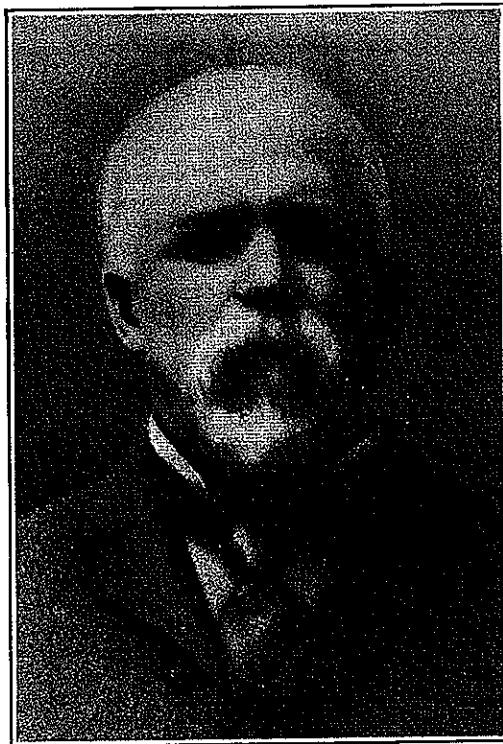


WM. G. McGEORGE, SEN.

By W. G. McGeorge, Jr.

William Graham McGeorge, although of Scotch ancestry, was born in Wales on Aug. 19th, 1838. His grandfather, William McGeorge, was born and died in Scotland. His father, William McGeorge, was a Civil Engineer, having been educated at the University of Edinburgh, and having married Jessie Graham of Scotland. He followed his profession in England, Wales and Scotland until the year 1848, when he moved with his family to the New World and engaged in engineering work in the States of New York and Vermont. About the year 1857 he moved with his family to Canada and settled at Rondeau (now Blenheim) in Kent County, and there he died in 1866. Beside William Graham McGeorge, he left another son, Joseph, and two daughters, Margaret and Jessie. Margaret had married George Flater of Blenheim, Mr. F. W. Flater, O.L.S., of Chatham, being a son.



William Graham McGeorge, after his early education had been obtained, taught school for a number of years and at the same time studied surveying. He was apprenticed with Sherman Malcolm, P.L.S., and was admitted to practice as a Provincial Land Surveyor on June 8th, 1866, the same year he lost his father. He practiced at Rondeau for a time, but later moved to Chatham, where he practiced during the remainder of his life.

During the first years of his practice he did a great deal

of survey work, retracing and running lines in Kent and the adjoining counties.

For the Provincial Government Mr. McGeorge made a number of re-surveys, the most important being as follows:

1872—9th concession Aldborough, line between Counties of Elgin and Kent.

1873—Five concession lines in Raleigh, and one concession in Oxford.

1876—Re-surveys of certain lines in E. Dover and Oxford.

1877—Two concessions in Romney, and lots in Howard.

1881-85—Middle Road, Twp. Oxford.

Early in his career, however, he turned his attention to the engineering work necessary for the draining and reclaiming of much of that portion of the county, and it was largely to work of this nature that he devoted many years of his life.

Of the many gravity drainage works he designed, two might be mentioned, namely, the Little Bear Creek Drain in the Townships of Chatham and Dover and the Raleigh Plains Drain in the Township of Raleigh, both in the County of Kent. The former drain was about twenty miles in length, and its lower reaches had a bottom width of forty-five feet. Its cost aggregated sixty thousand dollars, which was a large sum at the time of its construction, about 1893. The Raleigh Plains Drain was about five miles in length, provided an outlet for eighty or ninety thousand acres of land, and had bottom widths from twenty to eighty feet. Its cost was fifty thousand dollars or thereabouts.

Of the embanking and pumping schemes which he designed, the Skinner Drainage Works and the Pike Drainage Works in the Townships of Chatham and Raleigh, respectively, were among the most noteworthy. The Skinner Drainage Works reclaimed about five thousand five hundred acres of land, and the Pike Drainage Works over three thousand acres, and although large portions of these lands are below lake level, they are among the most productive in Western Ontario.

In addition to his drainage work, Mr. McGeorge had charge of the construction of many large bridges over the River Sydenham and River Thames, he having acted as County Engineer for the County of Kent for upwards of twenty-five years. Among these bridges might be mentioned the Wallace-

burg Bridges, Tupperville Bridge, Dresden Bridge, Bothwell Bridge, Moraviantown Bridge, Thamesville Bridge and Kent Bridge, all of which are from two hundred to four hundred feet in length.

Mr. McGeorge re-surveyed the Moravian Indian Reserve about the year 1903, and in 1906 was engaged in re-surveying the Walpole Island Indian Reserve in the St. Clair River when he was stricken with heart trouble. He was removed to his home at Chatham, but on July 1st passed away.

During his practice he had a number of apprentices who afterwards became well known in the profession, of whom might be mentioned Mr. James A. Bell, St. Thomas; Mr. Alex Baird of Leamington, and Mr. F. W. Flater of Chatham.

Mr. McGeorge married Miss Jane Gardiner of Chatham in 1873, and to them were born seven children, of whom three died in childhood. In 1901 Mrs. McGeorge passed away, leaving four children, Ethel, Sybil, Flora and William Graham, all of whom are still living at this date.