: 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870
(Rt. Wor. Bro.)	
W. Ox Hist: Map 1876 shows:	Born: 1822; Died: 18 Feb 1889,
Lot 11 owned by: a Mrs. Curtis.	age 67 yrs.
widow of Hull Curtis.	Was David 'B' Collector of
David of Lot 12	Customs at Brantford? Sr. or
Jr ?	. . . dates to be
established.	

It seems we have two different brethren named David Curtis!
Which proves nothing is ever certain in developing an historical record. Were they related? PROBABLE: a coincidence - no relationship!
Did David 'B' have a son, David Jr. - ??

Checking Grand Lodge records has brought us as far as we are able to go in being as certain as we'll ever be. We are unable to reconcile these differences, unless more information can be found.

We are grateful for the help of V. Wor. Bro. Gerry Wright of Brant Lodge No. 45, for giving us the Brant Lodge story.