

death of the Hon. Peter Veniot, a former colleague in the government, and one who was a very close personal friend. Mr. Veniot's death cannot be said to have been altogether unexpected. All will recall how during the last session, despite great pain at times, suffering as he did from a malady which was incurable, and which he must have known to be so, he continued to keep his place at his desk and to participate in the debates in this house. He did so until, no longer able to bear the strain, he was removed to a hospital in Montreal, and subsequently to his home in Bathurst, where very soon he had to give up all thought of further activity in public affairs. His courage was a very part of him, and was nowhere better exemplified than in the brave and patient manner in which he faced death. It was on July 6 that at the age of 72 Mr. Veniot passed away in his home at Bathurst, New Brunswick, the town which for some forty years had been the centre of his personal, business and political activities.

I hardly need to review Mr. Veniot's public career. It was a distinguished career well known to hon. members of this house and scarcely less so to citizens of Canada generally; for he had been a minister in the government of his province—Minister of Public Works—and also premier of the province of New Brunswick; and for some years he was Post-master General in the government of Canada. It might, however, be well to recall that Mr. Veniot was for the most part a self-educated and self-made man. He was one of the few remaining members of parliament whose birth anteceded the date of confederation, he having been born at Richibucto in 1863. His early education was obtained at the Pictou Academy, Nova Scotia. His first association with public affairs came as owner and editor of an Acadian weekly newspaper in the maritimes. He was elected to the New Brunswick legislature in 1894. After a few years in the legislature he became collector of customs at Bathurst, which position he occupied for a little over ten years. It was in 1917 that he became Minister of Public Works in the government of New Brunswick, and from that time on until the end of his life he was continuously in the legislature or parliament.

Mr. Veniot's personal characteristics will be much in the minds of all who are present here. Outstanding, as I have already said, was his courage and, born of deep conviction, the fearlessness with which at all times he was prepared to express his views. He belonged to the old school of political fighters who rather enjoy the rough and tumble of politics. He was one of the most vigorous in party contests. At times he was given to striking

hard blows, but he was always equally prepared to receive them. He did not, however, cherish bitter feelings towards his opponents. As an administrator he was most industrious and efficient. He worked tirelessly in whatever office he held.

With Mr. Veniot I personally enjoyed a very close association, and I confess that his passing has left a blank in my life. When it came to the formation of the present ministry, a year or two ago, it was a source of disappointment both to him and to myself that we were each obliged to recognize that having passed the age of three score years and ten, with health somewhat impaired, it seemed inadvisable for him, either in his own interest or in that of the public, again to attempt to assume the onerous responsibilities of a portfolio. However, his disappointment in that regard served only to bring out the finer side of his nature. I am sure that all my followers will agree that in the assiduous manner in which he continued to fight its battles no member of the party could have been more chivalrous to the party as a whole. Certainly I can say that no supporter was ever more loyal to his leader to the end of his days than was Peter Veniot. It was these qualities of true worth which so greatly endeared him to all his colleagues.

As I think of how Mr. Veniot's name will be remembered in this country, I feel that it will always be associated with the qualities of industry, of integrity, and of fidelity. It is very much to his credit that throughout a life of public service which extended over almost half a century he gave almost all of his time to public affairs, often at considerable sacrifice of his own private interests. As the best of all legacies he bequeathed to his family an honoured name, and to his country an honourable tradition of public service. Perhaps as fine a tribute as any that could be paid his memory was that expressed by the people of Gloucester, whose interests in the legislature and in parliament he had served for so long a time, when being called upon to choose a successor they selected Doctor Veniot, his eldest son, one of six sons, and returned him to this House of Commons by acclamation.

May I say to Doctor Veniot, knowing his father as I did, I am sure that nothing could have meant more to his father or could mean more to his father's memory than to have one of his sons, and in particular his eldest son, continue unbroken the tradition of public service which has come to be associated with the name he bears.