

Commissioner Sherwood — A Leader of Distinction

During its lifetime, the Dominion Police had a total of six different Commissioners, the longest serving of whom was Sir Arthur Percy Sherwood, who served from 1885 to 1919.

Sherwood was born at Bytown (Ottawa) in March, 1854, and was of United Empire Loyalists descent. He served as Deputy Sheriff of Carleton County for two years before being appointed Chief of the Ottawa Police, at the age of 25. Three years later, he was recruited into the Dominion Police as a Superintendent. In 1885, he was made Commissioner. One of the first assignments given to him by the Prime Minister was to deliver into the hands of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Northwest Territories the Death Warrant for the execution of Louis Riel — Leader of the Northwest Rebellion.

In April 1913, the Dominion Police Act was amended. Sherwood's title became Chief Commissioner, with six other Federal Commissioners reporting to him. He had direct contact with the Governor-General and the Minister of Justice as well as the Prime Minister. Sherwood was highly respected by his peers as an expert on police matters and was frequently consulted by police chiefs from coast to coast. The presentation of his card by a member of his force to any police chief was assurance of the whole-hearted cooperation of the chief and his entire force.

Commissioner Sherwood and the Dominion Police were singled out for special praise for their work in the areas of espionage and sabotage during World War I. Sherwood was



Sir Arthur Percy Sherwood, Commissioner of the Dominion Police from 1885 to 1919.

knighthood: Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (K.C.M.G.) in 1916. Earlier, he had been honoured as a Member of the Royal Victorian Order (M.V.O.) in 1908, and Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (C.M.G.) in 1902.

Throughout his 40-year career as a peace officer, Sir Percy did much to help advance the art of police work in Canada. The success of the Dominion Police was largely due to his initiative and executive prowess. In 1905, he was the leader in organizing the Chief Constables Association of Canada. The members of this body fostered closer cooperation among