

BIOGRAPHIES

month, entered into service with Lane and Lane, Ontario Land Surveyors, with whom he remained until May, 1949. Meanwhile he was, on April 25th, 1949, commissioned to practice as an Ontario Land Surveyor.

In June of 1949, he entered the employment of the Geological Department of The International Company of Canada which employment was terminated by his untimely death five years later.

THOMAS RUSS DEACON

O.L.S., B.Sc. (Toronto)

From a lowly position as a clerk in a store at 11 years of age, later as clerk and foreman in a lumber camp, onward to be an engineer and surveyor, and finally to be an industrialist of no mean ability, Mr. Deacon lived an intensive and successful life.

He was born in the town of Perth, Ontario, January 3rd, 1865. His store clerkship lasted but one year and, learning of the great activity in the lumbering industry along the Ottawa River decided that there he should go. First as a camp clerk, then later as a foreman he thought of further education and so at the age of 20 he entered Pembroke High School. He proved an adept pupil and was advised to study for an engineer. So he sampled an engineer's field duties by working on a survey party in the Banff area for a season, liked the work and the life, and a decision was made. Therefore, he returned east and entered on an engineering course in the School of Practical Science (Toronto University). Graduating as a mining engineer, and having secured his Ontario Land Surveyors commission on November 12th, 1892, he located at Kenora (then Rat Portage). At that time gold mining was booming in that area, and there was plenty of surveying. For the next 10 years he spent a busy life surveying many many mining claims and tourist cottage sites and islands. Too he surveyed for the Ontario Government the Townships of Jaffray, Haycock and Halkirk, and generally was a busy surveyor in Kenora and Thunder Bay districts.

Then 10 years later (1902) he decided to move to Winnipeg, and there he made his home for the balance of his days. But he was not inactive for he saw an opportunity for a heavy industry for the fast growing west and was one of the principal incorporators of the very successful Manitoba Bridge and Engineering Works, later the Manitoba Bridge Company of which he was President. Later in 1930 this



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company was wholly taken over by the huge Dominion Bridge Company of Montreal, with Mr. Deacon continuing as a director for many years.

He took a very great interest in Winnipeg's welfare, served on the City's Board of Trade for years, on the City Council for years, and was the City's Mayor in 1913-1914. That Winnipeg has so good and so plentiful a supply of water today was his vision of conveying water from Shoal Lake.

He always was a lover of the outdoor life and so continued in his later years. Much of his later spare time was spent in travel in northern Europe and in South America.

Mr. Deacon's wife predeceased him by some years, but there were left to mourn his passing, a daughter, Mrs. Gordon Jamieson of Toronto; sons, Ronald of Toronto, and Dr. Alfred of Winnipeg. A son Lieutenant Lester, was killed on active duty in France in 1917, during World War I.

On Sunday May 29th, 1955 at the ripe old age of 90, our subject passed away and, after a service at the United Church of Canada which was widely attended, he was laid to rest in St. John's Cathedral Cemetery in Winnipeg.

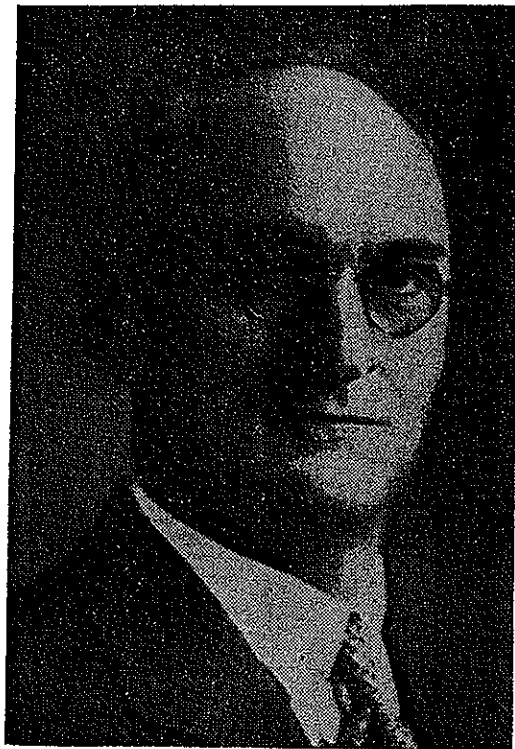
WILBERT SILAS GIBSON, O.L.S.

On January 23rd, 1955, death removed one more of that long line of Gibsons who were active in the surveying profession in Ontario. To our Association it was the loss of one more of "our" Gibsons.

The grandfather of our subject was a surveyor in Scotland before coming to Canada in 1825, locating on a farm near Toronto (now Willowdale) and engaging in land surveying. He, David Gibson, became Toronto's first City Surveyor and also was a member of the first Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada.

Here on the farm was born the first of the list of O.L.S. Gibsons in the person of Peter Silas who became one of the prominent surveyors of his day. His biography may be found in the O.L.S. report for 1917. Next came the second Canadian born Gibson surveyor—our subject—he was born on that farm on April 21st, 1875, served his apprenticeship with his father and obtained his O.L.S. commission on February 21st, 1898. Before moving from the farm Wilbert's son Silas Elden was born.

In 1908, the family moved to north Toronto (Willowdale at that time) where Mr. Gibson had built a home and office. Continuously under the name of "Wilbert S. Gibson and Sons" the practice has been carried on at that location. Another son also now an



O.L.S. was born there, Charles Wilbert Gibson.