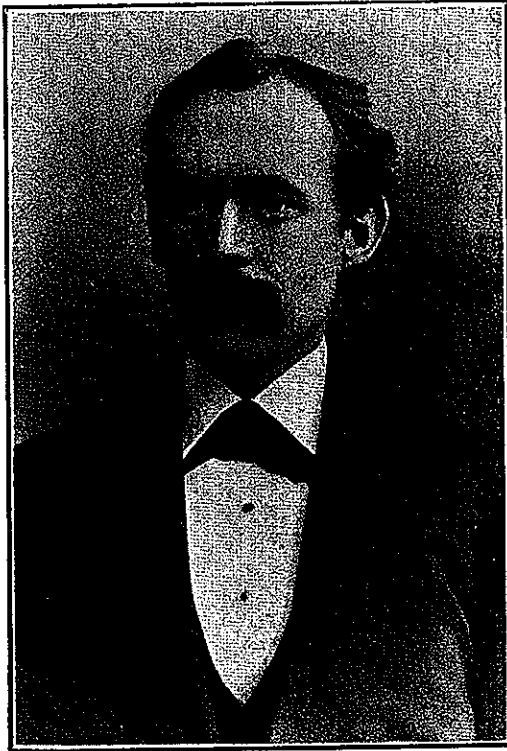


## RICHARD PURDOM

By R. P. Fairbairn.



Richard Purdom was born in Hawick, Scotland, on the 15th of November, 1849. He was the eldest son of Alexander Purdom and Margaret Hunter, and came to London, Canada, with his parents in his first year. Alexander Purdom became a successful builder and contractor, many public buildings, churches and private dwellings being built by him. Richard Purdom was educated in the London Schools under the late Nicholas Wilson and J. B. Boyle. He spent a year with his father as a builder and obtained a useful knowledge of building that was of much value to him upon taking up the

study of Architecture. He became articled as a student with the late William Robinson, P.L.S., City Engineer of London, who also had a large practice as an Architect both in the city and the western peninsula of Ontario. While a student he had a varied experience in surveying in retracing boundary lines in the city and townships. He spent some time in drainage engineering with the late T. W. Dyas, P.L.S., a former student of Mr. Robinson. He also was a member of the staff of engineers on the preliminary survey of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway. Colonel Thos. H. Tracy, now of Vancouver, and the late Geo. F. Durand, were fellow students of Mr. Purdom. Mr. Tracy and Mr. Purdom were associated for some time in the Department of Public Works and Mr. Durand joined Fuller and Laver, Architects for the New York State Capitol at Albany.

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Mr. Purdom became a Provincial Land Surveyor on July 6th, 1872, and entered the service of the Ontario Department of Public Works in the same year. His services were highly appreciated by the late Mr. Kivas Tully, C.E., the Chief Officer of the Department and by the late Hon. C. F. Fraser, Commissioner of Public Works. Mr. Purdom was Mr. Tully's Chief Assistant and under instructions from Mr. Fraser, reported on plans for the then proposed new Parliament Buildings.

Mr. Purdom had a bright future before him at the time of his death, which occurred in June, 1882, at the age of 32 years, after a very short illness. His work in the Department was chiefly as an Architect. He was offered the position of Engineer of the Department, but he refused it because the work was not congenial to him. He was engaged on the problem of new Parliament Buildings when his life was suddenly cut off. Had he lived, there is no doubt he would have been the Architect of the Ontario Parliament and Departmental Buildings, as it is believed that this was Mr. Fraser's desire.

As a surveyor, he made valuable maps of the Provincial Government properties under the control of the Department of Public Works. During his service in the Department of Public Works he was endeared to all the public servants with whom he came in contact in the different public buildings.

Mr. Purdom was unmarried. He was survived by three brothers—Thos. H. Purdom, K.C., Barrister of London; John Purdom, a successful Contractor, who died in July, 1921, and Alexander Purdom, Barrister, all prominent men in the business life of London, Ontario. Mr. Richard Purdom Fairbairn, O.L.S., Deputy Minister of Public Works, is a cousin of Mr. Purdom, his mother, Margaret, having been a sister of Alexander Purdom.