

McGeorge, William Graham (Jr.) (1887 - 1972)

Inducted: November 28, 1990



William G. McGeorge, O.L.S, D.L.S, P.Eng., was so respected as an authority on farm drainage that he was consulted by the province when revisions were made to the Farm Drainage Act. His vast knowledge was understandable. From earliest childhood he had heard about drainage from his father, William G. McGeorge Sr., who was a pioneer in the conversion of boggy Kent County land into some of Canada's most productive farms.

McGeorge Jr. followed his father's footsteps and established a reputation as a hard worker. For many years, he was the only surveyor in the Chatham area doing legal surveys and he developed a large practice. One obituary noted that in this, as in everything he did, "he was meticulous, careful and accurate." Mr. McGeorge served as Township Engineer for Dover and Chatham for almost 60 years. Townships in Lambton, Perth and York Counties appointed him their drainage engineer and he served as drainage consultant for the Holland Marsh Drainage Scheme near Bradford for over 20 years.

Some highlights of McGeorge's work years:

- He was responsible for numerous drainage projects amounting to over 30,000 acres of reclaimed land.
- Gravity drainage projects comprised of more than 125,000 acres
- He excelled in bridge design and engineering including bascule or movable bridges: Prairie Siding Bridge (1923), Fifth Street Bridge (1934), Parry Bridge (1954) and Third Street Bridge (1963). Each bridge is more than 300 feet in length.

His profession gave him honours and recognition. Mr. McGeorge was president of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors in 1925 and was appointed to the Board of

Drainage Engineer Biography

Examiners in 1948 serving as a lecturer in drainage law and drainage engineering until 1966. He was Honorary Vice-President of the Association until his death.

Mr. McGeorge's service to his community was not just to agriculture.

- Member of the Chatham Suburban Road Commission for over 40 years
- Member of Chatham Water Commission and its Chairman, 1923 to 1950
- Chatham Board of Education, six years
- Elder and member of the First Presbyterian Church, serving as Sunday School Treasurer and Superintendent, for over 47 years

McGeorge married Miss Irene Dolsen in 1912. Of their eight children, two sons, Donald and David, followed the career chosen by their father and grandfather.

One tribute, expressed by his contemporaries, after his death following a traffic accident was: "Mr. McGeorge was a tireless worker and established an unattainable record, by today's standards, for municipal work. His work, in which he excelled, was his life's pleasure."

Based on the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors, Reports of Committees. n.d