



Frederick Montizambert, MD

Dr. Frederick Montizambert was one of the first doctors in North America to realize and understand the importance of bacteriology as it relates to infectious disease. As a result of his tireless work and innovative approach, he turned quarantine stations into effective medical centres and significantly reduced the morbidity and mortality rates due to infectious diseases.

After receiving his MD at Université Laval, Dr. Montizambert travelled to Edinburgh for post-graduate training before taking up the post of medical superintendent of the Grosse-Île Quarantine Station in 1869, a post he held for thirty years.

At the time, the Station, which was the main point of entry for all immigrants coming to Canada from Europe, had a long history of deadly cholera epidemics. Dr. Montizambert's innovative quarantine methods, based on a knowledge of the newly discovered "microbes" and their relationship to contagion, succeeded in reducing morbidity and mortality among the vulnerable newcomers.

In 1899, he became the first federal Director General of Public Health, responsible for the administration of quarantine stations throughout the Dominion. As representative of the Canadian Medical Association, Dr. Montizambert succeeded in 1919 in convincing the Federal Government to establish the Canadian Department of Health.