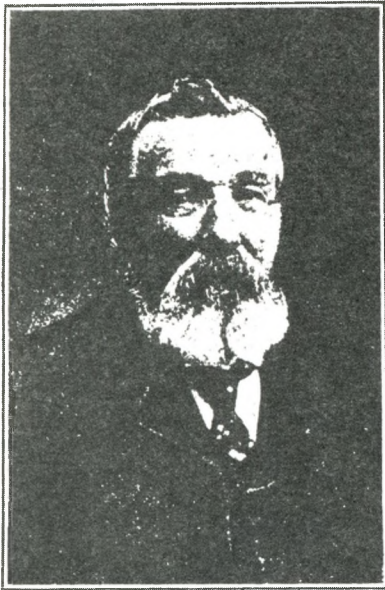


SURVEYORS OF THE PAST



H. O. WOOD, P.L.S., O.L.S.

Foreword by Charles Fairhall

The following is the autobiography of H.O. Wood, P.L.S., O.L.S., which has been reproduced without regard to spelling and grammatical errors, from a pencil account in one of Mr. Wood's field books. (now in the possession of Fairhall and Moffat, Ottawa)

Mr. Wood was licensed to practice as a P.L.S. in 1855 and maintained an office at Billings Bridge, now a suburb of Ottawa, from 1855 to 1899. In 1892, he was registered as an Ontario Land Surveyor. Mr. Wood died in 1901.

I, Henry Osborne Wood, the eldest son of Leonard Wood and his wife Margaret Cook, both descendants of Unrighted Loyal Empires was born in Cornwall (Canada) on the 30th day of December A.D. 1827.

Moved with my parents and young sister on E $\frac{1}{2}$ Lot 35 in 6th Con. of Osgoode in March 1831.

Lot 35 in said 6th Con. was a free grant to my father's Uncle Stephen Wood (as U.L.E.) who gave my father a grant of the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of said lot in 1830. My father and his uncle in the fall of 1830 left Cornwall with what provisions they could conveniently carry and each an axe and proceeded on foot through almost a dense forest to E $\frac{1}{2}$ of said lot 35 in 6th Con. of Osgoode where they succeeded in clearing a small piece of land and erecting a small shanty ready to move in the following spring. Which we did in March 1831, in the following summer we

lost our small shanty and all contents by fire.

From this until I was 20 years of age I assisted my father in clearing and cultivating the farm and occasionally going to school in winter. Until 1847. I then went to school to an elderly Englishman who taught 5 miles from my home but at the end of a year our section employed a man to teach, "an old country surveyor", well posted in Geometry, Mathematics, trigonometry, etc. I attended his school for about 2 years besides taking extra lessons from him at every opportunity.

Being very strongly advised by friends to go with a surveyor by the name of George Bruce, he being very clever, I went to his place of residence in the Township of Osnaburg—thence (with him) to Cornwall Town, got a lawyer to draw writings, signed them. We started for Osgoode where he had some work to do. After running a few lines in Osgoode and Russell Townships. We then went to work in the Township of Cambridge (very nearly all a dense wilderness) to run out 18 side lines for a lumberman. We were to put up in a lumber shanty. In the morning Mr. Bruce, I and 4 or 5 axe men went to where the nearest line was to be run. He opened up a portion of the Con. line by cutting out the brushwood so that he could see the old blaze line trees for the distance of 3, 4 or 5 chains from which he took his bearings to run the side lines. He then sat up 2 pickets and left me to run the line. He gave me a list of the lines to be run, and stated that he was going to start the rest for me to finish. The instruments he used were a sextant or a small pocket compass for measuring angles.

I saw no more of "my boss" until the work was done, he and the owner of the shanty returned about midnight with a $\frac{1}{4}$ of venasin and jug off whiskey. The next morning was warm and pleasant, about 8 in. of soft snow. I was anxious to leave but did not succeed until noon and made about 10 miles to where an old french man and his wife lived in an old lumber shanty. We got leave to remain for the night, supper & breakfast all for \$1 $\frac{1}{2}$, the old lady made a shake-dow of old rugs, blankets, etc., for a bed on the floor without feet to a bright blazing fire, which I expected to enjoy in a good sound sleep, but alas I was sadly disappointed. I was aroused out of my sleep by my boss getting up and tumbling over all our bedding and cursing that he was robbed of his money and that he would have revenge before he would leave. I had an exciting time for a while but finally I restored order and proposed a thorough search for the purse and money and on doing so we found that he had poked it

inside of his coat, vest and shirt (under his arm).

Next morning we started about 10 a.m. and landed that evening in the village of Duncanville (Township of Russell) where my friend could get all the whiskey he chose to drink as long as he paid for it. I remained with him for 3 days trying to get him sobered up and to go to work as there was any amount of surveying required among the farmers, but failing to do so I came to the conclusion that my chances was anything but encouraging to learn surveying, so I went home to my father's in Osgoode and after remaining for some while I went with my father to Bytown and seeing Robt. Bell, P.L.S., an old friend, engaged with him and started up the Ottawa to join a surveying party that were making a survey of the Opeongo Road, February 1852. I got a place as first chain man until the survey was complete (about 2 months). I then worked in the office and ran side lines in Osgoode where it was laid out with double fronts and the early settlers got their lines run with the compass but when Robt. Bell P.L.S. commenced to run legal lines by taking the bearings from the governing line which would upset all the lines already run, there was a meeting called and decided to have a special Act past to have the side lines run from post to post that is all laid out in the double front system (4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 Con.).

Whilst serving my apprenticeship I laid out a portion of the Matawa Road. Ran an exploring line from the Great Opeongo Lake to Lake Nipising (60 miles) thence scaled on the ice around the easterly side to the outlet of the lake (French River).

In running the above exploring line, I calculated that a certain distance I would cross a stream (Amable de Font) where I had arranged with a party to meet me with supplies to carry on the work but we had run the distance in the time calculated but no stream and alas no supplies. In the morning we walked on to the stream ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile) to have our breakfast but to our sorrow there was no breakfast for us so our only alternative was to go back the way we came, 5 days including $\frac{1}{2}$ day's search on about 4 lbs. pork and 2 lbs. brine (or beans) for 11 men. In addition to this, the 2nd day we had one partirij, 3rd day 2, 4th day 1, 5th day no game to be seen until 3 p.m. when there was 4 partirij bagged. We were for cooking at once but I proposed to go on for an hour and if the party I expected are on their contract we would be to them by 4 p.m. and at that time to our joy we heard the axe men at work. We remained with them one day and two nights, then 3 days landed us at Dugles consisting one hotel, blacksmith shop and grist mill. Thence to Renfrew and so on to Bytown. I did not return to complete the exploring until the following February. When I got my gang of

10 men and two team we started for the Matawa via Pembroke taking us 9 days to reach the Matawa (it snowed more or less for this 9 days) so that we had to discharge the teams and pack on snow-shoes for about 70 miles which we accomplished in 3½ days to where I left off my line, near the Amable du Font. I then continued my line of Lake Nipising making in all 60 miles from the Narrows on the great Opeongo Lake to the southerly bay of Nipising. In continuing my exploring line westerly we were obliged to use snow-shoes, the snow being very light and fully 4 feet deep. I got orders to explore the easterly shore of the Lake as long as the ice would carry then to forward supplies left at Mattawa to an island about 2 miles from shore, to build a store house and store away supplies as secure as possible as they are to be used in the fall. I did so and then left for Bytown. Where on ariving in June 1 found my case in a bad shape. The man that aranged with me was allowing my 75 cents per day and expenses up until the end of my apprenticeship when if I would remain and finish the work I would be allowed \$4 per day and expenses and that he would meet me at Pembroke when he would pay off the men, etc. but when I arived in Pembroke there was no word of Mr. A.H. Sims (Superintendent of Pembroke & Matawa Colonization Roads). I borrowed enough to take 6 of us to Bytown where I was informed that Mr. Sims was in Quebeck and

was expected up every day. I went to work in his office from day to day as I still was anxious about him. He would write me ocationally and state that he would be up on a certain day. He would write the same to his brother-in-law, so finally his brother-in-law (A.J. Russell) went to see after him and found that he was completely out of his mind. So that I never got a settlement with him and therefore lost all that I ever earned with him and had to borrow \$100 to go to Toronto attend the board of examiners. I passed the board and lost no time to earn the money borrowed. In July A.D. 1856 the survey of subdividing the Township of Brudenell, after I surveyed the Township of Lyndock, part of the Tp of Allis and Mayo besides several other smaller surveys for the government.

After completing the survey of Brudenell, I returned to Ottawa (14 Feb. 1857) in the evening, had my camp equipage, etc. stored in an old biliard room (surveying instruments, clothing, etc., in fact all exepting the clothes on my back and my velice in which I had my rough field notes of my survey). My notes were stored away with the others but had them brot in for to get some a/c's out, and inside of 2 hours the whole premises were burned.

I then ordered of Trouton and Sims a 6

inch theodolite with the latest improvements, an artificial horizon and large spyglass.

I have run about 3000 miles of picket line, exclusive of Township surveys, colonization roads, exploring lines and a large extent of drainage. For the last 3 years I have not been able to survey but very little on account of catarck growing on my eyes.

From 1855 I continued my profession up until 1899 when my sight faled. I find that my local work such as side lines and subdivinding farms (not including government surveys, drainage, etc.) amounts to very close on 3000 miles.

*Since we're a little late,
it's nearly time to wish you all*

A

MERRY

CHRISTMAS