



We have seen thee, Queen of Cheese,
Lying quietly at your ease,
Gently fanned by evening breeze;
Thy fair form no flies dare seize.

All gaily dressed, soon you'll go
To the provincial show,
To be admired by many a beau
In the city of Toronto.

from "Ode on the Mammoth Cheese"^[2]



James McIntyre

The decade of the 1860s was Ingersoll, Ontario's sweet spot in history. Economically its local (definitely not "lo-cal"!) cheese-making reputation would be celebrated in a mammoth 7,300 pound block of cheese made at the James Harris Cheese Factory in 1866 and eventually displayed at Toronto's major fair, and then in the United States (Saratoga, New York) before being shipped by boat for display in England and Europe. The cheese in turn inspired a celebratory ode from Ingersoll's Scottish-born poet laureate James McIntyre. The poem "*Ode on the Mammoth Cheese*" and poet McIntyre are today celebrated for less than complimentary reasons as bad or, perhaps to be somewhat kinder, as "outsider" exemplars of the art. Even the most disdainful however generally award McIntyre full marks for his attempt at memorable if "cheesy" versifying. The ode begins:

*We have seen thee, queen of cheese,
Lying quietly at your ease,
Gently fanned by evening breeze,
Thy fair form no flies dare seize.*

Baseball claimed a place of prominence throughout the 1860s beginning with its newspaper the *Ingersoll Chronicle and County of Oxford Intelligencer* confirming the town's participation in what the *New York Clipper* had described as a fully realized but soon to be extinct modern Canadian game of baseball. Throughout



Robert Hamilton, who had the honor of entertaining the illustrious visitors. They then returned to Niagara where they dined in the evening with his Excellency the Governor— Many of the great chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations, headed by the renowned Captain Joseph Brant, in full war paint, gave the war dance before his Excellency's residence for the amusement of the royal party. The next morning a large party of the swiftest and most skillful of the young warriors got up a match of baseball of a very exciting character.— There were foot races and several other characteristic games, in which his Royal Highness took a very warm interest, and expressed the high gratification he felt in witnessing them. After having examined the Fort and other objects of interest connected with the French occupation, the royal party embarked for Kingston en route for Quebec. The frontier towns on the American side had now been transferred to the United States authorities.

Excerpt from the 29 May 1860 *Montreal Herald and Daily Commercial Gazette* recalling the Duke of Kent's visit to Niagara in 1792 (incorrectly recalled by Colonel John Clark as 1791) – it is more likely to have been lacrosse but ...that's not what it says!



"Training Day" in 1819.
GEORGE'S BIRTHDAY AND ITS CELEBRATION.
 An old resident of Hamilton furnishes the *Times* with a sketch of the 4th of June, "in Olden times when George the Third was King." He writes from memory and thought; his account is brief; it is none the less interesting, especially after the celebration of our own more modern and National Day, July 1st. He says:—
 The 4th day of June, in the earlier days of Hamilton was decidedly the most lively of the whole year. On this day the general training (as it was called) of the "Men of Gray" took place. All the men liable to militia duty in this locality had to "fall in" in the morning and answer to their names in the presence of the commanding officer, or were officers might see fit to command or were able to give instruction in. The preliminary Company drill invariably consisted of the men of each Company clustering round the Captain, who he called over his list of names. The word "march" was then given, and a halt made in front of a store, when a patroll of more of "blackstrap" was compounded and passed around until all were satisfied. This delectable drink was made by mixing 75 whiskey and 25 India molasses, and was altogether a most deceiving beverage. After all had partaken to their heart's content (and there were no legends in this regard in those days, the real warlike aspect of the day came to the front. All disputes and quarrels during the past year were then settled by personal encounter. It has come to be understood that there was "no law on the 4th of June," and it seemed to be a fact, as we later on once was over attempted in the numerous pitched battles which took place all over the village on "training day." The old style of base ball, jumping and horse racing were also indulged in, and altogether a most merry time was made of King George's Birthday, for such it was.

25 May 1848 description of Bass-Ball Playing in Goderich Ontario, and games peculiar to merry England, harkens back to the influence of old English sport brought directly into Ontario from the source.

HER MAJESTY'S BIRTH DAY. This auspicious day which will be observed in England to-morrow the 27th instant, was duly honored at Goderich by abundance of fun and frolic on Wednesday last. In consequence of the morning being lowering, the cliff was decided upon for the amusements of the day, which consisted of Cricket, Base-Ball, Quoits, Foot-Racing and many other games, peculiar to merry England. The festivities were continued in the evening by a Ball at the Goderich Hotel, where the votaries of Terpsichore, were on the light fantastic toe till morning.

Just out, latest, no money or voter who tion, "w important indispens in cases harvest, where th March

THE HURON GAZETTE.
 PUBLISHED BY GUYTON, NOT MEN.
 FRIDAY MORNING, MAY 11, 1866.
 TO OUR PATRONS.

Early References to Baseball in Southwestern Ontario

returned, and Mr. Bennett brought out a barrel
of Beer for father in the evening.

Wednesday 13th I went to town with Joe to try
and collect some cash. - See a number of my friends.
Saw with Mr. H. walk'd out and joined a num-
ber of them jumping & playing Ball. Perceived a Mr. -

Joseph Randall to be the most active. Mr. Joe.
Wells & John Arnold came out here with us
and staid all night.

Thursday 14th The Grand Jury was dismissed
and I went home. I went to town with J.M.

Playing Ball

From the pages of Ely Player's Canadian diary of 1803

BASE BALL AT INGERSOLL, C. W.—The Young Canadian club of Woodstock, and the Rough and Ready of Ingersoll, met at the last named place on the 18th ult., to carry on a friendly warfare with clubs and ball, at this decidedly popular game. The game played in Canada differs somewhat from the New York game, the ball being thrown instead of pitched, and an innings is not concluded until all are out, there are also eleven players on each side. At

the conclusion of the game, which was won by the Young Canadian club by 24 runs, they adjourned, on the invitation of the Ingersoll, to the Royal Exchange Hotel, and partook of an excellent collation there provided, when, after the usual interchange of complimentary speeches, &c., they agreed to meet again at Woodstock to fight the battle o'er again on the 25th day of July. The play was as given in the annexed schedule:—

YOUNG CANADIAN.		ROUGH AND READY.	
NAMES.	RUNS.	NAMES.	RUNS.
Love, catcher.....	4	W Elliott, 3d base.....	8
Dorman, 2d base.....	9	N. Elliott, thrower.....	7
Denman, right field.....	0	Grineway, short stop.....	18
J McKay, 1st base.....	7	Hearn, catcher.....	8
Shuttleworth, short stop.....	12	Tallon, 1st base.....	1
M Whinnie, back stop.....	10	J. Murdoch, 2d base.....	2
D McKay 3d base.....	6	M Murdoch, right field.....	0
Snarey, 4th base.....	7	W Fowler, centre field.....	0
Clyde, thrower.....	18	Parkhurst, 4th base.....	4
Dash, centre field.....	2	J Fowler, left field.....	2
Burgess, left field.....	2	Campbell, back stop.....	5
Total.....	83	Total.....	69

BASE BALL IN CANADA.—The Young Canadian and Rough and Ready Clubs played a match at Woodstock on the 25th inst, which the former won as recorded below:—

YOUNG CANADIAN.		ROUGH AND READY.	
NAMES.	RUNS.	NAMES.	RUNS.
Clyde, pitcher.....	24	Parkhurst, catcher.....	4
Dorman, left field.....	10	N Elliot, short stop.....	4
Shuttleworth, short stop..	13	Bowers, back stop.....	1
McWhinnie, back stop.....	11	W Elliott, 3d base.....	8
Morrison, 2d base.....	10	Fowler, centre field.....	6
Dash, centre field.....	3	Hearn, 4th base.....	9
Love, catcher.....	6	Bowen, left field.....	8
Whitehead, right field.....	0	Murdoch, 1st base.....	3
J McKay, 1st base.....	10	Greenaway, pitcher.....	7
D McKay, 3d base.....	11	Husband, right field.....	2
Snarey, 4th base.....	2	Tallon, 2d base.....	7
Total.....	100	Total.....	68

PRESENTATION OF A FLAG.—On the 25th ult., the Kentucky Base Ball

A week later the home and home series continued at Woodstock. There is no doubt as to the authenticity of these games, the first of which was referenced in the Ingersoll newspaper and corroboration for the second was found in the diary of a young Ingersoll school teacher Thomas Wells. His diaries are preserved in fragile condition in the Public Archives of Ontario. On page 296 of his diary from 25 July 1860, he wrote: "John and I drove to Woodstock; got my government money; Saw a game of Base Ball between the Ingersoll and Woodstock Clubs; home to tea; I had a letter from Mr. Whittaker."

Ingersoll vs. Woodstock using the rules of the Canadian game, 1860.

the decade Ingersoll would gradually adjust to the game's new rules, making its

YOUNG CANADIANS		MAPLE LEAF	
H. L.	R.	H. L.	R.
Parsons, c.	2	Shuttleworth, c.	2
J Wilson, 3d b.	4	Secord, s.	3
S Wilson, 3d b.	7	Dennaby, f.	2
Clark, r. f.	4	Carroll, 2d b.	4
McWhinnie, 1st b.	4	Mason, 3d b.	3
Middley, c. f.	1	Manning, r. f.	4
Douglas, f. f.	4	McCann, p.	3
Clide, p.	3	Wangh, 1st b.	3
Hill, s.	4	Cooper, c. f.	3
Total	30	Total	28

RUSS MADE IN EACH INNING.

	1st	2d	3d	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
Young Canadian	2	1	4	2	3	2	4	8	4-30
Maple Leaf	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0-2

Umpire—Stephen Rymal, of the Barton club.
 Scores—Jas. Shuttleworth, for Maple Leaf; Mordecai Burgess, for Young Canadian.

ANOTHER MATCH FOR THE CHAMPION SILVER BALL WAS PLAYED at Woodstock, C. W., on Aug. 21, between the Young Victoria club, of Ingersoll, of which the following is the score:

YOUNG CANADA		VICTORIA	
H. L.	R.	H. L.	R.
Parsons, c.	4	Homer, c.	3
Clide, p.	4	Grimshaw, p.	3
I Edwards, s. s.	1	Martin, s. s.	3
McWhinnie, 1st b.	2	Fowler, 1st b.	4
Wilson, 3d b.	4	Gibson, 2d b.	2
Scott, 3d b.	2	Wilson, 3d b.	3
D Edwards, r. f.	1	McFarlan, r. f.	3
Douglas, f. f.	3	Fowler, f. f.	3
Middley, c. f.	3	Jarvis, c. f.	4
Total	27	Total	13

RUSS MADE IN EACH INNING.

	1st	2d	3d	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
Young Canada	5	2	3	4	4	6	6	7	0-37
Victoria	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0-12

Umpire—James Shuttleworth, of the Maple Leaf club.

Umpire—James Shuttleworth, of the Maple Leaf club; Scorers—M. Burgess, for Young Canadian club; M. C. Gohrick, for Victoria club.

The above game savored more of a social than a match game, the Young Canadians having allowed their third baseman to play in the Ingersoll nine. Having only lately been organized, they deserve much praise for the headway they have made in handling the ball and the bat. Hearn makes a big bid on the catch, and like the majority of sals, leaps well for a fly.

Games Forfeited—Young Canadians vs. Barton, for the championship—day not yet named. Also, the Y. C's are endeavoring to make arrangements to have the Attention, of Brooklyn, N. Y., meet them at Rochester, during the State Fair. The Y. C's are anxious to see how much more they have to learn in the manly game of base ball, and they are of the opinion that the Attention are the best tilters. Yours, &c.

NEW YORK CLIPPER
 SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1864.

Ingersoll vs. Woodstock playing by the New York rules for the first time, Aug. 23, 1864.

way to a brief Canadian ascendancy.

In 1867, playing at a level below their real quality, Ingersoll's baseball team the Victorias, whom the *Detroit Free Press* called the "hard fisted laboring men", won

...but in the main superior to what had been previously done. The first game, between the Victoria, of Ingersoll, and the Alerts, of this city, was called at 8:15 a. m. The Victoria being composed of hard-fisted laboring men had a wide advantage over the boys who had already defeated two clubs who were their seniors. At the end of the fourth innings the score stood, Victoria 39, Alerts 1; but notwithstanding the heavy odds against them and which might well have discouraged older players, the boys stuck manfully to their game and began

first prize in the third class division of Detroit's well publicized baseball tournament. They went home with "One hundred dollars in greenbacks" and a gold-mounted rosewood bat valued at \$75 presented to captain William Hearn.

Detroit Free Press
21 Aug 1867, Wed - Page 1

place in second class. We give

ALERTS		VICTORIA	
O R	O R	O R	O R
Hoberts, f. f.	2	Hearn, c.	3
Lothrop, f. f.	2	Gibson, p.	2
Hogarth, c.	2	Taylor, s.	5
Remsey, 1 b.	3	Fowler, r. f.	4
Davis, p.	5	Parsons, 1 b.	10
Whiting, 2 b.	2	Berry, 2 b.	1
Backhouse, s.	2	Hickson, 3 b.	6
Shandish, c. f.	4	Parkhurst, f. f.	2
Cherry, 3 b.	3	Jackson, c. f.	7
Total	21	Total	55

INNING.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Alerts	1	0	0	0	2	10	1	5	19
Victoria	5	15	10	12	1	7	4	6	63

Time of game—22.45m.
 Umpire—C. G. Cook, of Ann Arbor club.
 Scores—G. S. Trowbridge, for Alert; G. A. Gilbert, for Victoria.
 Fly Catches—Alert, 4; Victoria, 2.
 Fly Catches Missed—Alert, 1; Victoria, 3.
 Home Runs—Alert, 1; Victoria, 2.

THE SECOND GAME.

Ingersoll 63, Alerts of Detroit 19, August 1867.

By year-end the team, descendants of the town's original Rough and Ready club, were honoured locally with a splashy set of uniforms in which, next year, they became Canadian baseball title-holders. It was a very brief reign,

BASE BALL NEWS.
THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF CANADA.
Ingersoll Victorious.
THE SILVER BALL BROUGHT HOME
IN TRIUMPH!

stubborn and determined foes, climbing up steep precipices, and overthrowing strong bulwarks, Woodstock has had to succumb to their undaunted foemen of Ingersoll, and the silver ball with its attendant honors has been transferred from the hands of the Young Canadians to the hands of the Victorias, who will, we have little doubt, be able to hold it for all time, for the club is composed of the right kind of stuff, and we are not afraid that they will easily be made to yield the honors for which they have fought so hard.

The following is the score:

YOUNG CANADIANS.	O.	R.	VICTORIA.	O.	R.
S. Wilson, 3b	3	4	W. Horns, c	1	7
J. Pascoe, c	4	3	J. Gibson, p	3	2
J. Wilson, 2b	4	2	H. Jackson, ss	3	4
D. Clyde, p	4	3	C. Pascoe, 1b	3	5
J. McKay, rf	4	3	W. Berry, 2b	4	2
G. Forbes, 1b	1	5	J. Taylor, 3b	4	3
R. Douglas, cf	4	2	J. Brown, lf	4	3
I. Edwards, lf	4	2	W. Taylor, cf	4	2
J. H.R., ss	4	2	G. Hickerton, rf	4	2
	30	28		30	34

INNINGS (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) Total
 VICTORIA 3 5 0 5 7 0 3 0 5 6 — 34
 Y. C. 9 0 4 1 0 7 1 0 6 0 — 28

Ingersoll defeats Woodstock to win the Silver Ball, 1868...

SEPTEMBER 3, 1868.

“VICTORIA”
BASE BALL
CONCERT.

A VOCAL, INSTRUMENTAL AND COMIC Concert will be given in the

TOWN HALL,
INGERSOLL,
ON
Wednesd’y, Sept. 9

Under the auspices of the CHAMPION BASE BALL CLUB OF CANADA. The trophies of the Club consisting of the

Championship Silver Ball,
Gold Mounted Rosewood Bat,
(Regulation Size) the
Provincial Silver Cup, and the
Junior’s Champion Silver Cup

Will be on exhibition in the Hall.

For particulars see programmes. Tickets 25 cents; can be had from Members of the Club and at the door.

Doors open at 7 1-2 o’clock.
 Performance to commence at 8 o’clock.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

R. A. WOODCOCK, W. W. GRIFFEY,
 President. Secretary.

Base Ball.

Contrary to expectations the match between the Victoria Club, of Ingersoll, and the Young Canadian Club, of Woodstock, played here on last Thursday, resulted in favour of the Y. C. by thirteen runs—consequently they are again the champions of Canada, and the owners, for the time being, of the Silver Ball. The defeat is attributable to an accident which happened to the pitcher, Mr Gibson, while playing. Below will be found the score:—

YOUNG CANADIANS.	O.	R.	VICTORIA.	O.	R.
R. Douglas, cf	1	7	W. Horns, c	3	2
S. Wilson, 3b	3	5	J. Gibson, p	4	3
J. Pascoe, c	4	3	H. Jackson, ss	3	4
D. Clyde, p	4	3	C. Pascoe, 1b	3	5
J. McKay, rf	4	3	W. Berry, 2b	4	2
J. Wilson, 2b	3	5	J. Taylor, 3b	4	3
I. Edwards, lf	3	6	J. Brown, lf	4	3
Anderson, ss	3	5	Dr. Jarvis, cf	3	5
	27	43	G. Hickerton, rf	4	2
	27	43		30	34

INNINGS (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) Total
 VICTORIA 6 1 1 0 6 6 3 7 1 — 30
 Y. C. 4 4 3 3 9 4 6 3 2 — 42

Y. C.’s Majority

HOME RUNS.—Jarvis 1, Forbes 2.
 FLY CATCHERS MADE.—Victoria—Horns 2, Brown 2, Hickerton 2, Jarvis 1, C. Pascoe 2, Berry 1, Gibson 1.
 R. Pascoe 2, Jackson 1.—Total 16. YOUNG CANADIANS.—Pascoe 4, Clyde 1, Anderson 1, McKay 1, Douglas 2, J. Wilson 1, Edwards 1, S. Wilson 2.—Total 12.

FLY CATCHERS MADE.—Victoria—R. Pascoe 2, Jarvis 2, Hickerton 2, Brown 1.—Total 7.
 LEFT ON BASES.—Victoria—Horns 2, Berry 1, R. Pascoe 1, Brown 1, Jarvis 1. YOUNG CANADIANS.—Douglas 1, S. Wilson 1, Clyde 1, Forbes 1, McKay 1.

UMPIRE.—Mr E. H. Moore, of London.
 SCORES.—Messrs W. W. Griffey and W. McKay.

The Provincial Rifle Match.

...only to lose it back to Woodstock less than 2 weeks later, Sept. 9, 1868.

alongside of which the 1907 triumph by another small town, Kenora (then Rat Portage) Ontario in hockey’s Stanley Cup, provided at least a few months of ascendant glory. Ingersoll’s baseball acclaim lasted less than two weeks, but what a joyous occasion it was, topped by what passed in 1868 for big headlines in the *Chronicle*, along with a concert, and quite possibly the appearance of the town’s renowned poet. Two of his later poems mention baseball so he was not immune to its community impact.

Ingersoll's baseball story is one with its nearby neighbour and rival Woodstock, Ontario and the village generally equidistant between them ... Beachville.



The Railway facilitated travel from Ingersoll to Beachville and Woodstock.

Credit Valley Railway

Running in Connection with Port Dover Railway.

NO. 2 TIME TABLE, NO. 2.

Taking effect Monday, 9th September, 1878.

Miles.	GOING EAST.		STATIONS.	GOING WEST.		Miles.	
	No. 1.	No. 2.		No. 2.	No. 4.		
0	7.40	4.00	Dep. Ingersoll.	Arr.	9.15	5.25	10
2	7.45	4.05	× Centreville.		9.10	5.20	8
5	7.55	4.15	Beachville.		9.00	5.10	5
10	8.10	4.30	Woodstock.		8.45	4.55	0
—	8.15	4.35	Arr. Woodstock, P.D. & L.H.R'y. Dep.		8.40	4.50	—

× Flag Station—Will stop on signal.

G. LAIDLAW,
Managing Director.

September, 1878.

As for the cheese, on arrival in England it was purchased by a Liverpool merchant, cut up into bite-sized pieces, and sold locally, never to return to its hometown in Oxford County.

Liverpool Albion - Monday 16 December 1867

Public domain

THE MAMMOTH CHEESE!
WEIGHING 7,000 POUNDS.

Imported by Messrs. JOHN REYNOLDS, ROBERT PRICE, and
HENRY THOMPSON.
THREE TONS TWO-AND-A-HALF CWT.

This Cheese was manufactured at the **INGERSOLL CHEESE**
FACTORY COMPANY'S ESTABLISHMENT, one mile south of
the town of **Ingersoll** in the County of Oxford, Canada West, by
JAS. HAREIS AND CO.

TOOK THIRTY-FIVE TONS OF MILK, OR ONE MILKING
OF SEVEN THOUSAND COWS.

It is Six Feet Ten Inches in Diameter, Three Feet in Height, and
about Twenty-one Feet in Circumference.

IT IS THE LARGEST CHEESE IN THE WORLD!

ON VIEW THIS DAY, (MONDAY,) AND FOLLOWING DAYS,
IN CHURCH-STREET, (Corner of Paradise-street.)

ADMISSION SIXPENCE.

Meanwhile Ingersoll's cheese made its way to Liverpool, December, 1867

William Humber
November 2023

Great pumpkins and big ears of corn,
They do this rural arch adorn,
We are reminded now 'tis fall,
And boys enjoy game of baseball.

With joy at night each one did gaze
At the mighty bonfire's blaze,
The tree leaves shone like silver bright,
The lanterns too were pleasing sight.

James McIntyre



The author, 1958