



Ingersoll

FLOOD & FRESHETS

T I M E L I N E

11 APRIL, 1856

Immense quantities of snow melt cause pond waters to rise three feet. Bridges on King, Charles and Canterbury Streets were destroyed.

24 FEBRUARY, 1860

Massive ice floes cause damage to King Street bridge.

10 JUNE, 1869

A defective sluice gate at Smith's Pond results in water overflowing the dam and banks. The large outflow resulted in damage to many homes and businesses.

25 AUGUST, 1870

Heavy rains result in creek water rising twelve feet. Mills dams broke away and bridges on King, Charles and Canterbury Streets, destroyed. An estimate loss of \$10,000.

7 APRIL, 1887

Failure of the dam at King's Mills resulted in a mighty rush of water, carrying away a large building, train tracks and the tragic death of five people. A dramatic rescue by a citizen bystander saved the life of one woman and an elderly gent floated free of the wreckage, still in his bed.

16 APRIL, 1891

Days of spring rain result in the undermining of James McIntyre's business bordering King Street and the mill race. McIntyre loses coffins and furniture to the deluge. Caskets were seen miles downstream.

4 APRIL, 1901

The dam at Manchester Mill was swept away on this day, causing damage to sidewalks, bridges and railway tracks.

5 APRIL, 1903

Continuous rain melted snow causing high water in the Thames River. Ice floes blocking the dam were removed by concerned citizens.

6 MAY, 1909

A late snow fall resulted in melt water undermining the bank of the dam at Stuart's pond. The turbulent waters affected the bridge at Canterbury Street.

26 FEBRUARY 1918

Heavy rains caused high water in many creeks, and swelling the Thames River until it touched the bottom of the Thames Street bridge. The deluge caused the failure of the dam at Smith's Pond.

26 APRIL 1937

Nearly six inches of rain fell on Southwestern Ontario in five days and the resulting flood was the highest ever recorded on the Thames River. Three bridges were swept away in the onslaught. Ingersoll Doctor J. D. MacDonald was killed rushing to aid victims of a train that derailed because of the flood. Two CN employees were also fatally wounded in the washout.

10 MARCH 1976

Spring rains and melting snow resulted in the failure of the Smith's Pond dam. The deluge of water gushed into Memorial Park and proceeded to flood many businesses and homes on King Street East.

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The Flood of 1937

DR. J. D. MACDONALD, M. O. H. OF INGERSOLL, VICTIM OF FLOOD

Community Saddened By Tragic Death Of Esteemed Physician. Car Swept From Road While Answering Call To Train Wreck. Body Recovered Wednesday Morning.

Ingersoll's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. J. D. MacDonald, came to his death on Monday afternoon, while responding to a call for assistance, by those injured when the Chicago-Montreal C. N. R. train plowed through a washout on the main line just east of the North American Cyanamid Quarries, at Munroe's Crossing.

Dr. MacDonald attempted to cross from No. 2 Highway to the scene of the accident, via the side road that is known as Munroe's Crossing. Water was flooding over at the time and it is reported Dr. MacDonald was advised not to attempt the crossing.

Anxious to be of assistance to any injured in the wreck, the doctor failed to have regard for his own safety and drove his car over the water covered roadway.

Eye witnesses of the fatality claim the car appeared to stop, and the rushing waters took it out of control of the driver. It plunged over the embankment at the west side of the roadway into the raging torrents of the Thames.

Dr. MacDonald apparently tried to jump from the car but the swirling waters held the doors fast. He finally extricated himself, but was carried beyond the reach of willing rescue workers, who were eye witnesses of the accident.

The car was located on Monday afternoon, about three o'clock, marooned in the centre of the flooded river, about a quarter mile west of where it plunged into the water. Only the top appeared above water. A boat with volunteer rescue workers reached the car but the body was not to be found in the vehicle. The height of the flood waters made further attempts to find the body impossible until Wednesday morning.

While an attempt was being made

to extricate the car yesterday morning, between 10 and 11 o'clock, some five hundred yards west of the vehicle an object was seen. A boat was secured and the object proved to be the body of Dr. MacDonald. It was lying face down and entangled in some underbrush and fence wire. The remains were removed to the Fred S. Newman Funeral Parlor, here.

Dr. MacDonald was a native of the Thamesford district. He was a graduate of the University of Western Ontario Medical School and commenced practice here upwards of 30 years ago. He was Medical Officer of Health for a number of years past and was widely known through the town and district.

Surviving besides his widow who was formerly Miss Helen Coleridge, is one son, Donald MacDonald, a Medical student at the University of Western Ontario, one daughter, Miss Helen MacDonald, at home and a brother, Alan MacDonald, London.

A public funeral service for Dr. J. D. MacDonald is being held this (Thursday) afternoon, at 2.30 o'clock, in St. James' Anglican Church.

Three Bridges Go At Ingersoll

In addition to the Thames street bridge crossing the Thames river being carried away by the swirling flood waters on Monday night, the steel railway bridge carrying tracks from the main line of the C. N. R. to the plant of the New Idea Furnaces, was wrecked by the flood and the suspension foot bridge crossing Wonham street from Charles' to Victoria streets, was washed away. This completely segregated the north side of the town from the south for a time as the bridges on Mutual and Pemberton streets were still under flood waters.

THAMES RIVER ROSE TO GREAT HEIGHTS

Four Inches Of Rainfall In Forty Eight Hours From Saturday Night Until Monday Night Sent River On Rampage.

Flood waters of the Thames River receded Tuesday, but several industrial plants were still flooded and the north section of the town was separated from the south. The only means of communication was by telephone and to cross the Thames River, a distance of about 150 feet, one had to travel over treacherous roads, via either Dorchester or Woodstock a distance of some twenty miles.

Bread and milk was transported across the river before the Thames street bridge gave way, so there was no danger of food shortage as supplies could be brought in from London.

Natural gas was kept available to most every section of the town, despite the fact the main pipe line on Thames street broke with the crashing of the bridge. An underground main crossing Wonham Street, provided a sufficient supply for general use.

The water mains were all broken and residents on the north side of town were without water. Breaks in hydrant mains, cut off water in the main business sections of the town and the Public Utilities Commission issued a bulletin requesting people to be particularly cautious with fires or lights so that no serious conflagration might occur.

Despite the extensive damage to property, there were few telephone lines out. H. I. Stewart, manager of the Ingersoll Telephone Company informed the Tribune representative. Their loss would be small he declared.

Only a few daily papers reached town on Tuesday and mail had to be taken from the C. N. R. Station via Dorchester in order to reach the local Post Office.

A large number of trucks were tied-up in town from Monday night on, because of the dangerous condition of the roads west. The Hamilton road was flooded at Morris' Mill, just west of Dorchester and No. 3 Highway was out from Tillsonburg to Aylmer. Small trucks and cars were able to navigate some of the back concessions between No. 2 Highway and the Hamilton Road.