

THE WATERMARK

CANADA'S ONLINE MASONIC PHILATELIC NEWSLETTER.



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A New Discovery

The thing I enjoy most about producing the Watermark is that I get to dig into the pages of history looking for details on things Masonic. Some times I hit pay dirt. In this issue I discovered one of Canada's greatest men who happened to be a Freemason for 75 years, and has been forgotten by the Fraternity. Having searched numerous web pages on famous or notable freemasons, I could not find even one that included this fascinating brother on their list. So I guess I got the scoop, and you are the first to learn about Sir William Mulock and his many fascinating accomplishments that even included designing the worlds first Christmas Stamp!

Canadian Freemason – Sir William Huble Mulock



In January 1944, the New York Times dubbed him Canada's "Grand Old Man" after he celebrated his 101st birthday. The man they were celebrating had been a lawyer, businessman, educator, farmer, politician and philanthropist, as well as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ontario, Vice-chancellor of University of Toronto, Federal Cabinet Minister and the Postmaster General of Canada.

He was born at Bond Head, Upper Canada (Ontario) and never lost his connection to the land and farming. When his physician father died when young William was only four years old, his mother moved the family to

Newmarket where he was educated at the Newmarket Grammar School. Living in near poverty after his father's

death, Mulock spent most of his time milking the family cow, helping in the family garden, chopping wood, and working outside the home repairing the local corduroy roads.

Williams mother decided that he should become a lawyer and he was sent to study at the University of Toronto. In 1867 he was called to the bar and began building a successful law practice.

In 1882 he entered politics and ran as a Liberal for North York and to everyone's surprise he was elected from and served from 1882 to 1905. In 1896 the Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier appointed him to Cabinet as Postmaster General.

He was an accomplished man whose work ethic was recognized and admired by everyone including those who disagreed with what he did. Never a shy man he had a reputation of having the most picturesque use of profanity in parliament and a love of Cuban cigars and rye whiskey. He loved his drink so much that when the Province of Ontario introduced prohibition in 1916, he built special concrete compartments in his house to store a lifetime supply of whiskey.

Ever since the introduction of adhesive stamps in 1840 by Sir Roland Hill, statesmen the world over had been seeking reforms to the cost of postage. When he assumed the role of Postmaster General the Royal Canadian Mail was losing over \$1,000,000 a year. One of his first proposals was the introduction of a special 2-cent postage rate for letters being delivered between Canada and the countries within the British Empire instead of the regular rate of 5 cents. Mulock believed that by reducing the rate of postage the increased volume of mail would clear his department's losses, and provide a bond of union between Canada and the rest of the Empire. The 1898 Imperial conference in London adopted his proposal for "penny postage" and within a few years the Post Office annual losses had turned into \$1 million profit.

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1898 Scott# 85 & 86



The new rate was scheduled to come into effect on Christmas day 1898 and as Postmaster General Mulock decided to promote interest in the new postage rate so he decided to design a new postage stamp using the new rate and emphasizing the vast extent of the British Empire.

In October 1898, Mulock sat down with Warren Green, President of the American Bank Note Company Limited in Ottawa and discussed his idea for the stamp. In the archives of the Canadian Bank Note Company Mr. Green's handwritten memo still exists referring to the meeting. *"This is a rough idea for the new stamp. Mr. Mulock had a number of designs for this and naturally a great many conflicting ideas. The only way I could get anything definite was to sit right down with a pencil and a brush and work right alongside of him until he got something that approached his idea."*

The design of the stamps included the map of the world depicting various parts of the British Empire in red. The stamp bore the inscription "Xmas 1898" and across the base of the design the text reads: "WE HOLD A VASTER EMPIRE THAN HAS BEEN." The text was taken from a poem initially titled "A Song of Empire" by the Welsh Poet Sir William Morris who had published piece as the "Jubilee Ode" in June 1897 on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

The stamp was unique in three ways, it was the second stamp in the empire to not include the image of a member of monarchy, it was the most expensive issue in Canadian philatelic history to that date because it was made in three colours using two different processes and it was the world's first Christmas stamp. When Mullock learned that "sweatshop" factories were producing uniforms for letter carriers because the official contractors were sub-letting to families living in one room apartments where women worked 15 hours a day making less than 5 cents an hour. As a result he revised the Post Office contracting policy so that all uniforms would be produced under Government approved conditions. And followed that up with a system of minimum wages; "The Fair Wages Resolution". In 1904 he enacted an order to protect the public against Quackery to curtail the growing trend of advertising "marvelous, extravagant or grossly improbable cures".

His role as Postmaster General was not his only notable achievement. He initiated the publicly owned transpacific cable linking Canada to Australia and New Zealand. He funded the first transatlantic radio link from North America to Europe. In 1900 he established Department of Labour becoming its first minister while still holding the position of Postmaster General.

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Sir William Mulock cont...

In 1902 King Edward VII knighted him for his many services to the empire, in particular for the Penny Post, Transpacific Cable, and wireless telegraphy between Canada and Great Britain.

He chaired the parliamentary inquiry into the monopoly on telephones in 1905 that led to regulation of Canadian telecommunications, and he participated in the negotiations that led to the creation of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Due to health reasons he resigned from politics in 1905.

He followed up politics by becoming chief justice of the Exchequer Division of the Supreme Court of Canada. In 1923, he became Chief Justice of Ontario. Mulock had been an ardent abolitionist since his youth, and he actively campaigned in black communities as a politician. While serving as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ontario in 1930 he heard an appeal involving several members of the Ku Klux Klan who invaded the home of a mixed race family and upon conviction only received a small fine for their actions. On appeal Justice Mulock declared that the fines were a "travesty of justice", and slapped them with a three-month prison term. His denunciation of the Klan's racism and mob law was significant factor against racism and resulted in a marked decline in the activities and membership in the Ku Klux Klan in Canada.

In 1905 he became the first president of Canada's first national, secular peace organization, the Canadian Peace and Arbitration Society. During WWII at the age of 99 he served as Chair of the Canadian Committee of the International YMCA responsible for supervising enemy prisoners in Canada. For the last 20 years of his life he was Chancellor of the University of Toronto.

As a man of personal conviction he became a Freemason and joined The Rising Sun Lodge No. 129 GRC in Aurora Ontario on the 4th of September 1896 and of remained active in Craft for 75 years. In fact he was the only man ever to receive Ontario's Grand Lodge seventy-five year bar in 1944.

It is almost bewildering to think that a man of Sir William's character and accomplishments that spanned an entire century could be so quickly forgotten. Yes there is a school named after him and you can find plenty of information about him on the internet and in some libraries, but I doubt that there are even handful of Freemasons in Canada that ever heard of this great man. Well at least Canada Post remembered him in 1998 by honouring both the man and his role in philatelic history with a commemorative stamp on the 100th anniversary of the Imperial Penny Postage. Hopefully having been rediscovered, his name and accomplishments will become better known to others in the Craft and his name might find its way onto lists of notable Freemasons.



1998 Scott # 1722

Hot off the Press – Buffalo Bill

This past July Canada Post released another series of Photograph stamps and included in the five stamps was a photograph taken by William Notman in Montreal in 1885 of Chief Sitting Bull and William Frederick Cody ("Buffalo Bill").

The stamps measure 36 mm × 30 mm (horizontal) and 30 mm × 36 mm (vertical) and were designed by Stephane Huot and printed by Lowe-Martin Group.

Although William Cody was born in La Claire, Iowa on February 26, 1846, his family moved to what is now Peel Ontario Canada where he was baptized in 1847 at the Dixie Union Chapel in Peel County. His father Isaac Cody was born in Toronto. The Cody family moved back to the United States in 1853 settling in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. His father Isaac was fervent anti-slavery and when invited to speak on the topic at Rively's store, a local trading post, his speech so angered the pro-slavery crowd that a man jumped up on the stage and stabbed him twice. Although he survived the assault he never fully recovered from his injuries and later died in April 1857 leaving the family destitute.



After his father's death the eleven-year-old William began his adventuresome life as Pony express rider, scout, buffalo hunter, soldier and showman. He even received the Congressional Medal of Honor, which he was later stripped from him and eventually reinstated.

Brother Cody was raised in Platte Valley Lodge No. 32, North Platte, Nebraska on January 10, 1871. He was active in the concordant bodies of Freemasonry, becoming a Knight Templar in 1889 and receiving his 32-degree in 1894. When he received his Mark Master Degree in Euphrates Chapter No. 15 at North Platte, he chose the buffalo head as his mark.

Cody died of kidney failure on January 10th 1917 while visiting his sister, but his burial became a show in its own right. Father Christopher Walsh of the Denver Cathedral baptized him a Roman Catholic the day before he died. A dispute over where he was to be buried occurred but he was eventually laid to rest. He received a Masonic funeral on June 3, 1917 complete with eight pallbearers dressed in their Knights Templar uniforms.

Hear Ye Hear Ye



1927 Scott# 141



1927 Scott# 147



1973 Scott# 586

Canada Post has announced that they will be releasing a new stamp in 2015 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Canada's first prime minister and very active Freemason, Sir John A MacDonald.



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