

Insp. Edward Foster, the "father" of fingerprinting in Canada.

the fingerprint and Bertillon systems, supplemented by photographs. Inspector Foster actually started the work at Kingston Penitentiary where he took the fingerprints and measurements of the convict population. However, no money had been allocated for photography in the police appropriation and when the Inspector of Penitentiaries opposed continuance of the work, the project was abandoned.

Opposition which stalled Foster's plans would have discouraged a less dedicated man, but he was in truth a "man with a mission". With the support of his Chief, the project was kept before the government. On July 21, 1908, an Order in Council was passed sanctioning the use of the fingerprint system and making the provisions of the Identification of Criminals Act applicable to it. Debate on this bill, which was passed in parliament in June 1898, included the following comment by the Solicitor General:

"... There is to be a central bureau in Ottawa where the police officers throughout the country will send the results of their examination of criminals, and there has been an arrangement entered into, especially with Chicago and New York, for an exchange of these measurements."

(The reference here is of course to the Bertillon system of measurements. Official interest in this system was one of the first stumbling blocks encountered by Foster after his return from the World's Fair. In 1905 he was sent to Albany, N.Y., to study the Bertillon system, but returned home convinced that his own proposals were more desirable.)

It was not until 1910 that a definite progressive step was made and ironically it took the escape of a convicted murderer from Kingston Penitentiary to lend impetus to the move. In 1904 a man named Joseph Chartrand was sentenced to life



imprisonment in Kingston Penitentiary for the murder of a Provincial Constable at Webbwood, Ontario. Two years later he escaped from the penitentiary, but was recaptured in two weeks and returned to prison. In 1910 Chartrand escaped again and this time his freedom lasted only eight days. But this prisoner's exploits aroused considerable comment, the most critical suggesting that the work of the police in recapturing Chartrand would have been assisted materially if fingerprints had been in use in Canada.

Directly or indirectly, the controversy produced the effect that Foster desired—permission was given to inaugurate fingerprinting. The Bertillon system was abandoned and photographs were to be used in conjunction with fingerprints. Once again Inspector Foster started on a tour of Federal Penitentiaries where he fingerprinted and photographed the inmates. Each of these institutions was also supplied with fingerprint supplies and a camera to put the system on a permanent