

The Imperial Service Medal to the RNWMP and RCMP

by John Skuce

It is not widely-known that when the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal was instituted in 1934, that it concluded the period of time in which Mounties had been eligible to be awarded the Imperial Service Medal.

The Imperial Service Order and Imperial Service Medal were both instituted by decree of His Majesty Edward VII, on August 8, 1902, specifically to reward members of the civil service throughout the Empire, for long and meritorious performances of duty. The Imperial Service Order was limited to 700 Companions entitled to use the letters "I.S.O." after their names. The Imperial Service Medal had no such quantity limitation and its recipients were not granted the honour of using the initials "I.S.M."

The granting of the Imperial Service Medal to the Mounted Police dates from March 4, 1905, when the Comptroller of the RNWMP received a communiqué from Joseph Pope of the Office of the Secretary of State:

"Please send to this office the list of non-commissioned officers and constables for award of the Imperial Service Medal. Applicants to meet the conditions:

- 1) Must not belong to clerical or administrative branches of the civil service. Hence, not to include clerks or those of high office.

- 2) Must have completed a minimum of 25 years in the civil service.

- 3) Must be retired from the civil service and recommendation for award must be made only after the individual's retirement.

- 4) Must be recommended by the department head as having performed exemplary service with diligence and fidelity."

The Comptroller replied to Mr. Pope's letter on March 28, 1905, requesting further details and confirmation that RNWMP personnel were indeed eligible for award of the medal:

"We are not part of the military but we hardly consider ourselves to be civil servants, please confirm that R.N.W.M. Police are subject to this distinction."

Pope's reply of April 6 settles the issue:

"In response to your concern of March 28, affirmative, please forward list to this office, post haste. List to include those eligible since August 8, 1902."

The Comptroller's list consisted of only one name, John Clisby, and in