

## WINDEYER, Richard Cunningham (1831 – 1900)

**B**est remembered in Ontario for the richly detailed Toronto Custom House designed in 1873 in the Second Empire style, Richard Windeyer worked in Toronto for 25 years, from 1871 to 1896.

Born in England, he trained in the ordnance department of the British Army in Woolwich. Between 1854 and 1862 Windeyer led a peripatetic existence moving back and forth between Canada, England, and the U.S. where he also trained with architect Jonathan B. Snook of Brooklyn, New York. In about 1862 he settled in Montreal where he formed a partnership with civil engineer and patent solicitor Charles Legge and civil engineer and land surveyor Joseph Savage. In 1871 Windeyer moved to Toronto and entered into partnership with William Malsbury a civil engineer with whom he had worked on the Montreal and Ottawa Junction earlier that year. Other partners in his Toronto career were Joseph Savage (1873 – 1875) (the same Savage from the earlier Montreal partnership), a stepson John Falloon (1885 – 1887) and his own son Richard (1893 – 1896).

Windeyer designed many churches such as All Saints Anglican Church (1874), St. Alban the Martyr Anglican Cathedral (1885), in Toronto and St. Jude's (1895) in Oakville. He also was the architect for several houses (1871-1872), including his own on Bleeker Street in Toronto. His busy practice was not without event. Richard Windeyer was hired to design the Toronto Customs House by a Conservative government but part way through the project the Conservatives were voted out in favor of the Liberal Mackenzie King regime. In 1875, although the building was almost completed, Windeyer was dismissed from the job for alleged professional misconduct. It seems, however, that the reasons for his dismissal were political. His honor and reputation were later vindicated by subsequent work for the Government of Canada on the St. Catharines Post Office (1881), and the University Avenue Armouries (1891-1895).

Richard Windeyer was an early member of the Ontario Society of Artists and also belonged to the Royal Canadian Academy.

### Important work:

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| Custom House, Front St. W., Toronto                         | 1872-73 |
| All Saints Anglican Church, Sherbourne St., Toronto         | 1874    |
| St. Alban The Martyr Anglican Church, Howland Ave., Toronto | 1885-89 |
| St. June's Anglican Church, Oakville, Ont.                  | 1883    |
| St. James Anglican Church, Guelph, Ont.                     | 1890-92 |