

Amzi Lewis Morden



Amzi Lewis Morden, Past Grand Master, Barrister-at-Law, Solicitor of the Supreme Court Judicature of Ontario, County Crown Attorney and Clerk of the Peace, Queen's Counsel and Solicitor for the Merchant Bank, Napanee. He was born on the 19th of July, 1831, in the Township of Cramahe in the County of Northumberland. His father Joseph Wilkinson Morden was descended on both sides of United Empire Loyalist stock, the ancestors being the Mordens of the Bay of Quinte, and the Benedicts, who came from the well-known Puritan families, Benedicts and Stewarts. He received his early education at the common schools in Tyendinaga, afterwards attending the Normal

School, Toronto, Belleville Seminary, Belleville and private tutelage at the hands of Rev. Andrew Hudson, Melrose. His studies in addition to those required to qualify as a first class teacher, were *English Literature, Natural Science, Mathematics, Classics and French.*

He enlisted in the Volunteer Militia as a private in 1863 in a company of light infantry under Captain Buell, and remained in this company until after the Fenian Invasion in 1866. He was gazetted in 1867 as Lieutenant of Company No.7, in the 48th Battalion, and served in that capacity until 1873, when he tendered his resignation owing to the pressure of professional business.

A.L. Morden took an active interest in municipal affairs. He was elected Mayor of Napanee in 1872, 1873 and 1874. He was chairman of the Board of Education in 1869, 1877, 1880, 1882, 1884 and 1885. He was a member of the Senate of Victoria University (*now part of University of Toronto*), the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church and of the Consultation and Finance, Chairman of the Board of Health and a member of the Board of Trustees of Albert College.

In fraternal societies of a benevolent or otherwise worthy nature, he was a very active and zealous member. He initiated into Napanee Lodge No.86, Independent Order of Oddfellows in September, 1872. In 1873, he was elected Noble Grand, and after passed through the chairs of Napanee Lodge. A.L. Morden would be their representative to Grand Lodge in 1877, 1880 and 1881. Then he would be elected Deputy Grand Master in 1883 and Grand Master of the Independent Order of Oddfellows in 1884, at St. Thomas, Ontario. Within the A.F. & A.M. Lodge, he was a member of Mount Sinai Lodge No.280, Napanee where he was Lodge Secretary from 1880 until 1888 when Mount Sinai Lodge No.280 amalgamated with Union Lodge No.9, Napanee on March 25th, 1888. There is no mention of him being a Charter Member or an officer of Mount Sinai Lodge prior to 1880.

With respect to politics, he was always a Liberal. He was the secretary of the Reform Association of Lennox from 1872-1879, and president of the Association from 1879 to April, 1882 when he resigned his position upon his appointment to the offices of County Crown Attorney and Clerk of the Peace. He actively attended the local Methodist Church in Napanee (*Grace United Church today*). He never married and lived as a tenant in the house of Thomas and Julia (Morden) Symington (*his sister*). He believed himself to be 'self-made man'. He moved from Cramahe to Tyendinaga in 1841 when ten years of age, worked upon the farm with his father and brothers until he was twenty, then taught school and served as a book-keeper and clerk until he acquired enough money to procure a fair education to equip him for the study of law. He began his legal studies with Dean & Diamond, of Belleville, and after one year had his articles transferred to Richards & Senkler of Brockville. In September 1866, he began to practice his profession in Napanee, where he resided the rest of his life. Becoming the senior member of Morden & Williams; Barristers and Solicitors etc., of Napanee. Mr. Amzi Lewis Morden was noted for his industry and readiness in mastering problems of law. He was the Canadian Commissioner in the law case of Robert McKeown vs United States in 1872 which was a result of

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'injuries' occurring during The American Civil War. McKeown was awarded 1,475 dollars in gold by the government of the United States.

It should be acknowledged that in 1884 he was the Vice President of the Committee for the 100th United Empire Loyalist Celebrations at Adolphustown held June 16, 17, 18. During this Celebration he delivered a speech on Monday morning June 16th before the laying of U.E.L. Monument corner stone by the Masons of the County and Ontario. His speech is published in "The Centennial of Upper Canada by the United Empire Loyalists 1784-1884 Celebrations at Adolphustown, Toronto and Niagara" by Rose Publishing, Toronto 1885.

The Adolphustown Celebration Committee 1884 consisted of L.L. Bogart, President; J.J. Watson, Corresponding Secretary; J.B. Allison, Secretary; A.L. Morden, Vice President and Forty members.

Amzi Lewis Morden would die July 14th, 1895 in Liverpool, England while on a trip with his sister, Julia Symington to ease his suffering from 'nervous prostration' which had been causing him ill health. His body was returned to Napanee where a large and most imposing funeral/burial occurred in Napanee at Riverside Cemetery.

Additional Information

Independent Order of Oddfellows

"Its aim and object is to elevate a man physically, intellectually, morally and spiritually; to take care of the sick and helpless; to lend a helping hand to the fallen and need, and to teach its members the uncertainty of life and the importance of providing for those depending upon them, the certainty of death and the necessity of laying up treasure above."

The first IOOF Lodge in Ontario was Victoria Lodge No.6, Belleville, June 17th, 1845. But numbered No.6, because numbering is across all of Canada.

The IOOF Lodges in the Bay of Quinte District No.35 according to A.E. Paul D.D.G.M in 1895 include: Belleville Lodge No.81, Belleville with 212 members; Napanee Lodge No.86, Napanee with 62 members; Deseronto Lodge No.102, Deseronto with 92 members; Trenton Lodge No.113, Trenton with 69 members; Mizpah Lodge No.127, Belleville with 118 members; Bay of Quinte Lodge No.143, Picton with 127 members; and Argyle Lodge No.212, Napanee with 74 members. Their total membership was 21,608 in 310 lodges across Ontario.

Napanee would have a second Grand Master of the IOOF in the person of William Joseph Carl Clark in 1982. He would be the 125th Grand Master and die February 25, 1994.



Julia Symington, sister of Amzi Lewis Morden, led an Adult Bible Study group at Grace Methodist Church, Napanee for 37 years with 77 members. She died March 18th, 1913. South Fredericksburgh Heritage has an obituary posted in Deaths for her. According to the Journal of Proceedings for IOOF 1896, Julia received a photograph or painting of her brother Amzi Lewis. Her husband was Thomas Symington a grocer and owner of the "Opera House" on the south side of Dundas Street.

Sources

1895 Journal of Proceedings IOOF

Grand Lodge Proceedings A.F. &A.M. 1872-1889

Union Lodge No.9 Membership Register

Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography: Being Chiefly Men of Our Time vol.1 George MacLean Rose 1886, page 390-391

Lennox and Addington Museum and Archives

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Deseronto Archives: Obituary, Deseronto Tribune

South Fredericksburgh Heritage website

British and American Claims: British Claims No.1-478; No.463 Robert McKeown

Canadian Censuses

Board of Education Members 1890-1893

Lennox and Addington County Museum and Archives1909