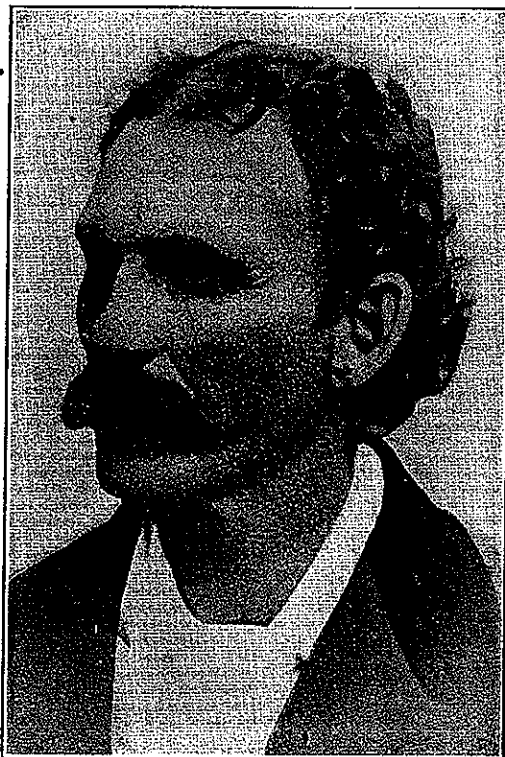


**ROBERT SPARKS.**

Robert Sparks was the fourth son of George Sparks and Sarah Welch, both natives of the parish of Darragh, Wexford, Ireland. His parents came to Canada in 1825, one year before Colonel By commenced construction work on the Rideau Canal. He was born on August 12, 1838, and obtained his education in Ottawa. He served under articles to J. M. O. Cromwell, P.L.S., of Perth, County of Lanark, and passed his final examination as a Provincial Land Surveyor on July 8th, 1859.

He resided at Ottawa and his work was confined largely to city surveys and making subdivisions in Ottawa and vicinity. He was also employed in laying out timber

limits along the Upper Ottawa. A notable line which he ran was a base line  $43\frac{1}{2}$  miles in length in the Province of Quebec. This line was run on an astronomic bearing of North 7 degrees and 15 minutes West from Turtle Portage on the Kipawa to Quinze Rapids on the Ottawa River. This was probably the last important work that he did.

Mr. Robert Sparks was among those who lost their lives when the steamer "Asia" of the Great Northern Transit Line foundered in Georgian Bay on September 14th, 1882. The vessel left Collingwood for French River on the evening of Sept. 13th, heavily laden with freight and supplies. A severe storm struck the vessel at 11 o'clock a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 14th, and, for some reason never explained, the vessel became unmanageable and began rapidly sinking in the trough of the sea. The passengers and crew took to the boats. One boat only reached the shore, near Point au Baril, Ont., about thirty miles Northwest of Parry Sound. Of the eighteen persons in the lifeboat that left the steamer, eight were immediately swept away, and one by one the others as the boat was overturned by the waves. Only two survived, Mr. D. A. Tinkiss, of Manitouwaning, Manitoulin Island, aged 18 years, and Miss Christie Ann Morris of Owen Sound.

Their escape was due to the fact that one was at each end of the boat, and when it overturned they were not struck by it.

Captain J. N. Savage, Purser John McDougall and Frederick Sparks, brother of Robert, were among those lost.

The body of Robert Sparks was found in an erect position within a few yards from shore a few days afterwards.

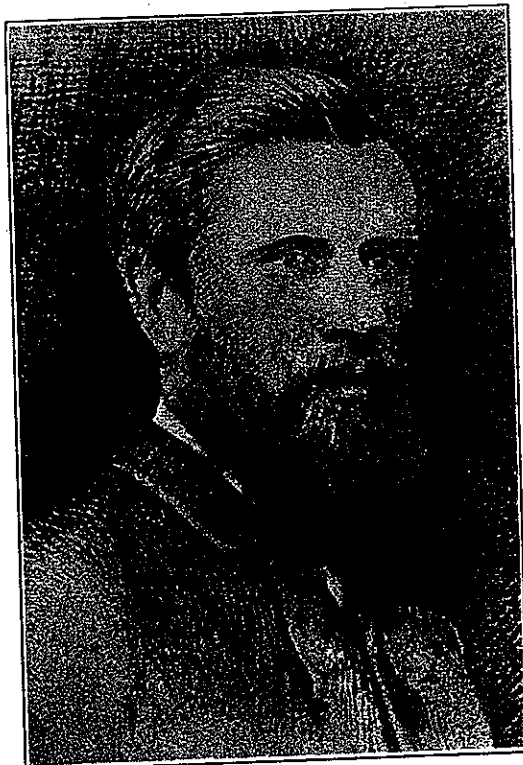
Mr. Sparks was a noted athlete in his younger days. In June, 1873, he defeated Pace, the professional champion long-distance walker of England, in a race from Arnprior to Ottawa, a distance of over 43 miles. Sparks covered the distance in 8 hours 17 minutes. Pace collapsed 13 miles from Ottawa. The event aroused the greatest interest and enthusiasm of the citizens of Ottawa.

Mr. Sparks is survived by his wife, Wilhelmina, daughter of Roderick Stewart of Nepean, whom he married in July, 1877; also by his two sons, R. R. Sparks of Ottawa, R. P. Sparks of Hull, and by his daughter, Mrs. Leonard Vaux, of London, England.

### JOHN A. FLEMING.

John Arnot Fleming was the youngest son of Andrew Greig Fleming and Elizabeth Arnot, of Kirkcaldy, Scotland, where he was born on December 5th, 1835. In 1847 he came to Canada with his parents and brothers. He then attended Thomas Henning's Academy on Front Street, Toronto, and decided to follow Land Surveying as a profession.

He qualified as a Provincial Land Surveyor on July 8, 1861, but probably his most important work, at least that which has given him a very prominent place, was accomplished in 1858 and 1859, when acting as assistant surveyor and draughtsman to Henry Youle Hind, Professor of Chemistry and Geology at



Trinity College, Toronto, on the first Canadian Exploring Expedition to the Assiniboine and the Saskatchewan. James A. Dickinson acted as chief engineer and surveyor, and Mr. Fleming