

JOHN GALBRAITH, M.A., LL.D.

No man was better known throughout the Province of Ontario by the profession than Dean Galbraith, of the School of Practical Science.

His father, Thos. Galbraith, came to Canada from Berwickshire in 1834, and for some time resided at Montreal, where his eldest son, John, was born on September 5th, 1846. He afterwards removed to Port Hope, where John attended the Grammar School, and when a student became acquainted with George A. Stewart, an engineer on the Midland Railway. At that time Mr. Stewart was a powerful man, a fine canoe-man, and a master of wood-craft, in whom the student



DEAN GALBRAITH.

Galbraith found a hero whom he desired to emulate. He then decided to become a civil engineer, and intended to take a course at McGill, but as the McGill School of Engineering, established in 1859, was then in a comatose state, he was induced by J. B. Cherriman, at that time Professor of Mathematics and Physics in the University of Toronto, to take a B.A. course, giving particular attention to mathematics. This he did, graduating with honors in 1868.

In 1866, when yet an undergraduate, he accompanied Mr. Stewart as head chairman on a Government survey on the north shore of Lake Huron. Prof. W. H. Ellis thus describes his adventures of that season:

"The trip included a journey of several hundred miles through dense forest interspersed with lakes and rivers, with no other guide than the compass and the stars, save an occasional rude map drawn by an Indian on birch bark. Stewart found him a most useful assistant, showing indomitable pluck and a never failing readiness to do anything and everything to help matters along.

"He was 'full of mathematics,' and the chief and his young assistant had many an interesting discussion over the camp fire.

"At length a belated newspaper overtook the party containing an account of the Fenian Raid and the skirmish of the 2nd of June, 1866, in which seven fellow-students of Galbraith, his comrades in the University Rifles, had been killed or wounded. He told his chief that he must go at once to join his regiment. Stewart asked him how he proposed to go. He said, 'I will get the Indians to take me across to Collingwood and go straight to Toronto from there.' His chief argued in vain about the dangers of such a trip, which he estimated as a hundred and fifty miles of open water across Lake Huron and in a birch bark canoe. But no danger could daunt and no difficulties quell Galbraith's indomitable courage. He set out on his adventurous voyage, and reached Collingwood in safety. There he learned that the trouble was over and the troops had returned home. Without delay he launched his canoe once more, and pointing her in the direction whence he had come traversed again the long stretch of wind-swept water that tossed between him and his chief, with whom he remained till the work was completed.

"He had with him on this occasion an Indian from Rama, John Peters by name, who became devotedly attached to him, and from whom he gained much of that familiarity with woodcraft and Indian lore, which distinguished him in after life. Years afterwards John Peters told me that had it come on to blow at all hard while they were crossing the lake, loaded as they were, they must inevitably have been swamped.

"Shortly after this Mr. Stewart was appointed chief engineer of the Midland Railway, and Galbraith became one of his principal assistants. After leaving Mr. Stewart he went to the United States to get some practice in mechanical engineering, and was employed for a time in the Baldwin Locomotive Works. Returning to Canada, he was employed on the construction of the Intercolonial Railway as contractor's engineer."

After graduation he was employed on the Intercolonial Railway, Midland Railway extension to the Town of Midland, and from 1875 to 1877 was engaged on surveys for the then proposed Canadian Pacific Railway.

He passed his final examinations as Provincial land surveyor on April 13th, 1875.

Upon the organization of the School of Practical Science in Toronto in 1878, he was appointed to the Chair of Engineering, and in 1889 was appointed principal. In 1906, when the school became the Faculty of Applied Science in Engineering of the University of Toronto, he was appointed Dean, which position he held until his death. For thirty-six years, therefore, he was responsible for the engineering education of Toronto, and of his remarkable success there can be no question. He was a great teacher, an able, efficient administrator, and model presiding officer.

He early became an associate member of the Institution of Civil Engineering of Great Britain, and was one of the founders of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers. In 1909 he was elected President of this society.

In 1875 he received the degree of M.A. from Toronto University, and in 1902 the honorary degree of LL.D. by his Alma Mater, and in 1903 Queen's University honored him with the same degree.

Of his work outside of the School of Practical Science, the most important is probably that in connection with the Quebec Bridge enquiry. This huge structure fell on August 29th, 1907, when under construction. Dean Galbraith was appointed one of a commission to investigate and report upon the failure.

Notwithstanding his many arduous duties, he maintained a continual interest in the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors, and seldom absented himself from the annual dinner. The older members of the Association will recall with pleasure his after-dinner speeches upon topical subjects. During the early Perry explorations astronomical difficulties at the Pole were brought to the attention of the surveyors. On another occasion the underlying principles of the fourth dimension of space were elucidated, and at one of the latest dinners he attended the prospectus of the Skutawabo Liquid Silver Mining Co., Limited, were presented in a most attractive way to those present. His loss to the Association is keenly felt, as a large percentage of the surveyors are graduates in engineering from the School of Practical Science.

Although he had not enjoyed the best of health for some years, his friends were shocked when his death was announced. He attended to his duties at the University during the season of 1913-14, and, shortly after the close of the session, left for his summer cottage at Go-Home Bay. He died suddenly from

heart failure on July 22nd, 1914, and was buried at Mount Pleasant Cemetery on Saturday, July 25th. The funeral was attended by representatives from every class of engineering since the founding of the School, and representatives were also present from engineering organizations throughout and beyond the Dominion.

In 1886 he married Emily Stupart, youngest daughter of Capt. R. D. Stupart, R.N., and sister of R. F. Stupart, of the Meteorological Office. His widow, one daughter Beatrix and two sons, John Stupart and Douglas; and two brothers, Thomas of the Mail staff and William of Prince Albert, survive.

We take the liberty of quoting verbatim from Dr. W. H. Ellis' article that appeared in the University Monthly, Nov., 1914. Dr. Ellis was closely associated with Dean Galbraith at the School of Practical Science from the founding of the Institution, and is now acting Dean.

"Such was Galbraith as the world saw him. Shrewd, clear-headed, straightforward, undaunted, indefatigable. To his friends he revealed another side of his nature. Beneath the somewhat hard exterior, they knew that there beat a warm, generous, loving heart and they discovered hidden springs of poetry and romance little suspected by superficial acquaintances.

"From boyhood Galbraith was a lover of nature and especially of wild, untrodden ways. One of his earliest vacations was spent in a canoe trip from Lake Superior to Hudson Bay, returning by way of the Saguenay. All through his life he sought and found rest and recreation in the forest and on the water. He was not a sportsman. He cared little for shooting or fishing, but he loved to see and to study wild life of all kinds in its native haunts. On such expeditions he was a delightful companion, skilful, resourceful, cool, courageous, patient and cheerful.

"For society in the conventional sense he cared nothing, but no one enjoyed better an evening with a few congenial friends. In such society the burden of care, which he so uncomplainingly carried, slipped away and he was gay and even jovial, while his rich stores of varied reminiscences added no little to the enjoyment of the company.

"The extraordinary affection which he inspired in all his students was manifested in the magnificent tribute which they paid him at the banquet last December (1913), when 600 of his old pupils gathered together to do him honour. Few men have found themselves before their work was done so richly rewarded by the love and gratitude of those for whom they laboured as John Galbraith."