

W.F. WILLSON::: Fort Erie Ontario. from Times Review.

Mr. Willson, Fort Erie business man who has lived here for nearly all of his seventy five years; died following an accident on No 3 Highway when his car struck a train..

Deceased has been in the Custom Brokerage business here since 1918; after he had resigned from the Customs and Excise Staff. He was prominent in social, business, and fraternal life, in the area. He was one of the original members of the Buffalo Peace Bridge Commission, now known as the Peace Bridge Authority, and was a member at the time of his death. He was a native of Bertie Township and a resident of Fort Erie for 40 years. He was a past master of the Palmer Lodge and Fort Erie Masonic lodge, a past Grand Z of Hugh Murray Chapter, Royal Arch Masons; also a member of Hindoo Kesh Grotte Hamilton; and the Skottish Rite; holding the thirty second degree.

For many years he was active in Liberal politics, and had held important posts in the county and local organizations of that party.

Mr. Willson is served by his wife Alice, by his two sons Capt. Ray Willson, and Harold engaged in the Customs Brokerage Business here; also two daughters, Mrs. E.M. Roker of Niagara Blvd. and Mrs. F.W. Chapman of Barrie.

William Franklin Willson (Fort Erie, Ont.). The subject of this sketch represents, through his grandfather, one of the first families that ever settled in Welland county and in his own right, in his business and in his many acts of civic endeavour, has created one of the widest circles of acquaintances who look to him for counsel and advice in matters pertinent to real estate and insurance.

His father was the late Robert Willson and his mother the late Martha Ann (Brown) Willson. His father was born in Welland county and his mother in the county of York.

Richard Willson, the grandfather of the subject of this sketch, pioneered Welland county. Scores of years ago he walked across the Blue Mountain, from New Jersey, crossed the Niagara River on an ice bridge and settle here, where, by dint of hard labour, he amassed a fortune of considerable size. He was United Empire Loyalist.

William Franklin Willson attended public school in Bertie township and the Welland high school before he entered the Bryant-Stratto business college at Toronto, Ont. After completing the course at the business college, M. Willson, who was then seventeen years old, went to Cleveland, Ohio, and engaged himself in the grocery business. After a year in Cleveland, he returned to Welland county to take charge of his father's farm which he managed until 1889.

Mr. Willson then went to Denver for his health and accepted a position, while there, in the accounting department of the Denver and Rio Grande Railway, which he held for two years or more.

In 1892 Mr. Willson again returned to Welland with his health improved, and farmed until 1896, when he was appointed custom officer at the Port of Fort Erie, under the Laurier Government. He remained in charge of the Ferry Customs office for eighteen years when he resigned to open his present business as customs broker, insurance and real estate with offices located on Niagara and Walnut Streets, Fort Erie. In his present undertaking, Mr. Willson has met with a success which is undoubtedly due to his thorough understanding of customs regulation and real estate

values throughout Welland county and to the faith that his clients have in his ability to take care of them.

The part that Mr. Willson has played in the civic activities of his community is great. He has taken a great interest in the growth of the Niagara frontier, being a member of the Development Committee of the Niagara Area, a self-governing group, organized to attract industries and investments. During the World War he was made chairman of the Victory Loans in Fort Erie which, under his direction was fully subscribed for. He was also director of the Patriotic Fund for Fort Erie during the war period. Many times has he been requested to serve in public office, but has declined each honor save that of serving on the Public School Board, where he held office for several years. He is a Liberal in politics.

Mr. Willson has also played a large part in the fraternal and social life of his community. He is a past master of Palmer Lodge, No. 372, A. F. and A. M. and was a charter member and the first worshipful master of Fort Erie Lodge, No. 613, A. F. and A. M., a charter member of Hugh Murray Chapter, R.A.M., the Lodge of Perfection of Cherry Hill Golf and Country Club, the Erie Downs Golf and Country Club, Fort Erie Business Men's Club and