

RASTRICK, Frederick James (1819 – 1897)

A pioneer in the development of a professional organization for architects, George Rastrick, a prominent 19th century Hamilton architect was a vice-president of the Association of Architects, Engineers and Land Surveyors of Canada and of its short lived successor, the Association of Surveyors, Engineers and Architects. Fourteen years later he was the first President of the Canadian Institute of Architects and following the founding of the Ontario Association of Architects in 1889 Rastrick was appointed to its inaugural council.

Born the third son of civil engineer John Rastrick in West Bromwich, Staffordshire, England, Frederick Rastrick was educated at London and Yorkshire before entering his father's office to study civil engineering. His training for architecture is indeed impressive beginning with a five-year apprenticeship in 1839 with Sir Charles Barry, architect of the British Houses of Parliament. He was then elected a student of the Royal Academy before embarking for four years to study in Europe, Asia minor and Egypt.

In 1848 he returned to England and opened up a practice two years later. However, Canada beckoned and in 1852 Rastrick emigrated first to Brantford then settling permanently in Hamilton where he superintended the erection of many im-

portant buildings over a long career. From 1854 to 1857 he was appointed engineer for the County of Wentworth and later was inspecting architect for the Hamilton, London and Orangeville post offices. Rastrick practiced alone for most of his career except for a short period during the 1850's when he was part of the partnership of Rastrick, Hall & Wily. He was later joined by his sons in Hamilton.

He designed wholesale warehouses for James McIntyre (1856), and for Sanford, Vail and Bickley, (1875); St. Paul's Anglican Church, Dunnville (1886); schools in Barton Township and the Hamilton Grammar School (1866) and many residences including one for William McLaren, "Oakbank" (1859), Peter Warren (1874) and house and stores for Dr. William Philp (1878). In the 1850's Rastrick designed his own house on what is now Forest Avenue. His skill can be seen in his designs of the elegant Gothic revival villa "Highfield" for John Brown (1858); the neo-palladia Hamilton branch of the Bank of Upper Canada (1857) and the severely handsome Second Empire warehouses for Young, Law and Company.

Active in Hamilton community life, Rastrick was President of the Gore District Mechanics Institute and helped establish the Hamilton Public Library and the Hamilton Art School. Rastrick's wife was Anna Mary Stephens.

Important work:

Custom House, Stuart St., Hamilton	1855
Bank of Upper Canada, James St. N., Hamilton	1857
"Highfield" mansion for John Brown, Hamilton Mountain	1858
Canada Life Assurance Co., James St. S., Hamilton	1855-56
Grammar School, Main St., Hamilton	1866
Warehouse for Young, Law & Co., McNab St., Hamilton	1854