



WM. HASKINS.

WILLIAM HASKINS.

An obituary notice of William Haskins appeared on page 182 of the 1896 Proceedings. Mr. Haskins served his apprenticeship with F. F. Passmore, P.L.S.

A portrait is now published, and the following additional information has been contributed by Mr. E. G. Barrow.

Mr. Haskins was a universal favorite, being of a genial and kindly disposition, but it is impossible for a man holding the position of City Engineer to escape making some enemies. In this connection he related

to me one day that a celebrated Phrenologist came to the city and gave public exhibitions of his skill. One of them Mr. Haskins attended, and during the performance his most bitter enemy called out for Haskins to go to the platform, expecting that some disagreeable characteristic would be revealed by the Phrenologist, but much to the chagrin and discomfiture of this man, the Phrenologist, after feeling his head all over, said: "You can place perfect confidence in this man; he could not be dishonest if he tried," and words to that effect.

The occasion before alluded to, when our friendship was nearly broken, happened in this way: I was Assistant City Engineer at the time, and Mr. Chas. Wallace was my assistant. Mr. Haskins had received orders from the City Council to prepare estimates and plans of the Beckett Drive, a scenic road on the side of the Mountain at Hamilton. The public were much interested in this matter, some predicting failure on account of the sliding nature of the ground and soft clay on which the road had to be built. Mr. Haskins was very anxious that the press should not gather any information as to cost, grades, etc., until he had presented his complete report to the City Council, so he gave the key of a room in an obscure part of the City Hall to me, and gave orders to have the door locked and put the key

in my pocket at night. Here Mr. Wallace and I made the plans and estimates under his instructions. We had nearly completed our work when to our horror and dismay the whole cost of the road with grades and other information was published in one of the newspapers.

Mr. Haskins naturally blamed me for it, as being the only person having the key to the room, and Mr. Wallace denied giving any information. As it was placing me in a very bad position, Mr. Morrison, now Col. E. B. Morrison, D.S.A., then admitted that he had got a key from the caretaker of the City Hall, who probably did not think what the consequences would be. This explanation of course, satisfied Mr. Haskins, and I remained his Chief Assistant until his death in 1896.

Besides being a very clever engineer, he was also an expert in fruit growing and had a farm of 40 acres which was skillfully underdrained, and in every way a model farm. This was his hobby, and he was about to drive me out to it on the day of his death.

I cannot do better in conclusion than to quote a paragraph from the Hamilton Spectator:—

“Mr. Haskins was a good man, with all that the words imply; an excellent citizen, a warm and loyal friend, a just and careful public officer, and a genial gentleman with whom personal acquaintance was both a pleasure and an honor.”

WILLIAM ROBINSON.

William Robinson was born in New Ross, County of Wexford, Ireland, March 17th, 1812, and received his education from an uncle who was a professor in the Trinity College, Dublin, and from a brother who was a surveyor on the Trigonometrical Survey of Ireland; he came to Canada with his family in 1833 and settled with his father in the Township of Burford. The following spring he went to Hamilton and obtained employment as a carpenter; from Hamilton he went to Brantford, and in 1839 he went to London and obtained employment from the contractor who built the Barracks in that city.

He then went to Toronto and obtained employment for two years with Thos. Young, the Architect of the University of Kings College, City Engineer, and Drawing Master at the