

COMMITTEE ON BIOGRAPHY

In 1904 he married Mary Agnes Riddell of Owen Sound. On his retirement in October, 1941, they came to live in Toronto at 22 Tichester Road.

On March 29th, 1942, Mr. McDowall died in Toronto after a brief illness. He is survived by his widow and one son, James Riddell McDowall. He was buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Owen Sound.

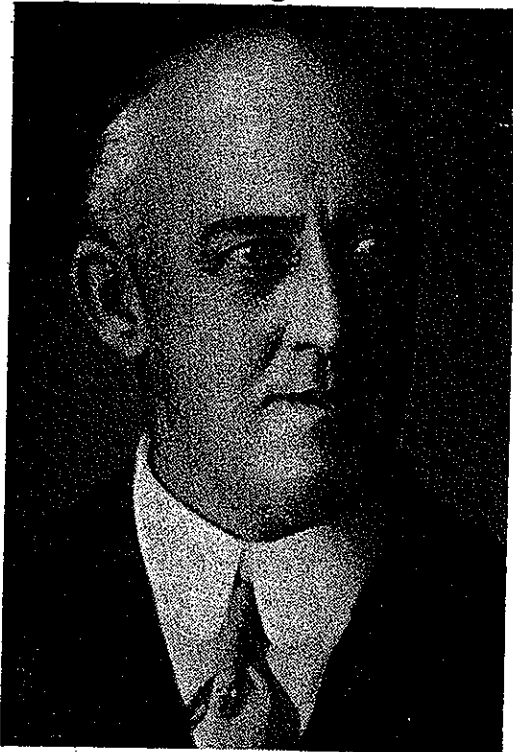
LOUIS VALENTINE RORKE

By N. A. Burwash

Louis Valentine Rorke was born on the ninth day of February, 1865, at Heathcote, in the Township of Collingwood, County of Grey. His parents were Thomas Jacob Rorke born in Picton, Ontario, and Sarah Valentine Richardson, born in Pickering, Ontario. Both his grandfathers were born in Ireland; on his father's side in Waterford and on his mother's side, in Belfast.

He was educated at the local public school, at Pickering College and Collingwood Collegiate. He was afterwards apprenticed to a druggist in Toronto, but did not find this business congenial.

He then wrote the preliminary examination for Provincial Land Surveyors and was articled to the firm of Elihu Stewart and J. F. Whitson, P. L. Surveyors, of Collingwood. While serving his apprenticeship he worked with Mr. Stewart on the survey of the Township of Edgar (now Algonquin Park) in 1887; on the Township of Bronson in 1888, and on an inspection and survey of the lands outside the Townplot of Rat Portage in the Villages of Norman, Keewatin and adjacent territory.



ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO LAND SURVEYORS

In the winter and spring of 1889 and 1890 he attended lectures at the School of Practical Science in Toronto and in the spring of 1890, he passed his final examination for Provincial Land Surveyor receiving his commission licensing him to practise on the 14th April, 1890. He then entered into partnership with James F. Whitson, with offices in North Bay and Sudbury.

The first season's work consisted of mining locations east of Wahnapiatae Lake and local work. Mr. Whitson was engaged by the Government in the following winter to make extensive timber limit surveys and on completion of this work, became a permanent employee of the Department of Lands and Forests, Surveys Branch and Mr. Rorke was left to carry on alone.

As development of settlements, villages and mining became active, additional subdivisions were laid out at Sudbury and North Bay and new village plots at Markstay, Wahnapiatae, Thorncliffe, Nickel City, Chelmsford, Whitefish, Naughton, Nairn, Copper Cliff and Haileybury.

In addition to his general practice as a Land Surveyor, in 1891 Mr. Rorke made the preliminary surveys and was Resident Engineer under John Galt, C.E., on the construction of the waterworks and sewerage systems at North Bay.

In 1894, in conjunction with J. R. Gordon, he designed and superintended the construction of the waterworks, sewerage and electric light systems at Sudbury.

In 1895, he made surveys and plans for the first water power development in the district, being on the Wahnapiatae River about three miles from the railway. Surveys for two more water power plants on the same river further downstream followed.

In 1898, he surveyed Wawa Townsite under instructions from the Crown Lands Department.

In 1900, he was employed by a New York syndicate to make surveys of zinc and lead locations on the east coast of Hudson Bay. The trip took four months, a most interesting account of which was printed in the annual report of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors in 1912.

During the season of 1903, he was employed by the Grand Trunk Railway to make a survey of the right-of-way between Toronto and Montreal. He then moved to Toronto and during 1904, was employed by Speight & vanNostrand, Ontario Land Surveyors, on city surveys.

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From 1905 to 1909 he was employed on surveys for the Ontario Government. These included subdivisions of the Townships of Collins, Chewitt, Patterson and Paul in Algoma; Township Outlines in Nipissing District and Gowganda Township.

On the 1st May, 1909, he was appointed Assistant-Surveyor, Department of Crown Lands, Ontario.

In 1912, Mr. Whitson, Surveyor for the Department, was appointed Commissioner for Northern Development. Mr. Rorke was promoted to his position and on the death of the Director of Surveys in 1917, he was appointed to that office.

In 1928, The Public Lands Act was amended and the Office of Director of Surveys was changed to Deputy Minister and Surveyor-General.

In addition to his duties as Surveyor-General, Mr. Rorke served as Ontario representative on the Geographic Board of Canada and on the Lake of the Woods Control Board and in 1932, he was appointed Ontario Commissioner to delimit the Ontario-Quebec Boundary in Lake St. Francis.

He was superannuated from the Government Service in May, 1935.

He served as Secretary of the Ontario Land Surveyors' Association from 1912-1923 and from 1936 to the time of his death on January 3rd, 1943. He was President of the Association in 1925.

He was Worshipful Master, Nickel Lodge A.F. and A.M. in 1902, and President of the Engineers' Club of Toronto in 1918.

He is survived by his widow, nee Maude C. Killaly, whom he married in 1898, and by a son C. Killaly Rorke born in 1904 who is serving with the R.C.A. in England.

The late Mr. Rorke had the "gift of understanding." This is amply proved by the high regard in which he was held by those with whom he came in daily contact. As the vice-president of a well known company once remarked: "For fair treatment, come to Mr. Rorke. He will not grant rights except to those who deserve them." His genial and affable manner during his long term of office as the Chief Surveyor of the Province, was an enviable characteristic, but all realized that at the same time, his hand could be firm when the occasion demanded.