

## The First World War and Peacetime Contributions of University of Toronto Alumni Featured on Canada's Postage Stamps

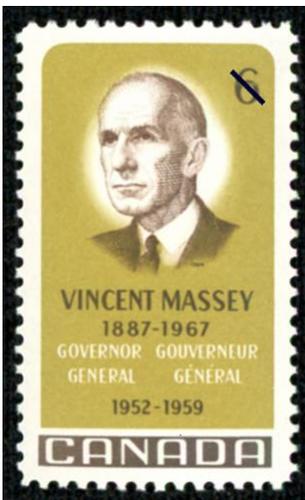


**Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae (1872-1918):** Doctor; artist; author of *In Flanders Fields*. John McCrae joined a Guelph artillery militia regiment commanded by his father. While completing a B.A. at University College ('94), he served with the Queen's Own Rifles and later commanded a company as a Captain there. He performed artillery training at RMC returning to the University to complete his medical training in 1898. Two of the students he tutored there, when most men refused to help women enter the professions, were among Ontario's first women physicians. Serving as a Lieutenant and a battery

commander in the Canadian Field Artillery in the Second Boer War, he was awarded three clasps to The Queen's Medal.

McCrae held several appointments at two Montreal hospitals and after further studies in England received membership in the Royal College of Physicians. He lectured at several hospitals and became Physician for Infectious Diseases at Montreal's Royal Alexandra Hospital in 1908. He was expedition physician for the canoe trip by the Governor General, Lord Grey, from Lake Winnipeg to Hudson Bay in 1910.

In September 1914, John McCrae served as Medical Officer to the 1<sup>st</sup> Artillery Brigade through the Battle of Ypres. After the death there of a former student and friend, he wrote *In Flanders Fields*. Promoted Lieutenant-Colonel in June 1915, he was transferred away from his beloved artillery to head a Canadian hospital near Boulogne. In January 1918, he died of pneumonia. By then John McCrae was a household name. His poem is still recited at Commonwealth Remembrance Day services and is the most enduring of the First World War.



**Vincent Massey (1887-1967):** Businessman; diplomat; philanthropist; Governor General. Vincent Massey graduated from University College in 1910 and completed an M.A. at Oxford. He was the first Dean of Men and a history lecturer at Victoria College. He enrolled in the University's Canadian Officers' Training Corps in 1915. He served on its staff and with the army's district headquarters and was promoted Lieutenant-Colonel in October 1916. From early 1918 until the Armistice he worked for the federal cabinet's war committee. He became president of his father's Massey-Harris farm machinery firm; established the Massey Foundation and pursued the arts. In 1921, he became a federal cabinet minister without portfolio. From 1926-30, he was Canada's First Minister to the USA. Appointed Canada's High Commissioner to the UK from 1935-46, Massey became trustee of the National and Tate Galleries while there. He was the University's Chancellor from 1948-53 and chair of Canada's National Gallery. He headed the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences in 1949. Its Massey Report had a major influence including

the founding of the Canada Council for the Arts; the National Library; and promoting Canadian arts and culture.



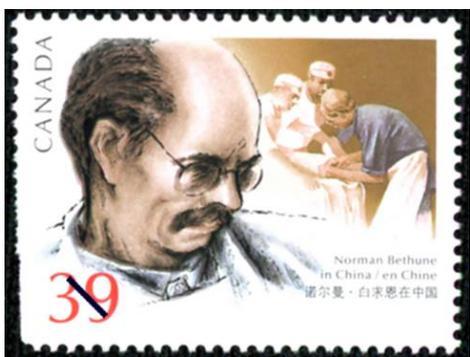
Vincent Massey was appointed as the first native-born Canadian Governor General in 1952 and was extended in office twice to 1959. His promotion of a national arts festival helped create the National Arts Centre. He supported Canadian identity and unity; was an early promoter of bilingualism; and established the Massey Medal for Geography. He travelled across Canada extensively with a particular interest in the Arctic. Though he could not establish a national honours system his concept helped create of the Order of Canada which he was awarded in 1967.

Vincent Massey and his family's philanthropy was the largest the University has received. It includes Burwash Hall and scholarship funding land at Victoria University; the Faculty of Household Science building; Hart House, and Massey College. In his private and official life he was a major patron of Canadian arts and letters. As the first native-born Governor General, Vincent Massey established that role for promoting Canadian unity and identity.



**Norman Bethune** (1890-1939): Doctor; medical innovator. Norman Bethune interrupted his medical training to be an early volunteer with No. 2 Field Ambulance, in September 1914. He arrived in France in February 1915, as a stretcher-bearer. Wounded, he returned to the University, and graduated with Frederick Banting in 1916. Bethune served as Surgeon-Lieutenant on a Royal Navy aircraft carrier in 1917. He interned in London and enrolled in the Royal Flying Corps, training in Canada as a Flight-Lieutenant, researching the causes of pilot blackout. Bethune has the rare distinction of serving in all three services in the First World War. The realization of the high mortality rates of the casualty evacuation process to distant hospitals was a major influence on his life's work.

Dissatisfied with his slow recovery from tuberculosis contracted in 1926, Bethune discovered obscure research on collapsed lung therapy and persuaded doctors to perform the risky surgery on him to aid his recovery. Bethune trained as a thoracic surgeon; innovated techniques for TB patients; and designed new surgical instruments.



Bethune's advocacy for universal health care during a Quebec election was ignored. He opened a free clinic for poor patients there in 1934. Aroused by the Fascist support of the rebel Nationalists in the Spanish Civil War, he sailed there to support the Republicans in November 1936. He helped develop a mobile blood transfusion service to save lives near the battlefield. Returning to Canada in 1937, Bethune raised funds for the Republicans. He then organized medical services to help the Chinese fight the Japanese invasion and arrived there in February 1938. By September he had opened a hospital that was soon destroyed making him realize the need for mobile medical units closer to the frontline.

Bethune performed countless operations on wounded soldiers and initiated training for doctors and nurses. He died of septicaemia after cutting his finger during an operation in November 1939. Mourned by 10,000 at his funeral, he is still revered in China. Norman Bethune, who had a controversial career, pioneered medical services closer to the battlefield to help save countless lives.

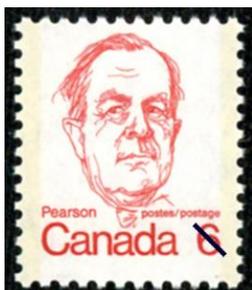


**Sir Frederick Banting** (1891-1941): Doctor; medical researcher; artist; co-discoverer of insulin; Nobel Prize Laureate. Frederick Banting was unable to enlist early in the First World War owing to his eyesight. Graduating in medicine in 1916, he enlisted in the Medical Corps, No. 2 Field Ambulance and was promoted Captain. In France by May 1917, he served in two hospitals and as a medical officer to an infantry battalion. Banting aided wounded soldiers while wounded himself at Cambrai and was awarded the Military Cross for heroism under fire. After the war he was a Resident Surgeon at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children. He taught at Western University and pharmacology at the University of Toronto where he earned his M.D. in 1922.



In 1921, Banting obtained lab facilities at the University from Professor J.R.R. Macleod and hired assistant, Charles Best, to research pancreatic secretions to treat diabetes. That summer he and Best kept a diabetic dog alive with insulin they had isolated. In January 1922, the first dying diabetic patient was saved with it. Banting and Macleod were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1923. At age 32, Banting remains the youngest recipient of that award. Upset that his assistant was not recognized, he generously shared his prize with Best. He became world-famous. The Ontario government financed his research chair which led to the founding of the University's Banting and Best Institute. He continued research on cancer, silicosis and drowning and was knighted in 1934. A good friend of Group of Seven artist, A.Y. Jackson, he painted with him in Ontario, Quebec and the Eastern Arctic.

Anticipating the Second World War, Sir Frederick started world leading research on aviation medicine. He was mobilized in 1939 as a Major in the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps and served as its Director of Medical Research. Initially at the University and then at a secret research centre nearby, he worked with other scientists including Professor Wilbur Franks, who built the Allied's first human centrifuge to develop his anti-gravity flying suit. This enabled pilots to avoid blackout during high G-force flying and is considered Canada's greatest Second World War research. He died in Newfoundland in February 1941 while flying to England. His funeral service was held at Convocation Hall. Sir Frederick Banting made one of the greatest medical discoveries of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and continued with pioneering peace and wartime research.



**Lester 'Mike' Pearson** (1897-1972): Professor; diplomat; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; Prime Minister. Lester Pearson entered Victoria College in 1913, graduating in 1919 as the First World War interrupted his studies. In April 1915, he enlisted in the Medical Corps arriving at Salonika, Greece, that October as a stretcher-bearer with No. 4 Canadian General Hospital (UofT). He transferred to the infantry, training at Oxford and was promoted Lieutenant in August 1917. With the urgent need for pilots, Pearson was transferred to the Royal Flying Corps that October and learned to solo. Following an accident he was returned to Canada in 1918 where he served as an R.A.F. navigation instructor at the University. In that training program were future notables: Governor General Roland Michener; Ontario Premier Mitch Hepburn; and novelist, William Faulkner.



Pearson completed an M.A. on a Massey Foundation scholarship at Oxford in 1925, playing on their Spengler Cup winning hockey team. He then taught at the University of Toronto for two years before joining External Affairs. From 1935-41 he served at London's Canada House for High Commissioner, Vincent Massey. In 1942, he was second-in-command at the Canadian embassy in Washington, D.C. becoming its Ambassador from 1945-46. He had a major role in the creation of the United Nations, serving as president of its General Assembly; and NATO, whose Council he chaired. He became an MP and Minister of External Affairs in 1948. Pearson helped defuse the Suez Crisis and create the first UN Peacekeeping Force for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957.

Lester Pearson became Opposition Leader in 1958 and Prime Minister from 1963-68. His social programs include: the universal Medical Care Act; the Canada Pension Plan; a student loans plan; and he shares credit with former PM John Diefenbaker for a race-free immigration policy. Pearson bettered working conditions and prosperity with a 40-hour work week; better minimum wages; a two-week vacation; and the Canada-US Auto Pact. He fostered Canadian identity by adopting the Maple Leaf flag. His Royal Commissions on the Status of Women and Bilingualism subsequently strengthened women's legal equality and established official bilingualism. Lester Pearson helped promote a more confident Canada on the post-war world stage. He left the legacy of founding the UN Peacekeeping Force and holding Canada's only Nobel Peace Prize. His government significantly improved Canada's social welfare, women's rights, bilingualism, and aided its prosperity.

David Platt, CD  
Chair, Soldiers' Tower Committee  
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