

McCubbin, George A (1869 - 1951)



George A. McCubbin was preeminent among the engineers and land surveyors who pioneered drainage schemes that turned malarial swamps into some of Kent County's most productive farmlands.

George McCubbin was born in Burford in Brant County, and moved as a small boy to Leamington where he received his public school education. Secondary school education at St. Thomas was followed by Model School (later Normal School), where he qualified as a teacher.

It was while he was teaching at South Essex, Perth and St. Thomas that McCubbin learned the fundamentals of surveying that made him decide to change his career.

McCubbin apprenticed with Archibald W. Campbell of St. Thomas, and was admitted to practice as an Ontario Land Surveyor in 1895. His partnership with James A. Bell of St. Thomas led to major assignments from the Ontario government. These included the surveying of Sanford Township near the Manitoba boundary in 1897, Firstbrook Township near Haileybury in 1901 and Michaud Township near Lake Abitibi in 1903.

In 1910, McCubbin established a practice in Chatham and embarked on the drainage work that won him a reputation as a brilliant engineer. His 41 years of work in Kent County won him the respect of farmers here and in other counties where he was instrumental in bringing thousands of acres into productive cultivation. Included in these projects was the McGregor Creek drain and the Ausable to Fort Frank drainage canal, a massive undertaking.

McCubbin not only became an expert in drainage, but he learned to anticipate and to head off some of the legal and financial problems that have plagued drainage proposals over the years.

McCubbin was a member of the Engineering Institute of Canada. He was on the Board of Examiners of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors from 1921-1949, its President in 1922, and Honorary President from 1948 until his death.