

GOODERHAM, WILLIAM, businessman and philanthropist; b. 14 April 1824 at Scole, Norfolk, England, eldest son of William GOODERHAM and Harriet Tovell Herring; d. 12 Sept. 1889 at Toronto, Ont.

William Gooderham accompanied his father when the latter moved to York (Toronto), Upper Canada, in 1832. After receiving a grammar school education, probably in Toronto, he refused to join his father's milling and distilling firm and instead moved to Rochester, N.Y., in 1842 where he took up a mercantile career. Born into an evangelical Church of England family, Gooderham was converted to Methodism while at Rochester and became a strong temperance advocate. On 14 April 1847 he married Margaret Bright whose sister, Sarah, had married his cousin, James Gooderham WORTS, in 1840. There were no children.

About 1850 Gooderham and his brother James opened a general store at Norval, Halton County, Canada West. The business was not profitable and closed in 1859. William then became the Toronto-based partner in the Boston grain firm of Taylor Brothers, but when his misjudgements proved costly, the partnership was ended. Other ventures were equally unsuccessful and several times Gooderham had to be rescued by friends and relatives. An obituary in the *Toronto World* commented: "His record as a business man tells of confidence placed in talents he did not possess."

In the 1870s Gooderham was, however, named vice-president and managing director, and in 1873 became president and managing director, of the Toronto and Nipissing Railway Company, then controlled by Gooderham and Worts. He remained head of the railway until its heavy losses forced an absorption in 1882 into the group of lines consolidated as the Midland Railway of Canada. In 1871 he was an incorporator of the Confederation Life Association and represented family interests on its board of directors until 1872. Failing health and his wife's illness caused him to withdraw gradually from active business management in the early 1880s.

Two events shaped the last decade of Gooderham's life. First, his own illness and that of his wife (who had become an invalid in 1875) brought about a reconversion to Methodism, and, secondly, in 1881 he received some \$300,000 from his father's estate. With this money Gooderham launched himself into careers in finance and philanthropy. He invested large sums in the shares of several corporations and was elected to their boards. He was director of the Great North-Western Telegraph Company of Canada, the Canadian Bank of Commerce, the Western Assurance Company, the Canada Permanent Loan and Savings Company, the Toronto General Trusts Company, and the British America Assurance Company. Of his investments, only the Central Bank of Canada proved to be a serious misjudgement. When that institution failed in 1888, Gooderham was named a liquidator, probably because of his known rectitude and the fact that he owned a large number of shares. With double liability, his losses exceeded \$40,000. Nevertheless, his estate was valued at approximately \$450,000 at his death.

With his religious reconversion Gooderham had entered upon a career of evangelism which lasted to the day he died. In spite of his eccentric behaviour, which included importuning strangers in public places to proclaim the Word of God, his generosity to religious organizations was admired. He personally supported missionaries in India, the Canadian northwest, and in the South Sea islands; assembled a quartet of young people with whom he paid regular preaching visits to hospital wards; gave sermons in various Protestant churches; and financially supported numerous charities. He was a director of the Toronto Willard Tract Depository, a member of the Toronto General Hospital Trust, and chairman of the executive of the China Inland Mission. In 1888 he gave \$25,000 to erect the Toronto Christian Institute. He died the next year preaching to destitute men at a Salvation Army haven.

Gooderham's will created a sensation. Instrumental in ending the delay in the implementation of the act of 1887 for the federation of Victoria University at Cobourg with the University of Toronto, it provided, in addition to a \$75,000 permanent endowment, for \$125,000 to be paid to Victoria on the condition that it move to Toronto. Federation with the University of Toronto was proclaimed on 12 Nov. 1890 and the transfer was completed in October 1892. In addition Gooderham bequeathed \$150,000 to organizations such as the Upper Canada Bible Society, the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian associations, the Boy's Home, Girl's Home, and homes for infants, the Toronto Home for Incurables, the House of Industry, and the Salvation Army.

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York County Surrogate Court (Toronto), no.7660, will of William Gooderham, 18 Jan. 1890 (mfm. at AO). Can., *Statutes*, 1871, c.54. *Christian Guardian*, 18, 25 Sept. 1889. *Globe*, 13 Feb. 1888, 13, 17–20 Sept. 1889. *North Ontario Observer and General Advertiser* (Port Perry, Ont.), 17 Oct. 1872. *Toronto Daily Mail*, 13, 17 Sept. 1889. *Toronto World*, 13, 19, 20, 22 Sept. 1889. *Canadian biog. dict.*, I: 62–70, 730–32. Chadwick, *Ontarian families*, I: 154. W. H. Higgins, *The life and times of Joseph Gould . . .* (Toronto, 1887; repr. Belleville, Ont. 1972), 202–12. L. A. Johnson, *History of the county of Ontario, 1615–1875* (Whitby, Ont., 1973). A. H. Raynar, "The arts colleges: Victoria College," *The University of Toronto and its colleges, 1827–1906*, [ed. W. J. Alexander] (Toronto, 1906), 124–36. G. R. Stevens, *Canadian National Railways* (2v., Toronto and Vancouver, 1960–62), I: 450–53.