



**Mrs. M. E. Holland — who encouraged Inspector Foster to study fingerprinting — and her husband. They remained close friends of Inspector Foster.**

“No history of the Canadian Criminal Identification Bureau . . . would be worthy of such a designation did it fail to make special reference to the prominent part played by him in its establishment, and in the success which has since attended its operation. With characteristic insight he recognized in the fingerprint system, the system ‘par excellence’. Its speedy and simple operation, unfailing accuracy and inexpensiveness of equipment made it appeal to him as the ideal one for police requirements. Realizing the immense possibilities for usefulness to the police and the Courts, as well as the protective value to the community, of a national bureau centralizing the criminal records of the entire Dominion, he entered energetically and enthusiastically upon the task of securing its establishment. Once that was accomplished and the Bureau placed under his supervision, he lost no opportunity either personally, or in his official capacity, to advance its claims to recognition and make known its merits.”

Foster himself said: “The establishment of the Canadian Criminal Identification Bureau is primarily due to the Chief Constables’ Association of Canada, which, at its initial meeting at Toronto in 1905, discussed the subject of criminal identification and favored the establishment of such a bureau.” With characteristic modesty, he shrugged off not only his efforts to “sell” fingerprinting in this country, but overlooked the fact that

there was no Chief Constables’ organization in Canada when he returned from the World’s Fair. This was something else he set out to rectify.

His experience at the IACP convention at St. Louis convinced Foster that a similar organization in Canada would not only do much to promote more co-operation among law-enforcement departments in the Dominion, but would be a great means of promoting national interest in fingerprinting. He discussed this subject with Sir Percy Sherwood and once again found in him a source of knowledge and encouragement. Foster learned from his Chief that there had been a similar organization in Canada before the turn of the century, but in 1898 the president of the association had been smitten with the “gold fever”, had resigned his position as a Chief of Police in a large eastern city and headed for the Klondike goldfields. His abrupt departure sounded the death knell of the organization and it ceased to exist.

Sir Percy believed that the Deputy Chief Constable of Toronto, Mr. Stark, would be an ideal man to interest in the project and subsequently told Foster that he had received an enthusiastic response from the Toronto man. An organizational meeting of the newly-proposed group was held Sept. 6, 1905 at Toronto and one year later the first annual meeting of the Chief Constables’ Association was held, with Lt.-Col. H. J. Grasset elected president the previous year, in the chair. Out of this meeting there came the first positive action toward the founding of a national fingerprint bureau for Canada. A committee was appointed to meet with the Minister of Justice and advocate the establishment and maintenance of such a bureau. The recommendations of the committee met with a favorable reaction and initially it was decided to use both