

MOORE, John Mackenzie (1857 – 1930)

A native son of London, Ontario John M. Moore concentrated his considerable energies on bettering the city not only through architecture but also through a variety of civic appointments.

Educated in the public and high schools of London, he went on to study architecture, engineering and land surveying in the firm of Robinson and Tracy. In 1886 he formed a partnership with George Durand and in 1892, he went into practice with Frederick Henry. In 1908, J. Vicar Munro joined the firm which was then known as Moore, Henry and Munro. Henry left in 1910 and Munro in 1913. Moore then worked independently until his son, O. Roy Moore joined him in 1920. His work was always based in London.

Architecture and civic affairs were connected interests for John M. Moore who served London as Engineer and Superintendent of Waterworks for 17 years, Controller for 1916 – 1917 and Mayor in 1926 and 1927. Moore had a practical understanding of how the city worked and earned a reputation for efficiency and foresight. In the words of A. Fraser he was known for “looking beyond the exigencies of the moment to the possibilities of the future”. This vision led him to develop the Spring-

bank natural park in conjunction with London’s waterworks system.

The strength of his architectural work lay in being able to design commercial, residential, and industrial buildings which responded to the needs of a growing London. One of Moore’s best remembered buildings, the classical London Life Insurance Building (1928) was designed to compliment its prestigious and very visible location and accommodate future expansion. Other notable buildings designed by Moore were the main buildings for the University of Western Ontario (1920’s) in the popular “collegiate gothic” style, and the eight storey Hotel London which was constructed using reinforced concrete.

An unassuming person, Moore won friends and respect for his scrupulously honorable business practices and his readiness to listen to ideas which could benefit his city. John M. Moore was a member of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada; the Ontario Association of Architects; the Engineering Institute of Canada and one of the first members of the Ontario Land Surveyors’ Association. He was also Captain of C Company, 7th Fusiliers, Canadian Militia, and a member of the Board of Governors of the University of Western Ontario.