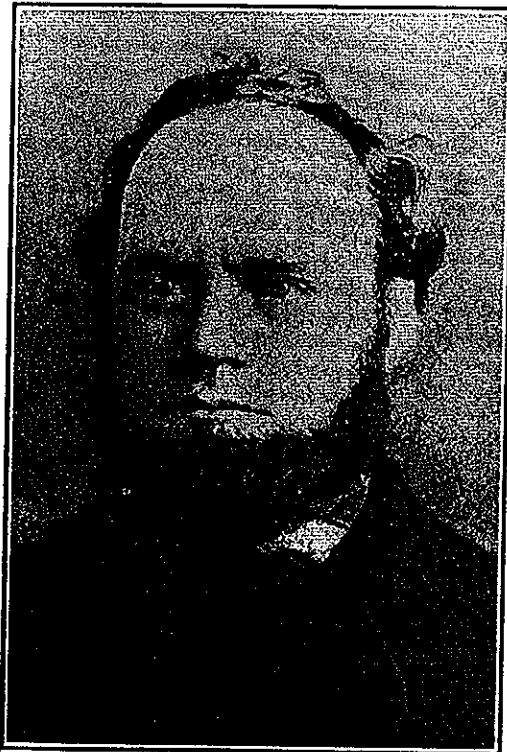


ROBERT BELL

In the Upper Canada list of Provincial Land Surveyors, published by the Government in 1862, will be found the name of Robert Bell, of Ottawa, who qualified on June 16th, 1843, and opposite his name the note "Retired."



There were two Bell families that settled in the Ottawa District, many of whom became prominent in the community. Rev. William Bell was brought out by the Government about 1817, as minister to the Presbyterians at Perth, Ontario, then a rapidly growing community. Rev. Wm. was a son of Andrew, of Scotland. He had two sons, Rev. Andrew and Robert. This last mentioned Robert Bell, of Carleton Place, was M.P. for Lanark before Confederation, and was one of those instrumental in the selection of Ottawa as the Capital of the Dominion. He was a director of the Brockville and Ottawa Railway Company.

Andrew Bell, P.L.S., of Almonte, 1835-1912, was a son of Rev. Andrew, and Dr. J. McIntosh Bell is a son of Andrew, P.L.S.

J. J. Bell, of Ottawa, and the late Dr. Robert W. Bell, of the Department of Health, Toronto, were sons of Robert Bell, M.P., of Carleton Place. Dr. Robert Bell, who was for many years on the Geological Survey of Canada, born June 3rd, 1841, died June 18th, 1917, was a brother of Andrew Bell, P.L.S.

In 1830 Robert Bell, of Strabane, near Belfast, Ireland, came to New York with his wife and three sons, William, Robert and John, with the intention of establishing a linen business. Owing to ill health, he decided to move to Canada, and early in 1832 they settled on a farm in the Township of Oxford, County of Grenville.

One son, James, was born in New York, and the following children in Oxford: Joseph, Mary, Samuel, Elizabeth and Charles.

The eldest son, William (1815-1890), qualified as a Provincial Land Surveyor in 1861, when forty-two years of age (see report, 1923).

The second son, Robert, born near Londonderry in 1823, the subject of the sketch, qualified when twenty years of age and seventeen years prior to his elder brother, William, rather a remarkable incident.

Robert took up his residence in "Bytown," now Ottawa, and for years practised there his profession of surveying. In 1854, Bytown was incorporated as a city, and the name changed to Ottawa.

For the Provincial Government he made the following surveys:—

- 1486—Complete Survey Lot letter "O," Bytown.
- 1846—Outlines Lot 39, Con. A, Nepean.
- 1846—Subdivision Lot 39, Con. A, Nepean.
- 1847—Snake River and Chalk River.
- 1847—Exploration line rear of Victoria and Colborne.
- 1848—Long Island in Lake Rideau.
- 1848—Water Lots No. 1 and No. 2, Bytown.
- 1850—Boundary Lots 33 and 17, Con. A, Nepean.
- 1850—Two water lots front of "O," Bytown.
- 1850—Road from Ottawa to Lake Openogo.

Mr. Bell made a survey of the Chaudiere Falls and the lands adjoining.

In these two Bell families there were repetitions of Christian names and there were two Roberts, one from each family, who were members of Parliament at the same time, all of which is very confusing.

Robert Bell, son of Rev. Wm. Bell, of Perth, represented the County of Lanark in the Federal House, and Robert Bell (the Surveyor), represented the County of Russell in the Federal House in 1861-1863, 7th Parliament, and the City of Ottawa in 1863-1865, 8th Parliament.

Robert Bell, P.L.S., took an active part in the development of the City of Ottawa. He was instrumental in promoting the Bytown and Ottawa Railway, which gave Ottawa a direct connection with the Grand Trunk at Prescott and with the American Railway System at Ogdensburg. This was before the Canadian Pacific Railway was commenced.

The following memorandum has been contributed by the Department of Railways and Canals:—

“The ‘Bytown and Prescott Railway Co.’ was incorporated by Act of Parliament in August, 1850; the name was changed to ‘Ottawa and Prescott Railway Co.’ in 1855, and to the ‘St. Lawrence and Ottawa’ in 1867.

“The name of Nicholas Sparks appears in the original Act as one of the subscribers and proprietors.

“A petition from the ‘Ottawa and Prescott Ry. Co.’, dated March 5th, 1856, is signed by Robert Bell as President.”

Mr. Bell and Mr. H. T. Friel were the proprietors or owners of the Ottawa Citizen from 1860 to 1868, when Mr. Bell sold his interest to a Mr. Taylor.

He was initiated into “Doric Lodge” January 15th, 1858. Many representatives of the Orange lodges and Masonic lodges were in attendance at his funeral, which was under the auspices of the Masons. The pallbearers were Messrs. Martineau, Dickensen, Taylor, Aumond, Currier, Wright, Merrill and Lees. The band of the Guards Regiment was also in attendance.

The following is from his obituary:—

“Whatever work he set his hand to was certain of accomplishment. There was no lions in his path, or at least none that could not be overcome by him, and there was nothing that in the end was not forced to yield to his indomitable pluck.

“As a friend Mr. Bell was staunch, loyal and kindly, and that his memory for many years to come will be dearly cherished, no one can doubt.”

For some years before his death he apparently retired from active participation in public affairs, although a comparatively young man.

Robert Bell married Margaret Waugh Buckham on 20th December, 1849. They had two children, Catherine Wallace, born at Bytown, 22nd June, 1851, who married J. W. McRae, of Ottawa in 1872, and Margaret Waugh, born 25th November, 1854, married Adam Buell in 1876.

Mrs. Robert Bell died on 5th August, 1868, and Mrs. McRae on September 30th, 1920, and Mrs. Buell on January 6th, 1917.

The children of Mr. and Mrs. McRae were as follows: John Bell McRae, the well known Civil Engineer, of Ottawa, who

designed the Chaudiere Dam and many other important works; James Hector McRae, Vancouver, B.C.; Margaret Katherine; Mary Elizabeth, wife of L. W. May, M.D., Edmonton, and Joseph Percy McRae, Toronto.

Mr. Buell was a member of the firm of Buell, Orde and Hurdman, lumbermen, of Ottawa and Burlington, Vt. The Buell's lived at Burlington. They had the following children: Mary Vaughan, who married Dr. M. Twitchell, of Burlington, Vt., and Katie Bell, who married Dr. George Critchelow, of Buffalo, N.Y.

After the death of his wife, Mr. Robert Bell took up his residence with his daughter, Mrs. McRae, where he died on February 25th, 1873, and was buried at Hull, P.Q.

THOMAS HUGHES

By Allan R. Davis

The subject of this sketch was born in Linlithgow, near Edinburgh, Scotland, in the year 1818.

He came to Canada, became a Provincial Land Surveyor on April 11th, 1857, and practiced as a Surveyor and civil engineer in various parts of the country until the time of his death in Napanee, Ont., on the 25th of March, 1883.

Thomas Hughes was an assistant engineer on the Ontario Division of the Canadian Pacific Railway for a time, residing with his wife in Napanee where, having no children of their own, they adopted two small children, brother and sister, who grew to manhood and womanhood and moved elsewhere before the death of their foster-parents, both children dying since, leaving no issue.

The Hughes' belonged to the Methodist Church in Napanee, where for many years they regularly attended service, and were known by a wide circle of friends as exemplary citizens and good, Christian people.

A monument was erected to the memory of Thomas Hughes by his widow, in the Eastern Methodist cemetery, Napanee, shortly after his death, in 1883, bearing an inscription which gives the above information concerning the date of his birth and death. The widow Hughes survived her husband a few years and presumably was buried in the plot beside him, but there is no inscription upon the monument to record the fact or the date of her death.

No photograph could be obtained of Mr. Hughes.