

GORDON, Henry Bauld (1854 – 1951)

Henry Gordon was the senior partner in the architectural firm of Gordon & Helliwell, which practiced in Toronto from 1879 to 1931. Church commissions formed a large part of the firm's work particularly for the Presbyterian church. Gordon served as president of the Ontario Association of Architects in 1896 and 1908.

Henry Gordon was born in Toronto in 1854 and trained under the architect Henry Langley before establishing his own practice in 1876. Two years later he and Grant Helliwell formed the partnership of Gordon and Helliwell, which continued until they both retired in 1931, after more than five decades in practice together.

The firm did many buildings in the Toronto area including the Toronto Young Women's Christian Association on Elm Street, (1890-91), which was a rich and rotund Romanesque revival building with fine detail outlining the mass. They designed the Upper Canada Bible Society, College Street, Toronto (1910) which resembles classical contemporary bank architecture with large double-story ionic recessed columns. The present office tower was added on later. Gordon and Helliwell also designed buildings throughout Ontario including Queen's College, Kingston (1879-80) which is one of the main buildings on campus when it was erected

in 1880 and set the style for later buildings. The firm also designed the Town Hall and Market in Orillia (1894), which was a distinctive composition with its robust turrets on the corners of the main facade. It unfortunately burned in 1915 and was rebuilt without the clocktower.

They were frequently engaged by the Presbyterian Church and it is remarkable how eclectic their designs can be. Many of their buildings have been recycled to other uses, speaking well of their design expertise. Some of their designs include: St. Paul's and St. Andrew's, Peterborough; Knox Church, Cornwall; Brampton Presbyterian, Brampton; Division Street Church, Owen Sound; Knox Church, Ayr; First Presbyterian Church, St. Mary's. In Toronto they also did many churches including: West Presbyterian Church, Denison Avenue (1879-80) (now St. Stanislaus' Roman Catholic); Parkdale Presbyterian Church; St. Enoch's Presbyterian Church, Winchester Street (1891); Bathurst Street Methodist Church, Bathurst and Lennox Street (1887); Church of the Messiah, Avenue Road at Dupont (1890) and Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, Avenue Road at Roxborough (1898) are built of an unusual white stone and act as a gateway across Avenue Road as they are across from each other.