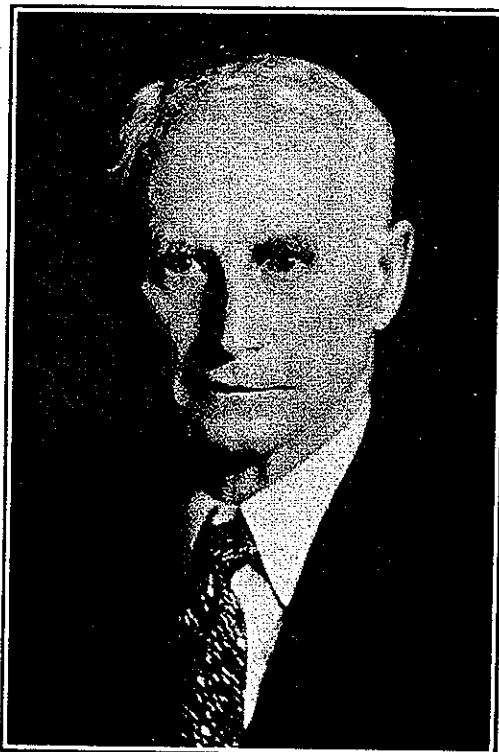


WILLIAM ROBINSON REILLY**Son of Francis Bell and Elizabeth Reilly**

I was born in the Village of Wardsville in the County of Middlesex, Upper Canada (Ontario) August 10th, 1857. My father was born in the Parish of Killmore County of Armagh, Ireland. My mother was born near my native Village of Wardsville. Her parents were from the same part of Ireland as that of my father. I was one of a grown up family of nine having one sister (now 83 years old) and one brother older than myself and three brothers and three sisters younger.

My father was a builder and cabinet maker. He operated in connection with his eldest son and other partners, a planing mill, cabinet factory and saw mill. From an early age I had free use of any tool in the shop, and the operating of wood working machines. I was a mechanic when at the age of nineteen. I was apprenticed to S. Peters and Son, London, Ont. (Architects and Civil Engineers and Surveyors). While with this firm particular attention was paid to architectural work. On account of S. Peters, P.L.S., retiring from active survey work, I was articled to John O. Mara, P.L.S., engaged in survey work in Middlesex, Elgin, Kent and Lambton Counties, obtaining my P.L.S. certificate in 1881.

In February, 1882 I engaged with Disbrow & Laycock, Real Estate Agents, Winnipeg, to survey town sites. The real estate boom was at its height at that time. It collapsed in June. When I left this firm I had laid out in small lots over four hundred acres in different town sites. I then engaged with Murdock Armstrong & Beddoe, Engineers and Surveyors,



for whom I laid out in small lots over eight hundred acres at Rapid City, north of Brandon.

I finished the season's work of 1882 by surveying a timber limit at the head of Swan River on the west side of the Porcupine Mountains. The route to the work was from Moosomin on the C.P.R. thence by trail to Fort Ellice on the Assiniboine River up the river to Fort Pelly. From Fort Pelly ten miles to Livingston on the Swan River then up the river to the site of the limits.

Livingston was the first capital of the North West Territories. The first session of the Territorial Council was held there March 8th, 1877. It was the headquarters of the North West Mounted Police from Nov. 27th, 1876 to March, 1877. A cairn to mark the site has been erected by the Historical Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

In May, 1883 I outfitted to subdivide by contract Townships 19 and 20, Ranges 18 to 23 inclusive, west of the 3rd meridian. A tract that extended west from the South Saskatchewan River into the great sand hills. I unloaded supplies at Waldeck on the C.P.R. the most convenient point to get on the old Hundon's Bay trail to Edmonton which passed through the townships.

Construction trains on the C.P.R. had reached Swift Current. The work on the line west of there was being pushed forward with as much energy as had been exerted in 1882 when all records of railroad building had been surpassed. Innumeral canvas tents large and small supplied accommodation for men and teams. This made up a small army on their steady march westward. It was a novel sight to watch the precise and easy manner in which a vast number of men, teams and grading machines, worked in harmony in forming a road bed on which track laying machines were placing a band of steel which connected on Canadian soil the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

After leaving the railroad and Old Hundon's Bay train, we got outside of civilization and your tent was your home and there was no one to cross your path. A couple of the boys were feeling a little blue until they met a lone man with a pony and cart load of furs. He was on his way from Edmonton to Winnipeg. His whole stock of cooking utensils was a small dish to mix flour in, a small water pail, knife and fork, a tin plate and cup, a frying pan and a tea pail. His provisions, flour, bacon, tea and tobacco. He baked his bannock at the open fire. Antelope and prairie chicken supplied fresh

meat. He had been one month on the road from Edmonton and expected to get to Winnipeg in another month.

For exercise he walked, for pleasure he rode. He was happy as a lark and the world moved on.

In the tract I surveyed the prairie was strewn with buffalo bones in greater numbers than on any part of the prairies that I have passed over. I used nothing but a head or a rib capped with a small inverted sod for a back site on a line.

In 1876 hunters were just learning how to hunt buffalo. In 1880 they were nearly exterminated. Hunting parties were well organized with a rifle man, skinner, cook, camp man and teamsters. One hunter who followed the chase for several years, told me that in the early stages of the game that it was not an unusual thing to get a stand and on shooting the leader first, to shoot a hundred head at once.

When the buffalo were numerous only the choice hides (two-year-old heifers) were taken. Finally any hide was taken.

The buffalo wintered in the United States, they travelled north in the spring in vast herds. The cows and calves were headed and flanked on either sides by the young bulls. A very reliable man told me that he saw a herd one spring take three days to pass a place. When such a herd passed over light soil the ground looked much like as if it had been ploughed. In moving south in the fall the calves were able to look after themselves. They all roamed in scattered form. The young bulls turned the old bulls out of the herds. These old bulls banded together in small herds and grazed in one locality without moving around much. It was these herds that made the many paths on the prairie, not the vast wandering herds. I have seen as many as a dozen paths side by side, (as soon as a path got too deep another was made) around the end of a fresh water lake making their trips to and from water.

In 1884, I subdivided by contract Townships 51 and 52, Ranges 25, 26, 27 and 28, west of the third meridian. The work was similar to that done in 1882 other than, it was in a partially bluff country.

The railway was left at Swift Current and the South Saskatchewan River crossed at Saskatchewan Landing by a ferry.

I saw a crossing of a freighters outfit of seventy carts and ponies made at this crossing. The ferry was operated as follows: A heavy wire cable supported on a tower on either

bank was stretched tight across the river. This cable carried two pulley blocks kept apart by a stretcher pole the length of the ferry. A pulley block was attached to the side of the ferry near each end. Ropes from these blocks passed through corresponding blocks on the cable. This enabled either end of the ferry to be drawn toward the cable, so that the water striking the side of the ferry on the slant, forced it into the stream.

The carts of this outfit were crossed on the ferry. The ponies were driven into the river. It took some forcing with four saddle horses to make them take the plunge. It was a peculiar scene to see the whole band take the water at once. The stream was very rapid at the time. They were carried down stream a quarter of a mile before they landed on the opposite side.

The Riel Rebellion in 1885 put a stop to most Dominion surveys until 1903 when active work was again started and a great number of surveyors were put into the field. In 1903 I subdivided by contract Townships 47 and 48, Ranges 13, 14, 15 and Townships 52 and 53, Ranges 23 and 24 west of the third meridian. In 1904, I subdivided by contract Townships 47 and 48, Ranges 17, 18, 19 west of the third meridian and by day work Township 66, Ranges 22, 24, west of the fourth meridian on the Athabasca River.

From 1904 to 1909 inclusive, I was engaged in retracements and resurveys of early surveys. This work extended over the central part of Saskatchewan from the third meridian to the Athabasca River in Alberta.

In 1910 I made a block outline survey of the original townsite of Regina, covering an area a little over a mile and a half north and south by about the same distance east and west.

I placed concrete monuments twelve inches in diameter and four feet in the ground with a $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 12" gas pipe bedded in flush with the top of the monument, at the northeast corner of each block. The pipe in the monument marked an offset line distant five feet north and five feet east from the block corners.

In all concrete walks movable iron caps are placed directly over the pipe in the monument. The pipe in a monument holds a survey picket in an accurate position when making a survey. The registration of a plan of this block outline survey definitely defined the outlines of the blocks.

From 1909 to 1914 was a boom time for subdivision surveys. I have had as many as forty quarter sections at one time on the boards, located in and surrounding the cities of Weyburn, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current and other places. I was president of the S.L.S. Association in 1916 and 1928 and a member of the Council a number of years.

What was a marked event in reference to land surveys in the west was the unveiling of a memorial cairn and tablet on July 14th, 1930, to commemorate the planting of the first monument on the principal meridian on July 10th, 1871. I had the honour to represent our S.L.S. Association at the unveiling.

While I have spent more time on survey work than architectural my inclination has always been to the latter. In 1906 I took into partnership F. Chapman Clemesha, an architect who looked after the architectural work. The firm name was Reilly & Clemesha. This partnership was terminated in 1909.

In 1910 I took into partnership Harold Dawson, an architect and my brother, F. B. Reilly, making the firm name, Reilly, Dawson & Reilly. Mr. Hancock, an architect, joined the firm in 1911. He retired from it in 1915. He died at a hospital in Fargo in July, 1930. His home was Eau Clair. Mr. Dawson retired from the firm in 1922. He is now provincial architect for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Warburton, an architect, joined the firm on Mr. Dawson's retirement making the firm name Reilly, Warburton & Reilly, as it is now carried on.

Herewith is a memo of my certificates:

Preliminary for P.L.S. Ontario, April 4th, 1877.

Final for P.L.S. Ontario, April 7th, 1881.

Final, Dominion Land Surveyor, November 17th, 1881.

Final, Saskatchewan Land Surveyor, May 9th, 1910.

Charter member Architectural Institute of Canada, August 20th, 1907.

Fellow Architectural Institute of Canada, September 30th, 1908.

Charter member Saskatchewan Association of Architects, May 1st, 1912.

Fellow Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, February 1st, 1930.

Member of the Association of Professional Engineers of Saskatchewan, May 12th, 1931.

Certificate Steam Engineer, Saskatchewan, June 23rd, 1915.

My son and I operate a farm on which we used steam power. To guard against a hold up for the want of an engineer in threshing time I took the engineers' examination. I had always been used to steam power.

I am enclosing a snapshot of myself in my seventy-sixth year. I have not yet thought of retiring from work.

I look forward on the return of normal conditions for another busy time.

I was married on the 7th of May, 1883, to Jane H. Coutts, born of Scotch parentage in Halton County near Milton, Ontario, on June 28th, 1860. She spent one season with me on survey work a hundred miles from a dwelling. She did not see a woman for four months.

We look forward to our fiftieth anniversary in May. We have one son, three daughters and seven grandchildren.

He died suddenly at Regina, Saskatchewan, 21st March, 1936.

312 Westman Chambers,
January, 1933.

WM. R. REILLY,
February 4th, 1933.
