

*Historic Sites and Monuments*

of ancient free and accepted masons of England and holds the rank of a past grand senior warden of the freemasons of Canada.

Remember that he was alive at the time this was written and that is why it is written in the present tense.

Was a member of the executive council of Canada from 11 May, 1847, to 10 March, 1848 in the administration of the late hon. Mr. Morris—

That is approximately about the time he lived in this house in Kingston which is now the property of the people of Canada.

—from 11 September, 1854, to 29 July, 1858, in the McNab-Morin, the Tache-Macdonald, and the Macdonald-Cartier administrations; from 6 August same year to 23 May, 1862, in the Cartier-Macdonald administration; and from 30 March, 1864, until the union in the Tache-Macdonald and the Belleau-Macdonald administrations; and was during these several periods, receiver general from 21 May to 7 December, 1847; commissioner of crown lands from latter date to 10 March, 1848; attorney general for Upper Canada from 11 September, 1854, to 29 July, 1858, when as prime minister he and his cabinet resigned, being defeated on the seat of government question.

Remember that it was about this time, 1858, that the city of Ottawa became the capital of Canada.

Returned to office 6 August same year as post-master general, a position he resigned the following day on his re-appointment as attorney general, Upper Canada, which he continued to hold until the defeat of the administration on the militia bill, May, 1862, when he and his colleagues again retired from office. The late Sir George E. Cartier and he led the opposition in the assembly until the defeat of the Sandfield-Macdonald-Dorion government, when the Tache-Macdonald government was formed, 30 March, 1864, and he returned to his old office of attorney general and was government leader in the assembly from that time until the union of the British American provinces, 1867. Held the office of minister of militia affairs jointly with that of attorney general from January to May, 1862, and from August, 1865, until the union. Was requested to take the place of Sir E. P. Tache as prime minister on the death of that gentleman in 1865 but waived his claim in favour of Sir N. F. Belleau. Has been a delegate to England and other countries on public business on many occasions and was a delegate to the conference in Charlottetown in 1864, which had been convened for the purpose of effecting a union of the maritime provinces, to that which succeeded it in Quebec, same year, to arrange basis of union of all British American colonies—

As you can see, his career now pyramids to the great task to which he and his colleagues devoted themselves.

—and was chairman of the London colonial conference, 1866-67, when the act of union known as the British North America Act was passed by the imperial parliament. On 1 July, 1867, when the new constitution came into force, was called upon to form the first government for the new dominion, and was sworn of the privy council and was appointed minister of justice and attorney general of Canada, an office he continued to fill until he and his ministry resigned on the Pacific railway charges, 6 November, 1873. In 1871 was appointed one of Her Majesty's joint high commissioners and plenipotentiaries, together with Earl de Grey, now Marquis of Ripon, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir

[Mr. Alkenbrack.]

Edward Thornton and the right hon. Montague Bernard, to act in connection with five commissioners named by the president of the United States for the settlement of the Alabama claims and of matters in dispute between Great Britain and the United States, the labours of which joint high commission resulted in the treaty of Washington signed at Washington on 8 May, 1871.

Received degree of D.C.L. (hon.) from Oxford university, 1865. Is also LL.D. of Queen's university, Kingston, and a D.C.L. of university of Trinity college, Toronto. Created Knight Commander of the Bath, civil, by Her Majesty, July, 1867. Created a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Order of Isabel la Catolica, of Spain, January, 1872. Nominated a member of Her Majesty's most honourable privy council, July, 1872, and sworn in August, 1879. Unanimously elected leader of the Canadian Liberal Conservative opposition, 6 November, 1873. Sat for Kingston in Canadian assembly from November, 1844, until the union. Returned for same seat in the Commons at general election, 1867, at general election, 1872 and at general election, 1874. Unseated on petition, 21 November, 1874; re-elected 29 December, 1874. Contested the city of Kingston at last general election when he was defeated. Immediately afterwards was elected by acclamation for Marquette, Manitoba, which he vacated by having accepted office as premier and minister of the interior on 17 October, 1878, which position he now holds. Was then elected with Mr. DeCosmos for Victoria, B.C., for which he is now senior member. The following are among the principal measures which have been carried through parliament by the right hon. knight.

This should be very interesting, Mr. Speaker, to hon. members because it gives in capsule form a list of the accomplishments of our first prime minister. They are as follows:

The secularization of the clergy reserves; the improvement of the criminal laws; the promotion of public instruction; the consolidation of the statutes; the extension of the municipal system; the reorganization of the militia; the settlement of the seat of government question; the establishment of direct steam mail communication with Europe; the establishment of additional penitentiaries, criminal lunatic asylums and reformatory prisons, and providing for the inspection thereof; the providing for the internal economy for the House of Commons;

This is one of the features upon which we all depend in this body. I continue reading the list:

—the reorganization of the civil service on a permanent basis; the construction of the Inter-colonial Railway; the enlargement of the canals—

This last item seems fairly unimportant today because our internal canals are used mostly for tourist and pleasure purposes, but I remind hon. members that at that time our canal system was our main means of communication because activity in relation to railways had barely started. I continue reading the list:

—the enactment of a stringent election law; the ratification of the Washington treaty; the confederation of British North America and the extension and consolidation of the dominion. In his position as leader of the opposition, Sir John, on several occasions, gave the late government the