



The institution of the original RASC Fellowships (FRASC) is shrouded in some mystery. At the very beginning of the 1890s (the period of the effective revitalization of the Society), some “active” members (*i.e.*, “ordinary” members) of the Astronomical & Physical Society of Toronto (A&PST, as the RASC was then known), were using the post-nominal designation M.A.P.S. This was doubtless a down-market imitation of the sanctioned custom of members of the Royal Society (FRS), and the Royal Astronomical Society of London (FRAS). Among members of the A&PST, however, the practice was neither sanctioned, nor customary. It was, in fact, strongly discouraged by prominent members of the A&PST:

“Some discussion arose regarding the standing of the members of this society [the Astronomical & Physical Society of Toronto], as such and it was moved by Mr. Howell seconded by Mr. Miller that the following resolution be adopted: Resolved, that it is not advisable for any member of this society to write after his name the letters M.A.P.S. which would naturally signify “Members of the Astronomical & Physical Society”. This was carried”; “Minutes of the Astronomical & Physical Society of Toronto for 1891”, p. 81.

It is difficult to determine how wide-spread this usage was at the time, or even to discover the names of those affecting such a sign of unmerited status.

The Society went through several name changes at the turn of the century, culminating in the present appellation of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, a result of a successful petitioning of the Crown for the privilege to use the style “Royal” (granted in 1903; “Minutes of the RASC 1903”, regular meeting, 1903 March 3, p. 16). Buoyed by confidence in the Society's new status, the leadership thought it worthwhile to explore adding a further category of distinguished membership to the Honorary and Corresponding classes established in 1890:

“Mr. Miller, Mr. Musson and the President were appointed a committee to nominate candidates for “Fellows” of the R[.]A[.]S.C. Move[d] by G.E. Lumsden sec[onded] A. Harvey, carried”; “Minutes of the RASC 1903”, Council meeting for 1903 March 6, p. 17 (a draft report reads: “Mr. Miller[,] Mr. Musson & the Pres[iden]t [to] be a Committee to nominate Fellows of the R.A.S.C. Carried R.F.S. [=R.F. Stupart]”; *ibid.*).

As Richard Jarrell remarks:

“When the RASC was first incorporated with a royal charter, it attempted to emulate its British namesake, the RAS, not only in its national and international aspirations but in its election of fellows and honorary fellows from overseas. Those who bore the title FRASC were those who had contributed to the society, such as John R. Collins, the long-time secretary, and distinguished amateurs, such as A.F. Miller, or professionals, such as King, Klotz, Plaskett, and De Lury”; Richard A. Jarrell, *The Cold Light of Dawn: A History of Canadian Astronomy* (Toronto–Buffalo–London: University of Toronto Press, 1988), p. 140 (note, this is mistaken in one respect—the RASC, while incorporated, never received a royal charter; <https://www.rasc.ca/societys-royal-charter>).

No list of Fellows of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (FRASC) seems to have ever been published by the Society in the years 1903-*ca.* 1944. The following list is at best partial:

<p>Prof. C.A. Chant (1865-1956), M.A., PH.D., FRSC, FRASC https://www.rasc.ca/clarence-chant</p>
<p>John R. Collins (1865-1957), FRASC https://www.rasc.ca/john-collins</p>
<p>Prof. Alfred DeLury (1864-1951), M.A., FRSC, FRASC https://www.rasc.ca/alfred-delury</p>
<p>Dr. William Frederick King (1854-1916), CMG, D.L.S., LL.D., FRSC, FRASC http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/king_william_frederick_14E.html</p>
<p>Dr. Otto Klotz (1852-1923), D.L.S., LL.D., D.SC., FRSC, FRASC https://www.rasc.ca/otto-klotz</p>
<p>A.F. Miller (1851-1947), FRASC https://www.rasc.ca/allan-miller</p>
<p>John Andrew Patterson (1876-1930), KC, M.A., FRASC http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/paterson_john_andrew_15E.html</p>
<p>Dr. J.S. Plaskett (1865-1941), CBE, FRS, FRAS, FRSC, FRASC https://www.rasc.ca/john-stanley-plaskett</p>
<p>R.M. Stewart (1878-1954), M.A., FRAS, FRSC, FRASC https://www.rasc.ca/robert-meldrum-stewart</p>
<p>Sir Frederick Stupart (1857-1940), FRSC, FRASC http://articles.adsabs.harvard.edu/full/seri/JRASC/0035//0000140.000.html</p>

How long was this honour bestowed by the Society? That too is mysterious. No document survives to inform us why and when the practice was discontinued, but Peter Broughton, FRASC, speculates that the honour died during the upheavals of WWII:

“Corresponding Members and Fellows were recognized classes within the Society for many years but they ceased to exist by 1944”; R. Peter Broughton, *Looking Up: A History of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada* (Toronto–Oxford: Dundurn Press, 1994), p. 38.

–R.A. Rosenfeld, FRASC
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