

BROOKES WRIGHT GOSSAGE

Lieut. Colonel Brookes Wright Gossage, was born at Creaton, Northamptonshire, England, on Thursday, January 26th, 1832. He was the seventh and youngest child of Thomas Gossage and Mary Bosworth. His mother came from an old and well known Northampton family, Highgate House being the name of their country seat.

The Gossages had a strong Spanish strain and were considered the handsomest and most temperamental people in the shire, and the country folk delighted to tell tales of their strength and daring.

Col. Gossage remembered hearing the bells toll when King William died, and when Queen Victoria was crowned. On the latter occasion the working people were given a grand dinner in the barn at his father's place, and they asked that Master Brookes might be put on the table to walk down the middle and show himself.

Brookes Wright Gossage was educated at a boy's school in Spratton and at the age of twenty-one, decided to go to Australia and seek his fortune, but upon reaching Liverpool, he found the first boat to sail was bound for America, so he simply changed his destination and his family only knew this when a letter reached them saying he was safe and sound in Toronto, Canada. This was in 1853.

He decided upon the profession of land surveying and civil engineering, and became articled to the late Col. J. Stoughton Dennis, of Weston and Toronto, and served his time with him, living with Col. Dennis in his home, south of Weston.

He was granted his certificate as a Provincial Land Surveyor on April 11th, 1857. He entered into partnership with Colonel Dennis about 1860, which partnership continued until 1866:



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This firm laid out ten townships in the Haliburton District, for an English Company, under instructions from the Crown Lands Department in 1862, viz., Dysart, Dudley, Harcourt, Harburn, Guilford, Bruton, Eyre, Clyde, Havelock and Longford. They also made a large number of surveys in Toronto and other portions of the Province.

He made certain surveys on Manitoulin Islands and in the Northwest. For the Government he also surveyed the Ordnance Land at Prescott, upon which Fort Wellington stands, in 1859, and the south boundary of North Gwillimbury in 1865.

He was Superintendent of York roads from 1865 to 1868.

He took a course of training at the Military School and during the visit of King Edward, then Prince of Wales, in 1861, he was one of the Aides-de-camp.

He served in the Canadian Forces during the Fenian Raid in 1866, attaining the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and for his services was awarded a Fenian Raid medal.

The following surveyors served under articles to Dennis and Gossage: J. J. Francis, 1861; Milner Hart, 1863, and Maurice Gaviller, 1866.

During a depression in the business of land surveying and engineering he entered into partnership with the Aldwells, who were then carrying on a brewing business on Simcoe Street. This, however, was not a profitable venture, and he soon retired from it.

About 1870 he entered into partnership with Wagner & Miles, and this firm of surveyors made the right of way surveys for the Canadian Southern Railway Company. He also did some contracting work with the late Aister Mackenzie Clark, the firm being known as Gossage & Clark, and built a portion of the Canadian Southern Railway. He was appointed Chief Engineer of this road with headquarters at St. Thomas, Ontario, which position he held until the Railway was taken over by the Michigan Central Railway in 1874. He afterwards engaged in private practice until his death, which occurred at his home, Creaton Lodge, St. Thomas, Ont., on August 28th, 1899.

He was a man of unusual physique, standing over six feet, and built proportionately. He had the bodily strength of any two ordinary men, although for a long time a martyr to gout, but retained his vigor until his death. He was a keen sportsman and had some splendid specimens of buffalo, moose, deer and lynx, which are still in the possession of members of his family. Coming from a hunting county he had ridden to hounds from his youth and hunted with the famous Pychley and Quorn packs, and was instrumental in bringing out a fine pack of hounds from the old country.

He was also a member of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club and the Toronto Club when these organizations were in their infancy.

He married Elizabeth Agnes, eldest daughter of Alexander Murray of Toronto in 1862. There were six children from this union, four of whom are still living: Ellen Frances, wife of Dr. J. C. Gill, of Chicago; Charles Arthur of the Dominion Bank, Toronto, Alice Bosworth, wife of J. S. Brierley, Montreal, and Edith Esten Maney, of Peoria, Ill.

Five of his grandsons enlisted in the great war: Terence A. Gill, Norman Gossage Gill, Brookes Ferrar Gossage, George Murray Gossage and Charles Davidson Gossage.

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty, Lieut. B. F. Gossage was awarded the Military Cross when serving with the 66th Battery.

W. R. THISTLE

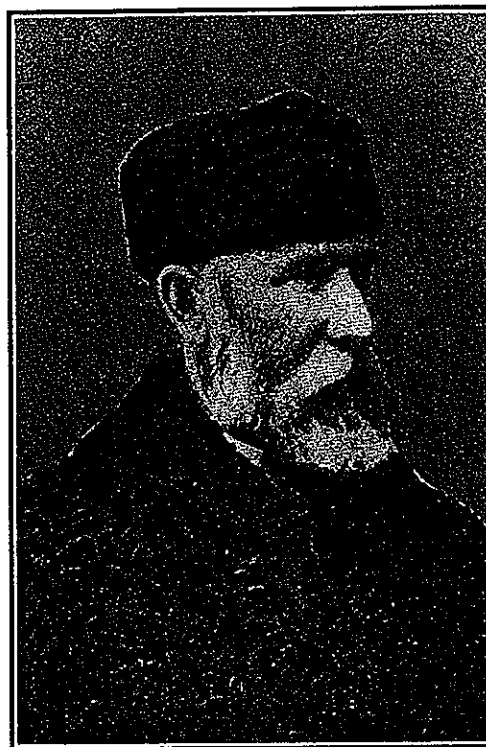
William Ryan Thistle was born at Thistletown near Weston, York County, Ontario, in 1837, his father being Dr. Thistle, after whom the village was named.

He received his education at the Weston Public School and at Upper Canada College.

He served under articles to Colonel J. S. Dennis, then residing near Weston, who at that time had an extensive practice in land surveying throughout the Province of Ontario.

Mr. Thistle passed his final examination as a Provincial Land Surveyor on July 19th, 1858. He made surveys in the Lake Huron District, Lake Superior District and in the vicinity of Toronto. He also made surveys of Ordnance Lands in connection with the Rideau Canal at Ottawa, in 1859.

In 1860-61, Mr. Thistle surveyed a timber berth on the River Severn, and in 1866, Ordnance property for the Provincial Government.



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