

## HEAKES, Francis Riley (1858 – 1930)

**F**rancis Heakes was the chief architect of the Ontario Department of Public Works for nearly 35 years and had a great influence on the buildings the province built during his tenure. Most of his work tended to be traditional using symmetrical composition, traditional decoration and the Beaux Arts system of planning.

Francis Heakes was born in Toronto, July 30, 1858 after his father had emigrated from England in 1845 to establish a dry goods business on King Street. He received his education in public and private schools in Toronto and studied architecture in the office of William Irving, a prominent architect. Heakes practiced privately until 1883, when he received the appointment of assistant to Kivas Tulley, architect for the Public Works of Ontario and succeeded him as Chief Architect for the province in 1896. A position he held until his death in 1930.

Mr. Heakes designed many buildings for the provincial government including court houses, hospitals, educational and agricultural buildings. One of his most outstanding designs was for the Government House at Chorley Park, Roxborough Drive, Toronto (1911-15, demolished 1959) which was a grand scheme in the French Renaissance chateaux style so popular in the United States. In addition he designed the Whitney Block as offices for the Ontario Government, Queen's Park,

Toronto (1925-27). It is one of the few examples of the Neo-Gothic style applied to the high-rise office tower and is beautifully proportioned with standing figures placed at the set-backs.

Heakes designed many of the provincial buildings throughout the province including the Court House in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario (1919-22) which is a traditional classical structure with a colonnade above the entry and the wings symmetrically set back from the front portico. He also designed the provincial courthouses in Bracebridge (1899), Sudbury (1907), Kenora (1910), Fort Francis (1913), Port Arthur (1927) and Cochrane (1924).

The School for the Deaf, Belleville, Ontario (1920-22) is a good example of collegiate gothic with distinctive massing around the main entrance, crowned by two octagonal turrets linked by tracery. Heakes did all the buildings built between 1896-1929 at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph (now Guelph University) many of them are in the Collegiate Gothic style with the Memorial Building (1923-24) being regarded as the best. At the Asylum for Epileptics, Woodstock (1903-05) the building is given a special quality with dutch gables piercing the sweeping roof line.

Heakes also designed many Normal Schools (used to train teachers) in the province including those at London (1898), Stratford (1906), Hamilton (1906), Peterborough (1906) and North Bay (1906).