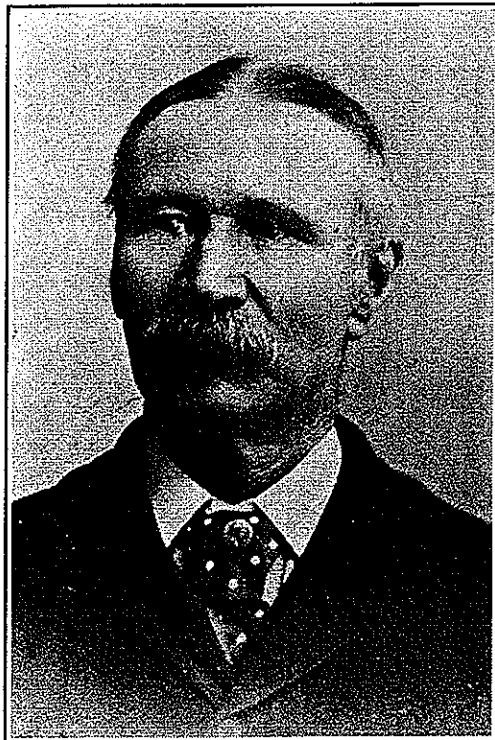


WILLIAM SPRY

Compiled by A. P. Walker

William Spry was born in London, England, in the year 1831, and was the eldest of the family of five children of Dr. William Spry of the East India Company's Service. The whole family came to Canada in the early forties, and settled on a



farm near Sherbrooke, Quebec, where William went to school and afterwards studied at Bishops College, Lennoxville, Que. It is possible he met the late Colonel Casimer S. Gzowski in Sherbrooke, for we find that when that eminent engineer, in conjunction with Sir David McPherson and A. T. Galt of Sherbrooke, obtained the contract to build that portion of the Grand Trunk Railway between Toronto and Sarnia in 1853, that William Spry also came to Toronto and worked for some years on the construction of that line. Following the completion of the line from Toronto to Sarnia, and its extension to Detroit, Messrs. C. S. Gzowski and Co. were

awarded the contract for building the old Toronto Esplanade in 1856, and it is possible that William Spry was also engaged on this work. He qualified as a Provincial Land Surveyor on 19th July, 1858, and settled in Owen Sound, where he practised as a Land Surveyor for many years. Soon after the construction of the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway was undertaken in 1870, he joined the staff under the late Edmund Wragge, M.E.I.C., Chief Engineer, and remained with that company for some years. This line had been built as a "narrow-gauge" line with 3 ft. 6 inch gauge and was widened to standard under Mr. Spry's supervision. He was also employed on the con-

struction of the Victoria Railway between Lindsay and Haliburton. The last professional work on which Mr. Spry was engaged was the straightening of the Don River at Toronto under Charles Sproat, City Engineer. After this Mr. Spry lived for many years in retirement at the old St. James Hotel, Toronto, and died at the Hospital for Incurables, Toronto, on 4th July, 1906, in his 75th year. He was unmarried, and was buried in the Peoples Cemetery at Owen Sound, Ont.

He had one brother and three sisters as follows:

(1) Francis R. Spry, born about 1834, unmarried; died at Owen Sound in 1913.

(2) Charlotte Ann, born about 1837, married George Scovill, of Toronto; died 1916.

(3) Mary, married Col. George Brodie, of Owen Sound; died in 1917.

(4) Catharine Jane, married John W. Manley, of Meaford and Victoria, B.C.; died about 1931.

William Spry was one of those who attended the inaugural meeting of this Association on 23rd February, 1886, in the old Parliament Buildings. From the printed report of this meeting it would appear that he was not entirely in favor of its formation, yet he finally became a member in 1893. A portrait of him is reproduced herewith. The portrait and much of the material for this sketch of his life was kindly furnished by his nephew, Mr. A. G. Scovill, of 56 Rusholme Road, Toronto.
