

ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO LAND SURVEYORS



ROBERT BINNIE MCKAY, B.Sc., O.L.S., D.L.S.

MR. MCKAY was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert McKay of Cornwall, and was born on April 21st, 1883. Other members of the family were Dr. Bertram R. Mackay, a geologist with the Department of Mines at Ottawa, Rev. Dr. James MacKay of Toronto, Miss Elizabeth MacKay of Ottawa and Miss Katherine MacKay of Sarasota, Florida.

Following Public and High Schools at Cornwall he enrolled at Queen's University and graduated from the School of Mining in 1904. He was a brilliant student and was awarded scholarships during his first and third years.

Following graduation, he worked at the Helen Mine in the Lake Superior area, thence to British Columbia, and Tonopah, Nevada, and San Francisco, where he established a practice as Mineral Surveyor and Mining Engineer.

In 1912 he returned to Canada and qualified as a Dominion and British Columbia Land Surveyor. He was employed by the Dominion Government on surveys in British Columbia and the Athabasca and Great Slave Lake areas. In 1919 he moved to Ottawa to serve with Dr. Deville in the pioneering stages of aerial photographic mapping. He was appointed chief of the Aerial Section of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, which post he held at his retirement from the Civil Service. He developed the principles upon which much of modern aerial map photography is based. "Canadian high oblique method" as McKay's development is known, was widely used, when it was superseded by trimetrogon, an American refinement of McKay's original concept which was made possible by the development of wide-angled camera lenses. McKay's high oblique method was adopted by the British War Office.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BIOGRAPHY

Mr. McKay was the first Canadian to be awarded an honorary membership by the American Society of Photogrammetry for his "outstanding knowledge of photogrammetric principles and his contribution to the advancement of photogrammetry".

Mr. McKay was an Honorary Member of the Canadian Institute of Surveying, and the Professional Institute of the Civil Service. He was an enthusiastic curler and was a life member of the Glebe Curling Club of Ottawa. His wife, Jessie Neilson, predeceased him in 1961. He died at Ottawa on October 12th, 1963, and interment was at Beechwood Cemetery.

A photograph of Mr. McKay appeared, with an obituary, in the March, 1964 issue of The Canadian Surveyor.

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