

ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO LAND SURVEYORS



ALBERT VICTOR CHASE

Albert Victor Chase was born in Orillia on March 4, 1883. His parents, George Albert Chase and Sarah Binns Chase, had a large family and Victor was one of the younger of the children. He received his primary school education in Orillia and also attended High School there. He graduated and was accepted into the School of Practical Science at the University of Toronto. He graduated in the year 1905, from this school. He served his apprenticeship, as an Ontario Land Surveyor, with J. Harrison Moore of Smiths Falls, Ontario, and he was admitted to practice on April 21, 1909. The remainder of the year 1909 he spent in a general survey practice in the City of Toronto.

He received his commission as a Dominion Land Surveyor (No. 423) on October 11, 1910.

From 1910 until 1913 he was engaged by the Department of Interior, Ottawa, working in British Columbia.

His work at this time consisted partly of surveying and partly examining the lands in the South Central area of the province. Starting in the Tranquille Forest Reserve and in the valley of the Tranquille River in Townships 22 and 23, Range 20 west of the sixth meridian, he worked on to Criss Creek, Deadman River and Pass Valley north of the Thompson River. He also worked through parts of the areas around Cache Creek, Bonapart River, Selin Valley, Hi-Hium Creek, Hat Creek and in to Lytton and the Lower Nicola Indian Reserve No. 10. He surveyed the fourth correction line, where it crosses the Fraser River and a portion of Section 35, Township 14, Range 27, West of the Fraser River. He traversed the West bank of the Fraser and tied in Lytton Indian Reserve No. 26 to the Dominion System, continuing his traverse down the East bank of the Fraser tying in to the remains of a wooden post, mound and bearing tree on the north boundary of the Kanaka Bar Indian Reserve No. 2.

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He continued his work into Venables Valley from Oregon Jack Valley, then on to Twaal Creek. Remaining east of the Fraser River he continued on to Merritt, B.C. Late in 1912, he moved to the West of the Fraser River, and continued his work in lands adjoining Boston Bar Indian Reserve No. 4. He also examined lands in the valley of the Nahatlatch River, Nahatlatch and Hannah Lakes.

During this interval, he reported on soil conditions, rock formation, amounts and location of arable land, crop possibilities, forest conditions and types of trees found, settlers and numbers in settlements, approximate elevations of "bench" lands and valleys, approximate acreages or percentages of townships under cultivation, pasturage, roads and their conditions, and transportation generally whether by rail, boat, pack train or by trail packed by man. His reports are very detailed and give quite a complete picture of the areas traversed.

It can be seen that he had considerable contact with the Indians of the region and he became proficient in the Cree and Blackfoot languages. He was given a name by the Cree Indians and was known as "Little Dog", probably due to his tenacity in the carrying out of his work.

In the years from 1914 to 1916 Victor Chase was engaged in making right-of-way surveys along the Severn Division of the Trent Canal System, and became quite familiar with the waterway throughout its northern length. In 1919 he moved again to Orillia where he carried on a general surveying and engineering practice including railway and highway locations, roads and pavements, sewage disposal, land drainage, water storage and irrigation until 1925, so that in his lifetime he had a well rounded career, both as an engineer and a surveyor.

In 1927, Victor met and married Mary Alice Macdonald. Mary Alice, or Molly, as she was better known, and Victor were inseparable and a devoted couple. Their interests include bridge, elocution, music and the Coterie Players, a drama group. Molly was a trained elocutionist and Vic, an accomplished musician, often provided the musical background for her recitals. In the "Players" productions, usually for charitable purposes, Vic was an accomplished actor, and Molly directed.

In 1928, Victor joined the staff of the Department of City Planning and Surveying in Toronto where he worked as a senior planner until his retirement in 1952. One of the early projects, in the late 20's, in which he was engaged was an extensive Plane Table Survey of the suburban area outside the City, known as the Toronto Urban City Zone. The Geodetic Survey of 1909 was used as a base for this survey. The purpose was to arrive at a reasonable, yet economical determination, of the physical topography of the area which is now included within the bounds of Metropolitan Toronto. One of his associates related that they used an old McLaughlin automobile to travel from the City Hall out to the job and when the weather was good, especially in the summer time, they used to camp out in the "country", at Bayview and Steeles Avenues.

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"Vic", as he was known, was a very clever mathematician. He devised simplified formulas for many of the survey and engineering problems which arose during his practice and recorded these in the notebook that was always at his side as he worked. He was always willing to help his associates and students in mathematical matters and his talents were widely known among the City staff.

Vic and Molly lived their lives together until late 1953 at the same address on Radford Avenue in Toronto, when their happy idyll was broken by Molly's passing.

Vic then moved to Guildwood Villa in 1966 where he pursued his interest in Science and Space Travel. He even made his own calculations for some of the "shots".

Here he spent his remaining years and passed away on February 26, 1972 in his 89th year. He was buried in Orillia, his home in the early years.

He will be remembered as a quiet, scholarly gentleman, of ready wit, and helpful nature, devoted to his family, conscientious and thorough in his work — a friend.