

John Patterson



John Patterson was born in Oxford County, Ontario, on 3 January 1872 into the large family of Scots-origin farmer Francis Patterson and Annie (Telfer). He worked as a teacher, earning enough to graduate from the University of Toronto in 1900 with a B.A. in engineering. A scholarship to the University of Cambridge led to the award of an M.A. in physics.

Patterson served as professor of physics at the University of Allahabad, India and in the position of Imperial Meteorologist to the Government of India at Simla. In 1910 he returned to Canada with his wife Margaret Norris, a medical practitioner and later magistrate, and son Arthur.

He was appointed physicist for the Canadian Meteorological Service in April 1910 and was responsible for the research program including upper air observation and instrument development.

In 1929 he was appointed Controller of the Meteorological Service, directing it through rapid expansion during the Second World War. He was awarded the Order of the British Empire in 1943 and he retired in 1946.

Patterson was the founding president of the Canadian Branch of the Royal Meteorological Society, serving three terms (1940-43). He was also president of the American Meteorological Society (1930-31) and the Royal Canadian Institute (1932-33). Each year the Canadian Meteorological Service awards the *Patterson Medal* for distinguished service to meteorology in Canada. John Patterson was the first recipient. Today, the *Patterson Medal* is presented annually, often in conjunction with the CMOS Congress.

John Patterson died on 22 February 1956 and is interred in Park Lawn Cemetery, Toronto.