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THE
GREAT
SEAL
OF CANADA

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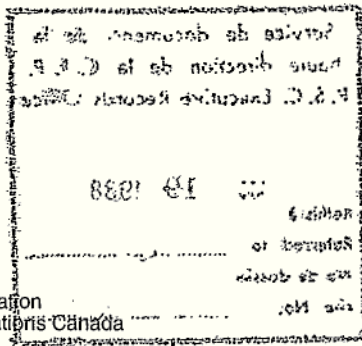
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THE GREAT SEAL OF CANADA

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Preface

The history of Canada's Great Seal is intrinsically linked to the growth of our country from colony to nationhood. Our Great Seal honours traditions inherited from our founding nations, France and Great Britain, which employed seals to lend authority to the decisions of the sovereign and government.

In a similar way, Canada's Great Seal attests to the validity of the most important decisions of the government. When affixed to a document, it signifies the will of an elected parliament flowing from the Crown. Our Great Seal is also a work of art and skill. Representations of two of our oldest Great Seals, the permanent Seal of Queen Victoria and the Seal of the Province of Canada, may be viewed in the Hall of Fame in Parliament where they are carved in stone.

As Registrar General of Canada and Custodian of the Great Seal, I am pleased to commend this publication to all Canadians in view of the historical significance of Canada's Great Seal.

Harvie Andre

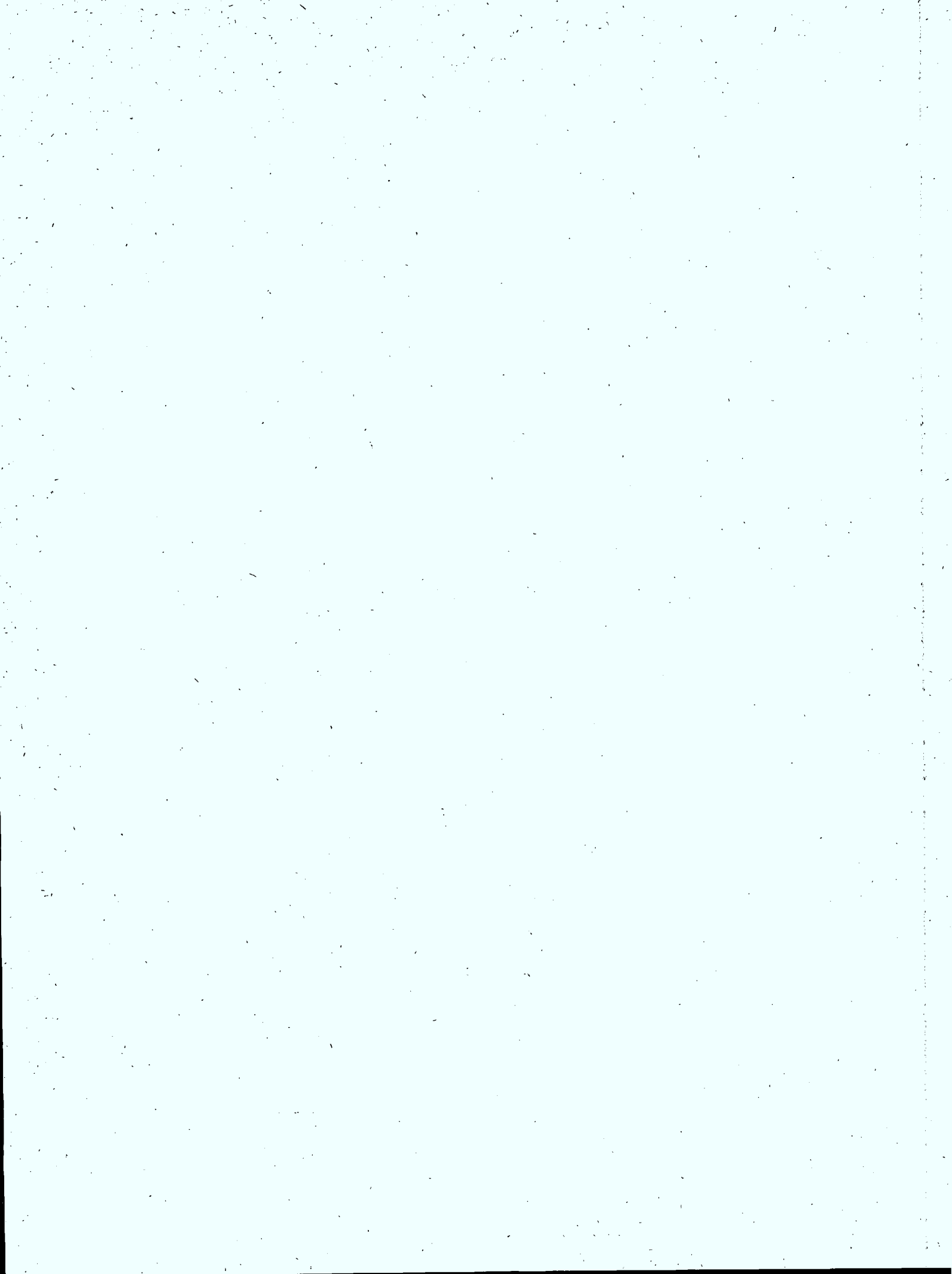
Introduction

The Great Seal of Canada is one of the oldest and most venerated instruments of our government. Since the earliest days of our nation, Canada's most important documents have been made official through its imprint. The Great Seal signifies the power and authority of the Crown flowing from the sovereign to our parliamentary government.

In many ways, the Great Seal is a reflection of our history, yet its role is not confined to the past. Up to the present day, the Great Seal has both a ceremonial and administrative purpose. Each time a new Governor General is installed in Canada, he or she is solemnly charged with custody of the Great Seal of Canada as representative of the Crown. Each significant federal appointment — be it of a Cabinet Minister, Senator, Lieutenant Governor or officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police — is formalized by instrument under the Great Seal. The Great Seal is affixed to proclamations, Crown land grants, commissions and election writs, to all formal documents issued in the name of the reigning sovereign. For each of these documents, the presence of the seal melds together the notions of authenticity, authority and will of the Crown, while at the same time lending a certain prestige to the document.

Our country's Great Seal is uniquely Canadian. It has been in existence since Confederation yet has changed, as currency changes, with each successive reign.

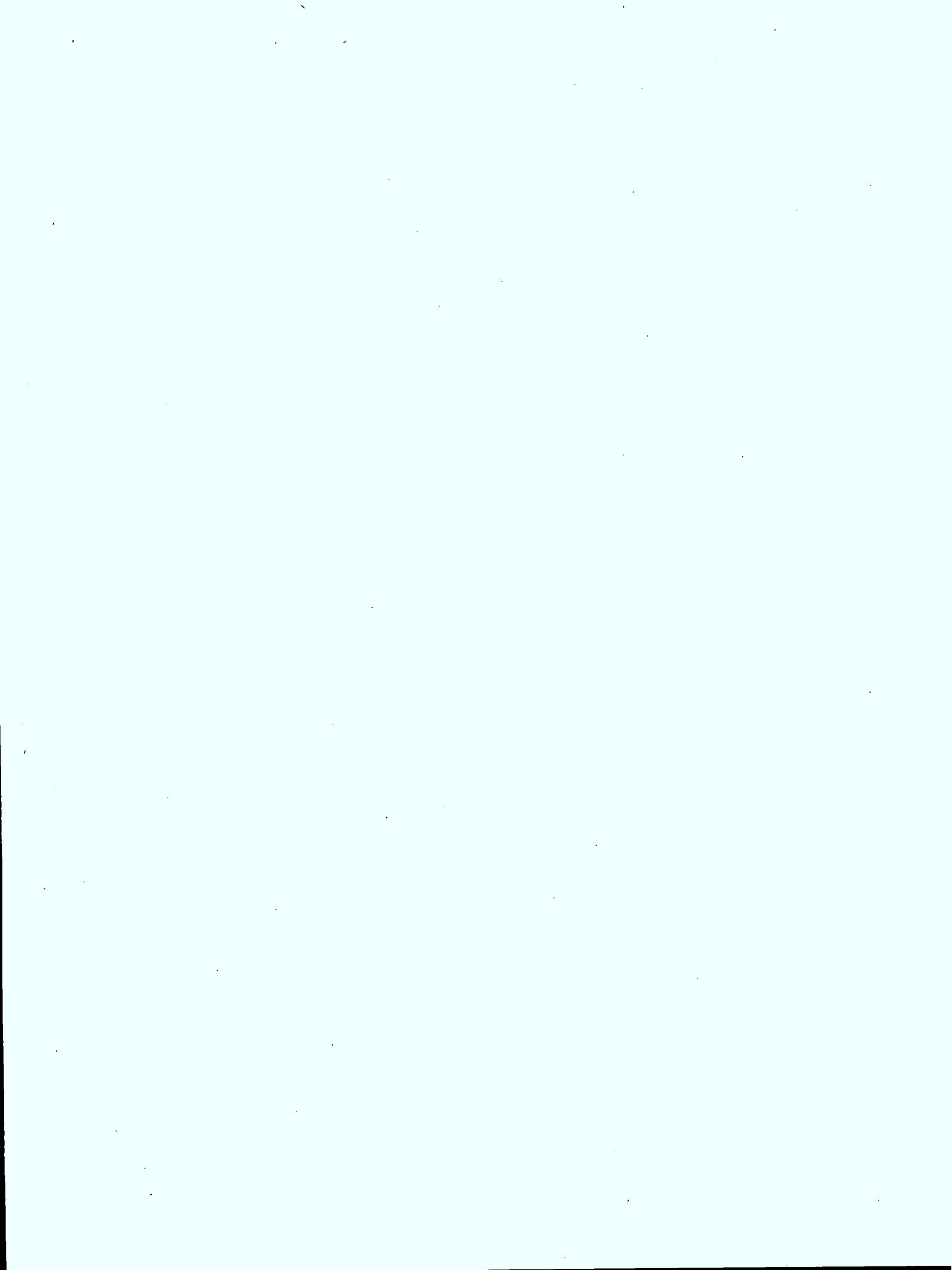
The Great Seal of Canada has a fascinating story, especially when we view it against the colourful backdrop of earlier heraldry and Canada's own history. This story is in some respects a mirror to our past, providing a unique perspective on our own constitutional inheritance and evolution as a nation.





I Pre-Confederation Seals





The advent of the Great Seal of Canada was preceded by a long tradition. That tradition was brought to Canadian shores in the first instances of colonization, along with the languages and customs of our European forebears. When John Cabot landed on a rocky eastern coast in June 1497, his first act was to raise a banner showing the royal arms of England — by which he claimed “the dominion, title and jurisdiction” of this uncharted territory for King Henry VII, the English king he served. Thirty-seven years later, in July of 1534, Jacques Cartier performed a similar rite upon arriving at Gaspé harbour, raising a thirty-foot cross on which were affixed a shield adorned with three *fleurs-de-lis* and a sign engraved *VIVE LE ROY DE FRANCE*. Ephemeral as these insignia may have been, the claims of our two founding nations were to have a permanent impact upon Canada.

Seals designed to authenticate, proclaim authority, denote property and prevent tampering with a document or a container’s contents, date back to well before the time of Christ. However, royal state seals did not appear until much later. These seals of majesty, representing both king and state, were introduced in France during the reign of Henri I (1031–1060). Typically, they depicted the king, crowned, robed, and seated on a throne, surrounded by various regal symbols of his dominion.

The *Grand Sceau* of François I, in whose name Cartier claimed Canada, possessed certain details which were to characterize many later royal seals of France. Some of these details also appeared in Britain’s and consequently Canada’s own Great Seals. In this seal, the King wears a crown and is seated on a throne under a canopy decorated with *fleurs-de-lis*. He wears the royal mantle and an ermine cape, symbols of nobility.

A sceptre in the right hand, tipped with a *fleur-de-lis*, represents his authority to rule. Justice is symbolized by a sceptre in the left hand. The top of this sceptre shows a hand held in the required manner for taking an oath. The two lions at the monarch’s feet reflect his dominion and strength. The legend around the circumference reads *FRANCISCVS DEI GRATIA FRANCORVM REX PRIMVS* (Francis I, by the grace of God, King of the French).

The *Grands Sceaux* of subsequent French kings during the French colonial period — Henri IV (1589–1610);



The Grand Sceau of Louis XIV (obverse)



The Grand Sceau of Louis XIV (reverse)

Louis XIII (1610–1643); Louis XIV (1643–1715); and Louis XV (1715–1774) — were similar in concept, though slightly modified in design to reflect current fashion. In the case of Louis XIII, the royal legend abandoned Latin for a vernacular rendering of his title: *LOVIS XIII PAR LA GRACE DE DIEV ROY DE FRANCE ET DE NAVARRE*. Also, many seals following that of François I showed two winged angels holding aside the curtains of the pavilion, signifying the sovereign’s divine right to govern.

Under Henri IV, a permanent French settlement was established at Quebec in 1608, but it was not until New France became a royal province in 1663 that seals of royal authority played a prominent role in colonial administration. At that point, a colonial council — the *Conseil souverain de la Nouvelle-France* — was charged with local administration in the name of the King. Each member of the *Conseil*, in turn, became custodian of the Council seal, which was specially “deputed” (or delegated) for use in the province. A small one-sided seal, it was engraved with the royal arms and carried the inscription *NOUVELLE FRANCE*. In time, the *Conseil souverain* became known as the *Conseil supérieur*, at which time the design of the seal was somewhat modified.



The seal of the Conseil supérieur — 1742

Other and lesser forms of heraldic insignia were also common in New France. Mercantile companies authorized by the French Crown had their own heraldic marks. Such was *La Compagnie des Cent-Associés*, founded by Cardinal Richelieu in 1627 and charged with the



The seal of the Compagnie des Cent-Associés (obverse)



The seal of the Compagnie des Cent-Associés (reverse)

tasks of colonization and evangelization as well as commercial enterprise. Its company seal, the first to be used in New France as a token of public authority, depicts on the ‘obverse’ (or front), a woman carried by waves and holding a lily stalk and cross which betoken the company’s spiritual and cultural mandate; she is set against a field of *fleurs-de-lis* signifying French authority

and encircled by the inscription *ME DONAVIT LVDOVICVS DECIMVS TERTIVS 1627* ("Louis XIII granted me [the Company], 1627"). On the reverse is shown a merchant ship plying the waves, with the inscription *IN MARI VIÆ TVÆ* ("Thy paths [are] upon the sea"). In many seals of this type, the authority under which the seal is issued as well as the company's mission are clearly identified.

The heraldic tradition Canada has inherited, and much of its symbolism, comes from both France and England. Interestingly, these traditions were themselves already profoundly interwoven before they reached the New World. The standard John Cabot planted on the Atlantic shore in 1497 provides a good example; it was decorated not only with lions, symbols of English royalty from the time of King Richard I, the Lion-Heart, but also with *fleurs-de-lis*. This symbol became the "flower of Louis" during the reign of Louis VII and was from the mid-12th century permanently connected with the French monarchy. The *fleurs-de-lis* were added to the Royal Arms of England after Edward III asserted his claim to the throne of France in the 14th century, and remained until the reign of George III. Upon the union of Great Britain with Ireland in 1801, the *fleurs-de-lis* were removed when new arms were designed and hence, this symbol disappeared from the royal arms used in the colony. It reappeared in 1868, following Confederation, in Quebec's coat of arms and in 1921 in Canada's own coat of arms as a tribute to one of our founding nations. The *fleur-de-lis* is familiar to Canadians from its use on Quebec's flag and as the official emblem of the Quebec government.

The period known as the Age of Chivalry, from which most heraldic symbols are derived, was characterized by immensely complex relations between France and England. The language of the court on both sides of the channel was French. The English nobility was educated in French and French was the preferred vernacular for much poetry and fiction. And so, even mottos associated with England's claims of sovereignty over her near neighbour and constant enemy were worded in the French tongue. The English royal motto *Dieu et mon Droit* ("God and my right") is a case in point. Historians feel the "right" refers to Edward III's claim to the throne of France. The slogan came into permanent use in the reign of Henry VI.

The famous Order of the Garter may itself have been devised to marshal chivalric sentiment in aid of Edward's claim to the throne of France. Or it may, according to early French sources, have resulted from the courtesy of a gallant monarch, who bound a lady's garter to his own knee after she accidentally dropped it at a court function. In any case, the well-known and most perplexing of heraldic mottos, *Honi soit qui mal y pense* ("Shame to him who thinks evil of it"), which has adorned English medallions, shields, brasses, arms and seals from the late 14th century to the present, betokens a period in which French strongly influenced literature in England and was spoken in the royal court.

English seals of state date back to well before this period of the great burgeoning of heraldry. King Edward I, also known as Edward the Confessor (1042–1066), used a large double-sided seal which depicted an enthroned monarch on both obverse and reverse. It is, however,

to the first of the Norman kings of England, William the Conqueror (1066–1087), that we owe the pattern for virtually all subsequent English Great Seals of the Realm. William’s seal, also double-sided, depicted on one side an enthroned monarch arrayed in robes of peace, on the other an equestrian warrior-monarch prepared for battle. The twin virtues of wise governance and decisive leadership in crisis are still cherished monarchical ideals. Great Seals of the Realm have, to the reign of Her present Majesty, retained this basic symbolism.

In England, as in France, a variety of other official seals were created for the purposes of local administration, among which Deputed Great Seals, direct ancestors of the Great Seals of Canada, came to play a particularly important role. As plantations and provinces were established abroad, deputed seals were used to further the decentralization of government and promote commerce. The local governor could validate appointments, transfers of land and proclaim laws in the name of the central government and the reigning monarch. The first instrument of this kind to be attached specifically to Canada was the Great Seal Deputed of Nova Scotia in 1730. Like most other English seals of this period, it was double-sided; royal arms of England encircled by the royal titles appeared on one side while a symbolic motif referring to the colony itself, along with a motto, was shown on the other.

Following the Treaty of Paris in 1763, when New France came under the jurisdiction of England, the first Great Seal Deputed of Quebec was prepared in London, and transmitted for official use to the governor of the new colony. A particularly striking example of 18th century engravers’ artistry, it depicts on the obverse King George III in coronation robes, standing before a scrolled map of eastern Canada. By means of a sceptre in his right hand, he points to the province which has just come under his jurisdiction. A Latin motto is engraved at the base: *EXTENSÆ GAUDENT AGNOSCERE*



The Great Seal Deputed of Quebec — 1763 (obverse)

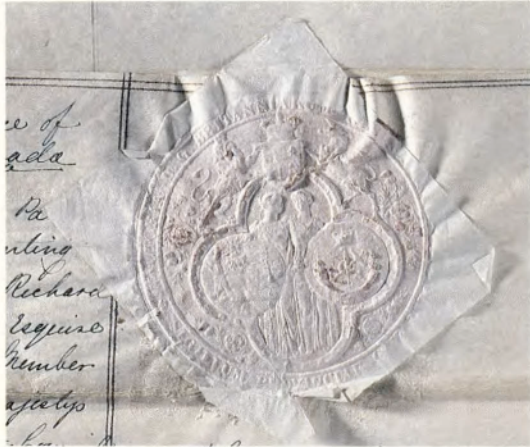


The Great Seal Deputed of Quebec — 1763 (reverse)

METÆ (“The extended boundaries rejoice to acknowledge [him]”). The legend around the circumference reads *SIGILLUM PROVINCIÆ NOSTRÆ QUEBECENSIS IN AMERICA* (“The seal of our Province of Quebec in America”).

After a seal was taken into use in British North America, it was not generally replaced except at the beginning of a reign. Sometimes, however, events dictated changes in the royal arms, such as when Great Britain and Ireland were united in 1801, or alteration of the royal titles, for example when the monarch ceased to be “Emperor of India” in 1947. In such cases, new seals were prepared. Changes in colonial status also, of course, made

revision necessary. After the Constitutional Act of 1791 created Upper and Lower Canada, new seals were engraved for both colonies. Some fifty years later, following the Rebellion of 1837 and Lord Durham's famous Report, when Upper and Lower Canada were united to form the Province of Canada, the Great Seal Deputed of the Province of Canada came into being and was used from 1841 until Confederation.



The Great Seal Deputed of the united Province of Canada — 1841

Whenever a new seal was issued to the local authorities, it was stipulated that the old seal be returned to Britain for official defacement. The practice of defacing seals as they pass out of use is still current, although defacement now takes place in Canada. Early seals, once defaced, were often melted down or simply discarded. Except for the Temporary Great Seal of 1867, the matrices of the Great Seals of Canada, defaced or not, are now held by the National Archives of Canada in recognition of their historic, symbolic and artistic importance.

Since 1967, the Great Seal of Canada has been entrusted to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, in the capacity of Registrar General of Canada. Prior to that, the seal was customarily given, after official defacement, to the Secretary of State in office when the seal went out of use. Over the years, a number of former Secretaries of State or their families have donated seals in their

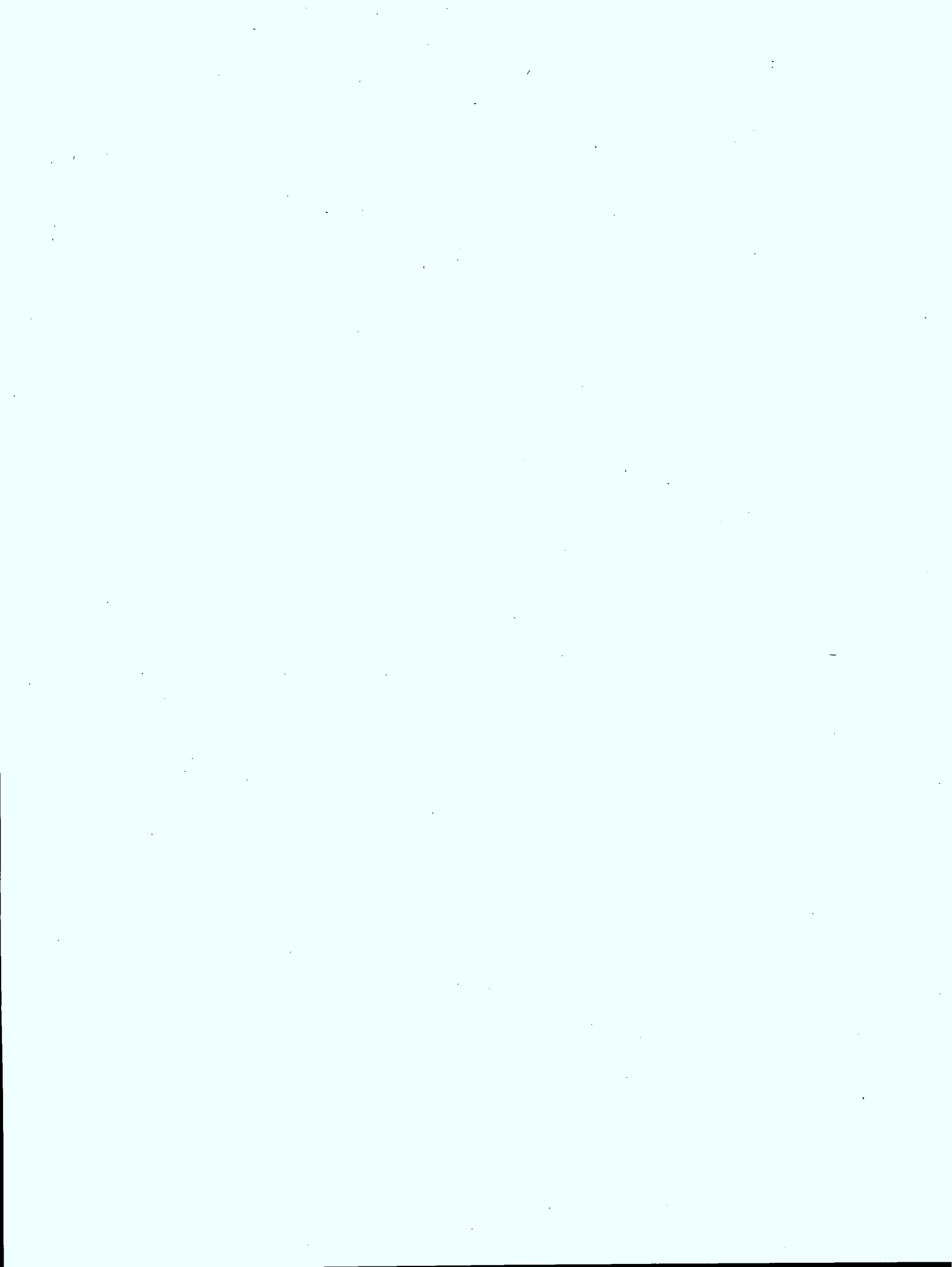
possession; in 1951, the Honourable F. Gordon Bradley, then Secretary of State, chose not to accept the Great Seal of George VI to which he was entitled so that it could be housed in the National Archives. Thus began the efforts to unite all existing Great Seals. Mr. Bradley's generosity in waiving the honorary prerogative of retaining the seal established a precedent.

The Great Seal of Canada did not come into being until Confederation, when Canada became a political entity. Since 1867, there have been seven Great Seals. One was issued at the time of Confederation as a temporary seal; the others were issued in the name of each successive monarch except Edward VIII who abdicated before a seal could be completed. Queen Victoria and King George VI are the only monarchs to date for whom two Great Seals of Canada were engraved. Victoria's first seal was the

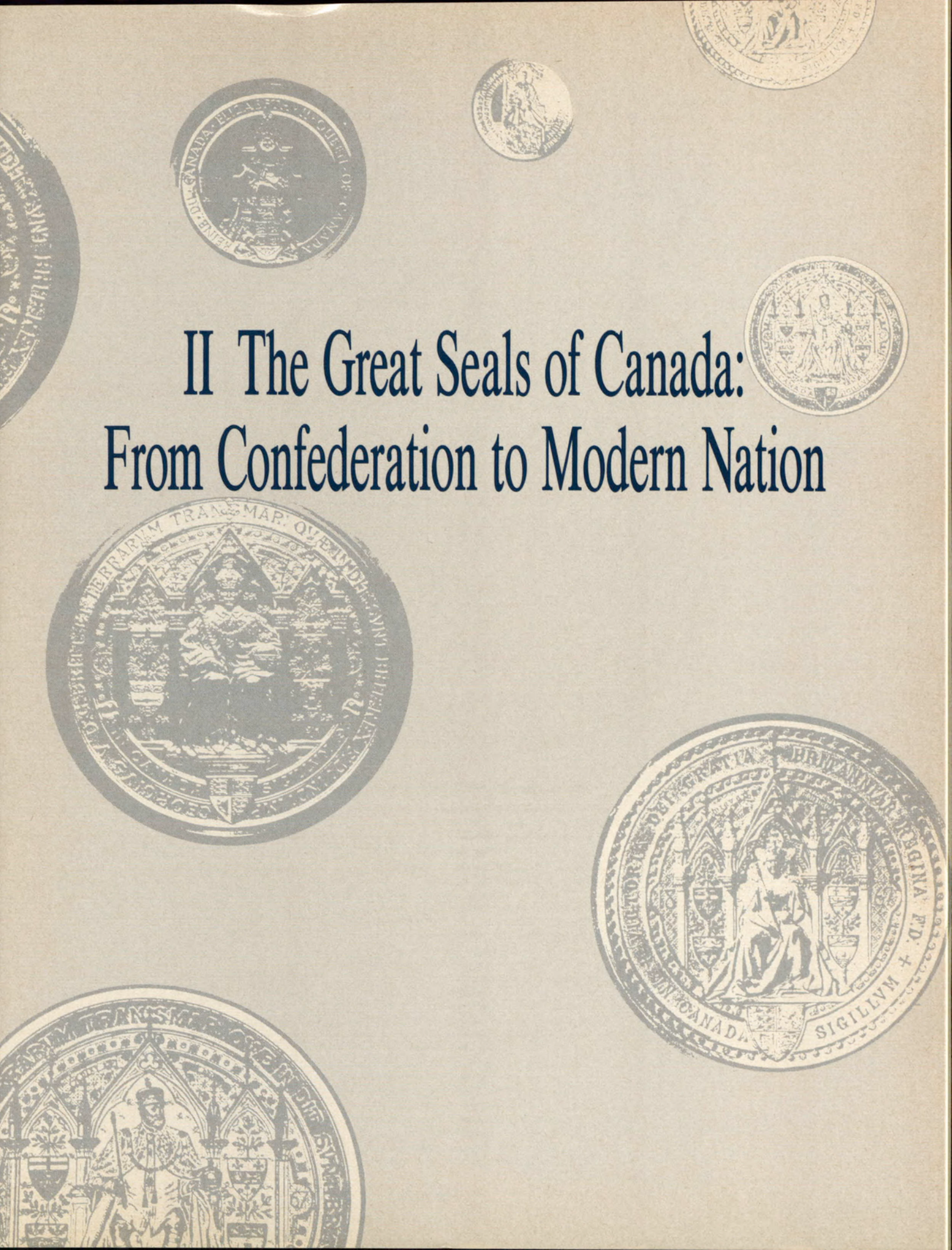


From left to right: the first and second seal of George VI

Temporary Great Seal. The second seal of George VI, which came into use in 1949, was a precise copy of the first except that the abbreviation *IND• IMP•* (for "Emperor of India") was deleted from the royal titles in recognition of the Indian Independence Bill. Also, the abbreviation *F• D•* was expanded to *FIDEI DEF•* (for "Defender of the Faith") to fill the extra space.



II The Great Seals of Canada: From Confederation to Modern Nation



(1867-1901)

QUEEN VICTORIA



Typically gothic ornamentation is here evident; no space is left undecorated. The Queen is figured with all the marks of her dominion — sceptre, orb, and heraldic crown. The Royal Arms of England are below the throne.

Canada receives specific symbolic representation in both the arms of the four founding provinces and the prominent display of the year of Confederation. The maple leaf, a uniquely Canadian emblem, makes its appearance here in the shields of both Ontario and Quebec.

Victoria's seal measures 124 mm in diameter and was engraved in silver. It was impressed upon an octagon of paper over wax. There were problems, however, with the choice of silver as the medium for the matrix. It was found to be too soft for the pressure requirements and was not used in Canada's later Great Seals. The photograph shown is a plaster cast of the 'intaglio' matrix of which the National Archives has custody. No 'relief' counterseal is known to have existed; it is possible that a pad of some type was used for the same purpose.

One month prior to Confederation, a temporary Great Seal Deputed of Canada which had been designed in Britain was forwarded through the Colonial Office. It came into official use as of July 1, 1867 when, by royal proclamation of the British North America Act, the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick were united as “one Dominion under the name of Canada.”

This seal, of which wax and paper impressions are in existence, was used until mid-1869. Its design consisted centrally of the Royal Arms of England — a shield with the arms of England quartered with those of Scotland and Ireland surrounded by the famous Garter. The motto of the Order of the Garter, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, is partly obscured by the royal helm and mantling above the shield, which are in turn topped by the royal crown and crest. The crown and crest are

flanked by the royal cipher, *V* on the left and *R* on the right. A lion *rampant guardant* (leaping, looking at the spectator) and a unicorn ‘support’ the shield to the left and right respectively. The lion had long been associated with English kings; the unicorn, an early emblem of Scottish sovereignty and independence, was added to the arms when James VI of Scotland ascended to the English throne in 1603. The royal motto, *DIEU ET MON DROIT*, appears on a scroll beneath the shield, and the legend band around the periphery of the seal contains two Latin inscriptions: *VICTORIA D: G: BRITT: REG: F: D:* (“Victoria, by the Grace of God Queen of Great Britain, Defender of the Faith”) and *SIGILLUM CANADÆ* (“The Seal of Canada”). From the base of the legend band upward through the motto scroll appear the rose of England, shamrock of Ireland and thistle of Scotland, which are conjoined at their stems to signify their union under one crown.



This seal was smaller than subsequent seals for Canada, measuring 80 mm in diameter and was made of copper. It was impressed directly on the surface of the paper on a wafer of wax covered with a square of paper. The defaced matrix of this seal is found in the Archives nationales du Québec with the papers of Sir Hector Louis Langevin, first Secretary of State after Confederation.

The shield of the Royal Arms of England, along with its helm and mantling, crest and supporters, dominate this first post-Confederation Great Seal. England's arms, the three lions passant guardant (walking, with head

turned to face the viewer), are here 'quartered' with those of Scotland, a lion rampant (leaping), and of Ireland, the harp. The most ancient sovereignty, England, occupies the first and fourth quarters. The floral emblems — rose, thistle, and shamrock — also appear, joined at their stems to signify the union of England, Scotland and Ireland under the Crown.

There is nothing distinctively Canadian here, save the identification on the legend band. However, many of the elements of these arms, including the lion and the unicorn, will reappear in Canada's own coat of arms granted in 1921.

The temporary seal was expected to be in use for only a few months, but lengthy debate over the design of its replacement meant that it was not returned for official defacement until December, 1869.

A royal warrant in 1868 had stipulated that the permanent Canadian seal show the provincial arms of the four founding provinces of Confederation on a single shield. This design was eventually rejected. Instead, a presentation closely imitating that of the Great Seal of the Realm was chosen, since it was thought to reflect more properly the nature of the country which the architects of Confederation had envisioned — a strong central government with imperial ties.

The first permanent Great Seal of Canada, Victoria's seal, depicts the reigning monarch seated beneath a triple gothic

Canada's first Parliament Buildings were completed in Ottawa in 1877. They were consumed by fire in 1916 and replaced by the buildings we know today.

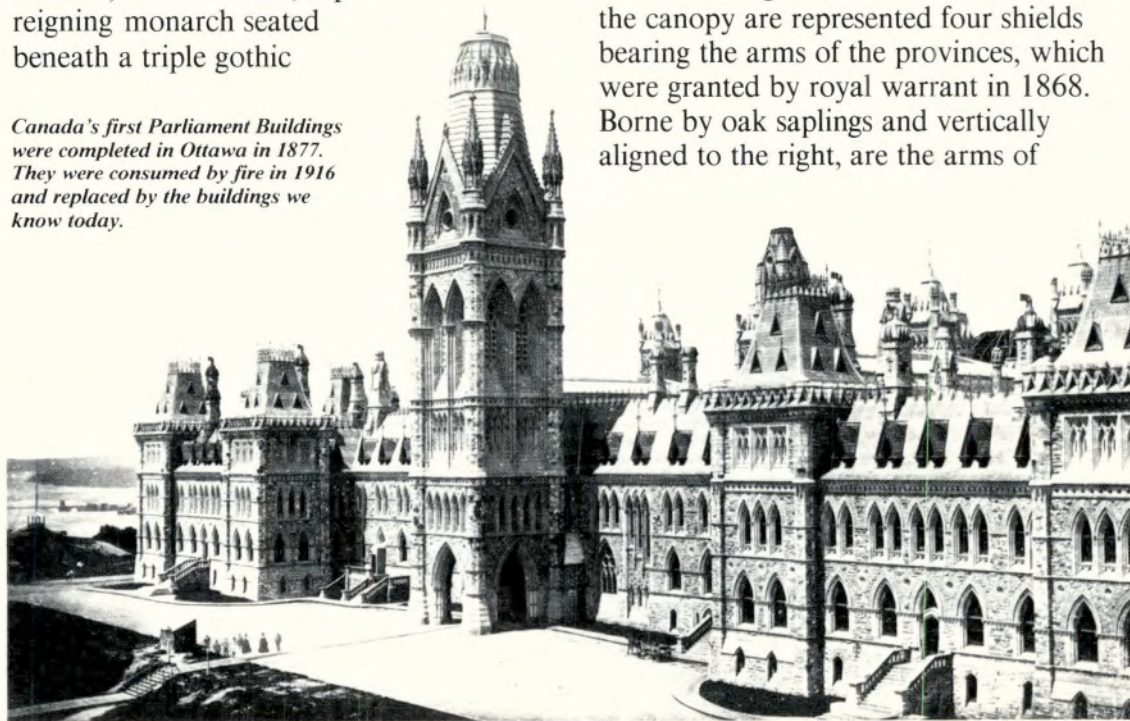


Queen Victoria (b. 1819 - d. 1901). In 1870, during Victoria's reign, the Northwest Territories became part of the Dominion. Yukon was created a separate territory in 1898.

canopy. She wears a stylized heraldic crown, the collar of the Order of the Garter, and robes of state, adorned at the hem with a border of roses, shamrocks and thistles. In her right hand she holds the sceptre with the cross which is described as "the ensign of kingly power and justice". In her left hand she holds the orb surmounted with a cross, which appears in all subsequent seals except George VI's, and reminds us of the words spoken to the

monarch during the coronation ceremony: "Receive this Orb set under the Cross and remember that the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer." Hence its significance as a symbol of authority and responsibility under God.

In the right- and left-hand niches of the canopy are represented four shields bearing the arms of the provinces, which were granted by royal warrant in 1868. Borne by oak saplings and vertically aligned to the right, are the arms of

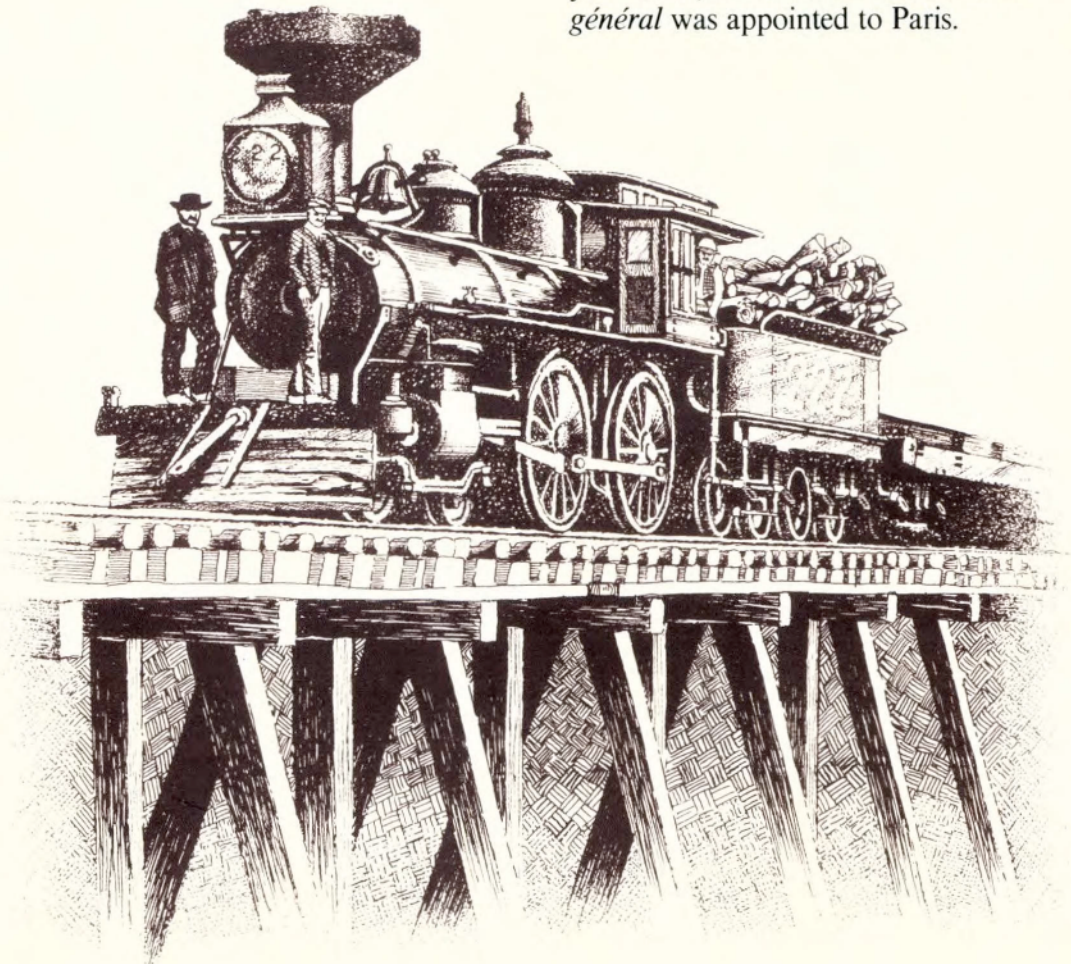


Quebec and New Brunswick; to the left are those of Ontario and Nova Scotia. The date of Confederation is also prominently displayed, an 18 appearing at the left and 67 at the right of the arcade. A scroll above the canopy bears the motto *DIEU ET MON DROIT*. The Royal Arms of the Realm appear at the base of the seal. With some exceptions in the abbreviations, the Latin legend in the legend band is the same as appeared on the temporary seal.

The new seal was not only elegant but particularly fitting as a tribute to the uniqueness of this experiment in nationhood. The distinctive arrangement of provincial insignia around the throne of the reigning monarch symbolized Canada

as a federation of distinct communities and yet as one dominion, one parliamentary democracy united under the Crown.

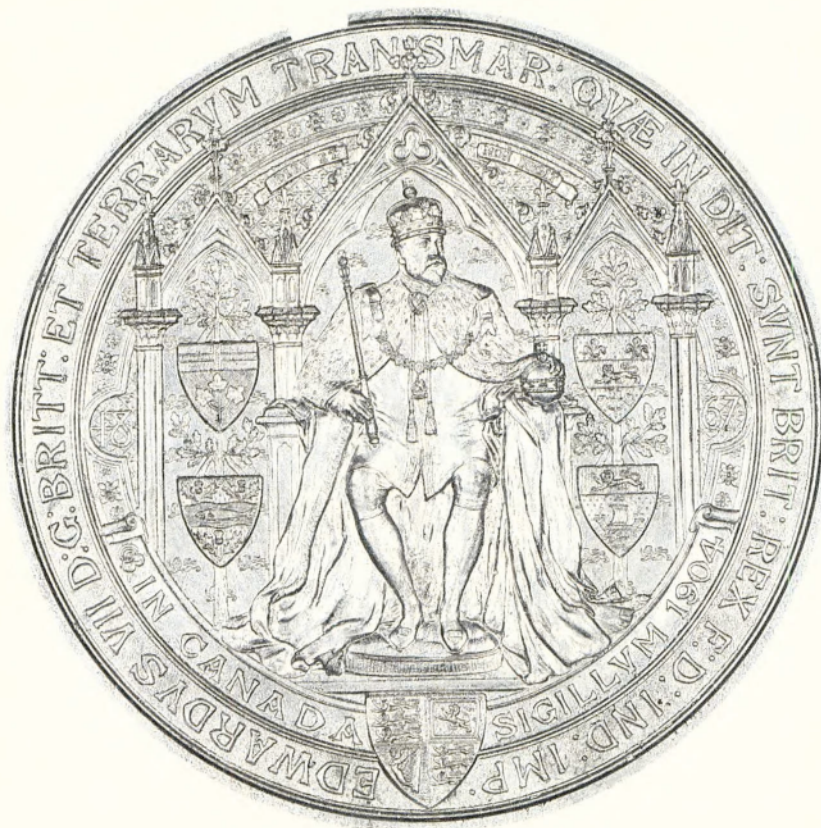
Victoria's permanent seal was in use for close to thirty-five years, during which time the Canadian experiment proved more than viable. The country was, by the turn of the 20th century, linked from sea to sea (*a mari usque ad mare*, as our Latin motto has it) by the Canadian Pacific Railway. Three new provinces — Manitoba (1870), British Columbia (1871) and Prince Edward Island (1873) — had joined Confederation. Canada had participated, along with British negotiators, in making several international treaties, and had established foreign offices abroad; in 1880, a Canadian High Commissioner took up residence in London and, two years later, a Canadian *Commissaire général* was appointed to Paris.



Engines, such as this Canadian Pacific locomotive of 1893, helped open the land to pioneering peoples who would develop the nation's resources.

(1901-1910)

KING EDWARD VII



The seal measures 125 mm in diameter and is fractionally larger than Victoria's. Also, the King's figure is proportionately larger on this seal than Victoria's was on the previous one. The King wears the Imperial State Crown used at his coronation.

While the principal elements of design remain unchanged, a different mood is created by the King's posture and bearing, his exposed knees, the tilt and turn of his head and the way he holds the orb and sceptre. The architecture has been somewhat modified and there is a feeling of spaciousness that does not characterize Victoria's seal.

The title IND: IMP: ("Emperor of India") which was added to the royal titles in 1877 appears here for the first time on a Canadian seal.

In recognition that silver was too soft to impress large surfaces of paper, particularly parchment, the Royal Mint chose tempered steel for Edward's. The counter-seal is made of a copper alloy and the adhesive used was a wafer of wax covered by an octagon of paper.

Upon the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, a royal warrant was sent to Ottawa authorizing the continued use of her seal until one could be designed and prepared for her successor, King Edward VII. This was, and continues to be, customary practice. The dates of a seal's official use never precisely correspond to those of the reign in question.

Considerable debate attended the process of producing the new Edwardian seal. A Canadian government committee recommended that the overall design of the previous seal be copied. There was some suggestion, however, of incorporating the arms of the three new Canadian provinces. This idea



King Edward VII (b. 1841 - d. 1910). In 1905, Saskatchewan and Alberta joined the Confederation.

was eventually abandoned, since the provincial arms of Manitoba, British Columbia and Prince Edward Island had no official authorization from the Sovereign. Also, their incorporation would have meant a completely revised design for the seal. Sketches were made in Britain and sent to Canada for amendment until mutual agreement was reached. Actual preparation of the seal was slowed when the English engraver died and the executor of his estate refused to

release documents containing drawings and agreed-upon particulars concerning design. It was not until July 4, 1905, in the fourth year of Edward's reign, that the seal was brought into use in Canada.



During Edward VII's reign, Canada was largely an agricultural society. All family members helped with the harvest.



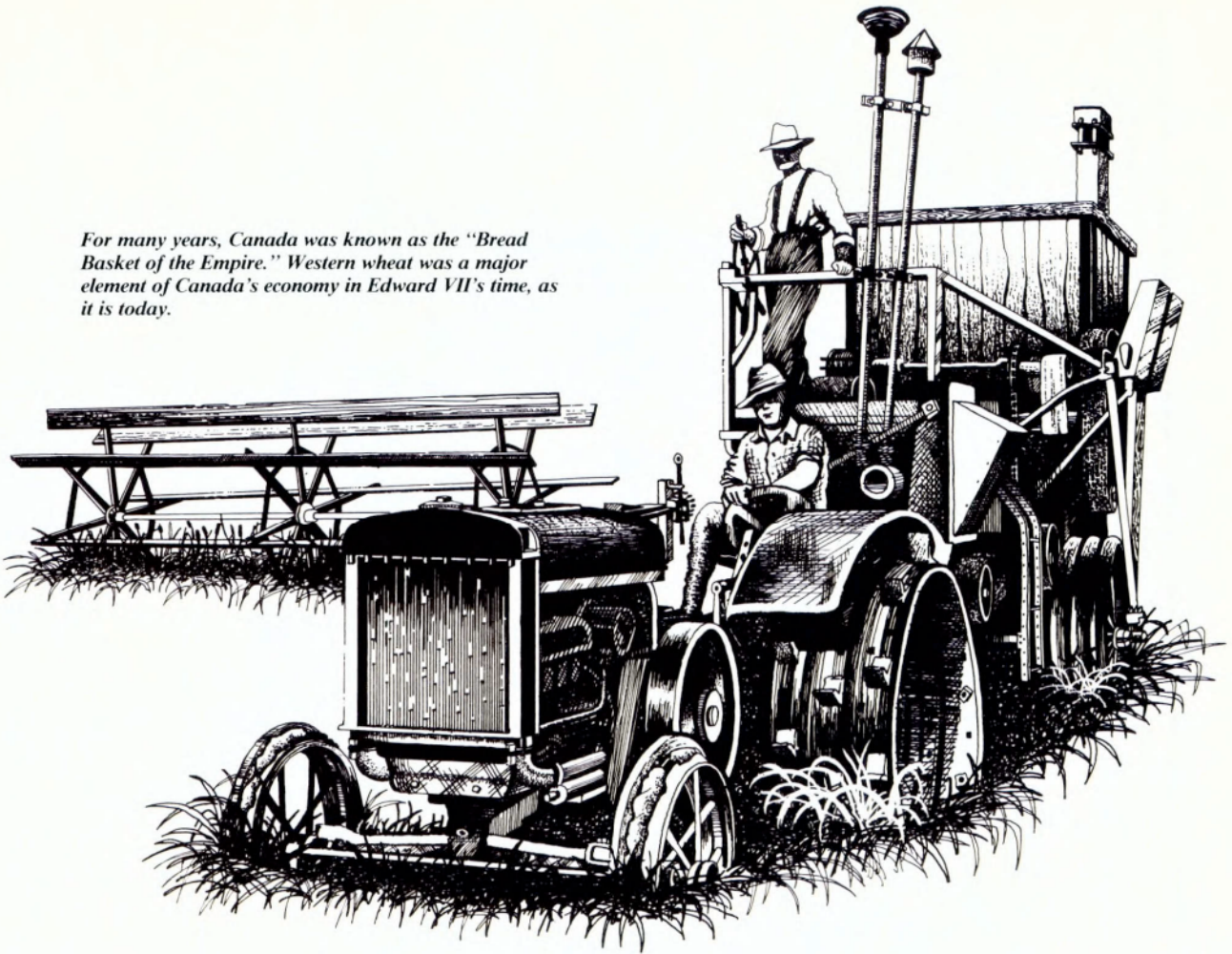
Blessed with huge forest resources, Canadians have produced lumber since our country's earliest days.

The design closely imitates that of Queen Victoria's seal. The monarch is enthroned under a triple canopy, which is somewhat wider than Victoria's and has modified architectural flourishes. Edward, like Victoria, is flanked by shields of the founding provinces of Confederation in niches to his right and left. Beneath his feet are the Royal Arms of the Realm. The King is clothed in robes of state, with an ermine cape and regal mantle which is held back exposing his knees. Below his left knee he wears the garter first donned by his 14th century namesake, Edward III.



In this era, a large percentage of Canadians lived on farms and in small rural communities.

For many years, Canada was known as the "Bread Basket of the Empire." Western wheat was a major element of Canada's economy in Edward VII's time, as it is today.



His head, on which he wears the Imperial State Crown, is turned slightly to his left, toward the orb which he rests on the left arm of the throne. In his right hand he holds the royal sceptre.

The entire presentation appears less rigid than that of Queen Victoria's seal. The tilt of the King's head and his relaxed posture, his arms resting on the throne, mantle open and garter visible below his left knee, convey a somewhat debonair, though stately aspect. The legend reads *EDWARDVS VII D: G: BRITT: ET*

TERRARVM TRANSMAR: QVÆ IN DIT: SVNT BRIT: REX F: D: IND: IMP: ("Edward VII, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India") and *IN CANADA SIGILLVM 1904* ("The Seal in Canada 1904"). The title, "Emperor of India," which appears here for the first time, was inherited from Victoria, who had been proclaimed Empress of India in 1877.

(1910-1936)

KING GEORGE V

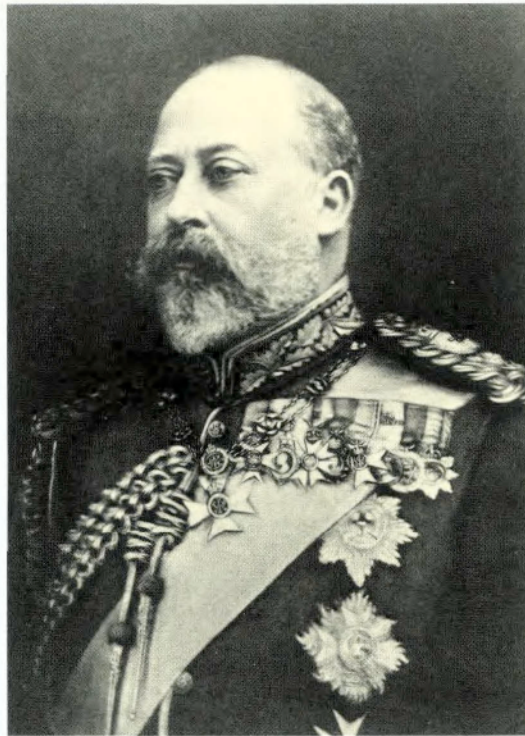


The George V seal measures 125 mm in diameter and was crafted from steel with a counterseal of a copper alloy. Glue was eventually selected to substitute for wax as the adhesive between the document and the octagon of paper. The use of glue allowed for a clearer impression.

The main elements of design here remain unchanged from the previous seal. Architectural and background details are virtually identical. The King faces directly forward, however, and his robes are gathered close around him; his feet rest on a solid platform rather than a cushion. The orb is somewhat enlarged and held closer to the King's own person. There is an evident concern for symmetry and clarity in the presentation, both of which contribute to an overall impression of reserved dignity and great stability. These virtues were doubtlessly appropriate in the volatile period in which George V reigned.

When Edward VII died in 1910, he was succeeded by his only surviving son, King George V, whose twenty-six year reign saw a series of dramatic developments in Canada's constitutional character and relationship with Great Britain.

These developments were shaped in part by the advent of the Great War. In August of 1914, when Great Britain declared war on Germany, Canada was, as were all nations of the British Empire, automatically involved. The first Canadian soldiers became, *ipso facto*, part of the Imperial Army. Canada nevertheless insisted on establishing its own military headquarters in London and eventually appointed a Canadian, Sir Richard Turner,



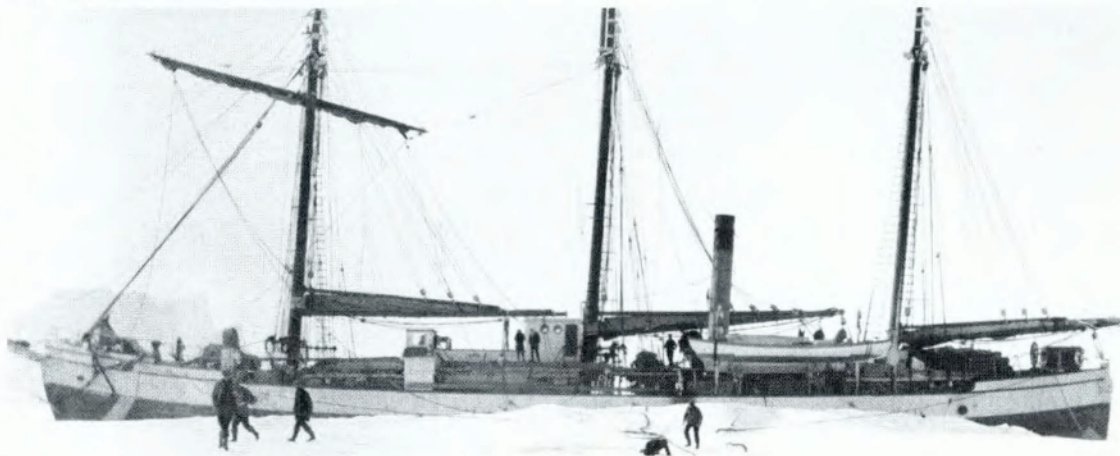
King George V (b. 1865 - d. 1936)

as commander of all Canadian forces in the United Kingdom, and another Canadian, Sir Arthur Currie, as commander of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in France.

The war effort was divisive at home, especially when conscription was introduced in 1917. It was also extremely costly; some 60,000 Canadian lives were lost. The war provided, nonetheless, an impetus for unprecedented Canadian nationalism and the

achievement of greater autonomy from Britain. In 1919, at the Paris Conference, Canada won the right to dual representation, both as a member of the British Empire Delegation and a nation in its own right. It signed the Treaty of Versailles

The Canadian vessel Arctic, under Captain Joseph Elzéar Bernier, became locked in the ice near Baffin Island in July 1925, during arctic exploration.





Thousands of Canadian men and women served on the European battlefields of World War I. Canadian nursing sisters treated combattants from all the countries involved.

in both capacities, and became a founding member of the League of Nations, which would later become the United Nations.

The ties of empire were decisively loosened in 1923 when at an Imperial Conference it was agreed that the dominions were free to pursue their own foreign policies and enact their own treaties without the authorization of Britain. In 1926 a formula for the emergent Commonwealth was expressed in what became known as the Balfour Declaration: the dominions were a group of “autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.”

The status of the Governor General was subtly but significantly redefined in keeping with this new view of international relations. Communications between

the two parliaments of Britain and Canada would no longer be relayed through the Governor General’s office but would be direct; in consequence a British High Commissioner was, in 1928, appointed to reside in Canada.

The intent of the Balfour Declaration was enshrined by the Statute of Westminster in 1931, which granted all the dominions, including Canada, full legal autonomy. No act passed by the British Parliament would now extend to any dominion unless a dominion so requested and consented. Nor could any act passed by a dominion parliament be overruled because it was inconsistent with English law. Having been a key player in negotiating this momentous democratization of the Empire, Canada nonetheless requested that amendments to the British North America Act continue to be made by the British Parliament until such time as domestic agreement on an amending formula could be reached.

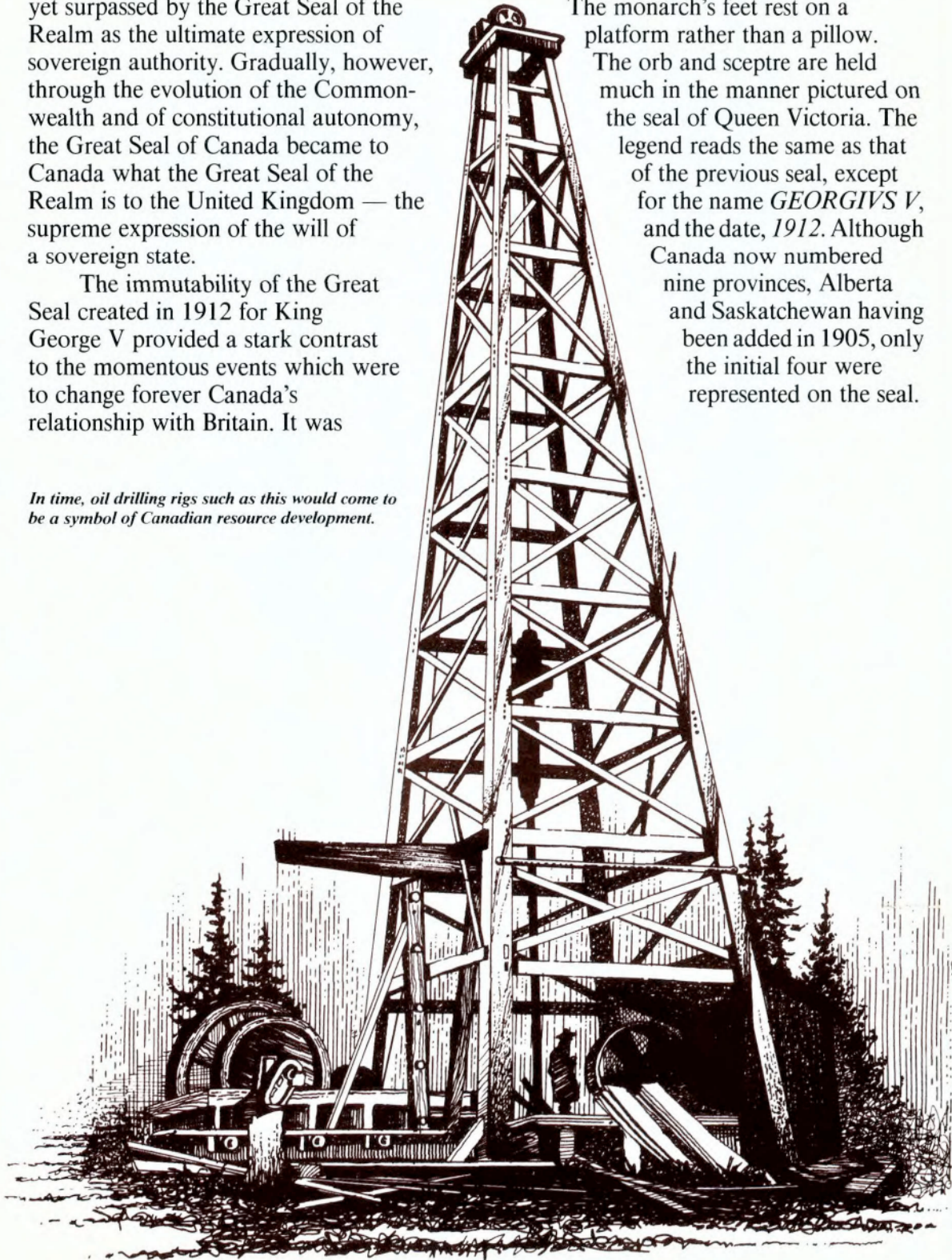
One of the implications of the transformation of Empire into Commonwealth was an altered status accorded to the Great Seal of Canada. Since 1867, the Great Seals had all been “deputed” or delegated, supreme in their own sphere yet surpassed by the Great Seal of the Realm as the ultimate expression of sovereign authority. Gradually, however, through the evolution of the Commonwealth and of constitutional autonomy, the Great Seal of Canada became to Canada what the Great Seal of the Realm is to the United Kingdom — the supreme expression of the will of a sovereign state.

The immutability of the Great Seal created in 1912 for King George V provided a stark contrast to the momentous events which were to change forever Canada’s relationship with Britain. It was

entirely conservative in character — more static and austere in its design than that of George’s father, Edward VII. A full-faced portrait is reintroduced; robes of state are here gathered closely around the King’s body and over his knees and legs.

The monarch’s feet rest on a platform rather than a pillow. The orb and sceptre are held much in the manner pictured on the seal of Queen Victoria. The legend reads the same as that of the previous seal, except for the name *GEORGIVS V*, and the date, *1912*. Although Canada now numbered nine provinces, Alberta and Saskatchewan having been added in 1905, only the initial four were represented on the seal.

In time, oil drilling rigs such as this would come to be a symbol of Canadian resource development.



(1936-1952)

KING GEORGE VI



An entirely new style is inaugurated with the seal of George VI. The triple canopy motif and other features of gothic ornamentation no longer appear. The King, wearing robes of state and the artist's conception of the heraldic crown, holds a sword in his right hand, a sceptre in his left.

Replacing the arms of the founding provinces is Canada's full coat of arms. The Union Flag (Union Jack) and fleur-de-lis banners acknowledge our country's two founding nations, and the emblems of England, Scotland, Ireland and France quartered on the shield bespeak the ethnic backgrounds of Canada's original settlers. Three maple leaves, conjoined at the stem, symbolize the unity achieved in the face of that diversity. Canada's own legend, A MARI USQUE AD MARE appears on this seal for the first time.

The Great Seal of George VI measures 127 mm in diameter. It was made of tempered steel and the counterseal was of a copper alloy. A second version of this seal, which eliminated the obsolete title IND·IMP·, was created at the Royal Canadian Mint in 1949.

When the firstborn and heir of George V, Edward VIII, came to the throne in 1936, preparations immediately commenced to create a new Great Seal of the Realm as well as seals for the various Commonwealth nations. It was proposed that a Canadian artist be asked to submit sketches to the British Royal Mint for the Great Seal of Canada. As it happened, however, the matter was never settled; Edward abdicated eleven months after ascending the throne.

Thus it was that the Great Seal of George V continued in use until one could be prepared for his second son, Albert Frederick Arthur George, a surprised and at first rather reluctant monarch, who ascended the throne as King George VI on December 11 of 1936, 'the year of the three kings.'

The Great Seal of Canada of George VI, the first to be ordered at the instance of the Privy Council of Canada, represents a considerable departure in design from the three previous seals. Gone is the gothic ornamentation and the intricate floral decoration. Instead, in keeping with the style of the times and with the monarch's own understated character, a seal of striking simplicity and unaffected dignity was produced by a British artist.

The King is pictured sitting on a high-backed throne against a plain background. He wears robes of state, a crown, and the collar of the Order of the Garter. Beneath his mantle, the cuff of a naval uniform is visible. The royal sceptre with



King George VI (b. 1895 - d. 1952). In 1949, during his reign, Newfoundland joined Confederation.

the cross is in his left hand; the sword of justice is in his right. This is the only instance in which a sword is shown on one of Canada's Great Seals, and it reflects the sense of imminent threat which hung over Europe at the time of the seal's creation. As the third decade of this century drew to a close, it was beginning to seem inevitable that this magnanimous and democratic sovereign would have to call his people to arms.

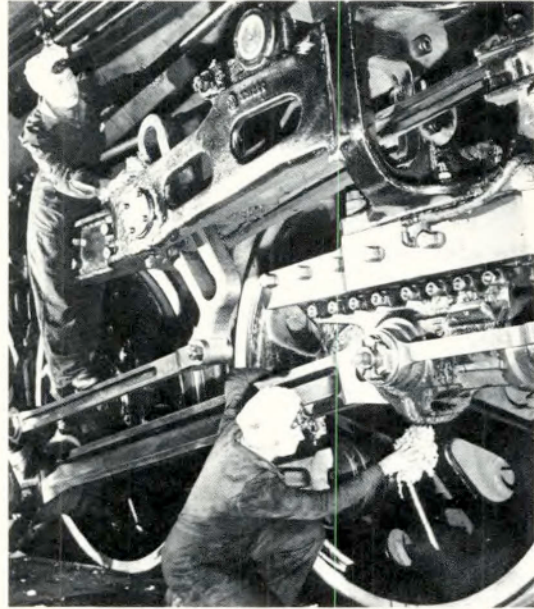
Beneath the King's portrait is depicted the coat of arms of Canada granted in 1921. This replaces the four shields of the provincial arms shown on previous seals, but incorporates several of their symbols — including notably the *fleur-de-lis*, the lions and the triple maple leaf joined in one stem. A double legend band around the seal contains the lengthy inscription *GEORGIUS VI D. G. MAG. BRIT. HIB. ET TERR. TRANSMAR. QUAE IN DIT. SUNT BRIT. REX F. D. IND. IMP.* ("George VI, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland and of the British Dominions Beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India"). The words *IN CANADA SIGILLUM* ("The seal in Canada") appear on a scroll above the King's head.

In 1939, sensing the approach of war and wanting to rally his allies, George VI visited Canada. He was the first reigning

British monarch ever to do so. When in the wake of the Canadian tour, Britain declared war, members of the Commonwealth were for the first time not automatically committed to the war effort. In a radio address, the King appealed rather than demanded: "I now call my people across the seas who will make our cause their own." And Canada, after one week of official neutrality, voluntarily declared war in her own right.

Canada was an important military presence in the Second World War. In April 1942, the First Canadian Army was formed in England under the command of Lieutenant-General A.G.L. McNaughton. The participation of Canadian armed forces was notable in the defence of Hong Kong, the raid on Dieppe, the Italian raid, the Normandy landings, the liberation of the Netherlands and the battle of the Rhineland. In addition, thousands of allied air and ground crew received their basic training in Canada under the Commonwealth Air Training Plan. The Royal

Canadian Air Force sent forty-eight squadrons overseas and, along with the Royal Canadian Navy, participated in patrolling the North Atlantic. When victory came in 1945, Canada took part in the establishment of the United Nations.

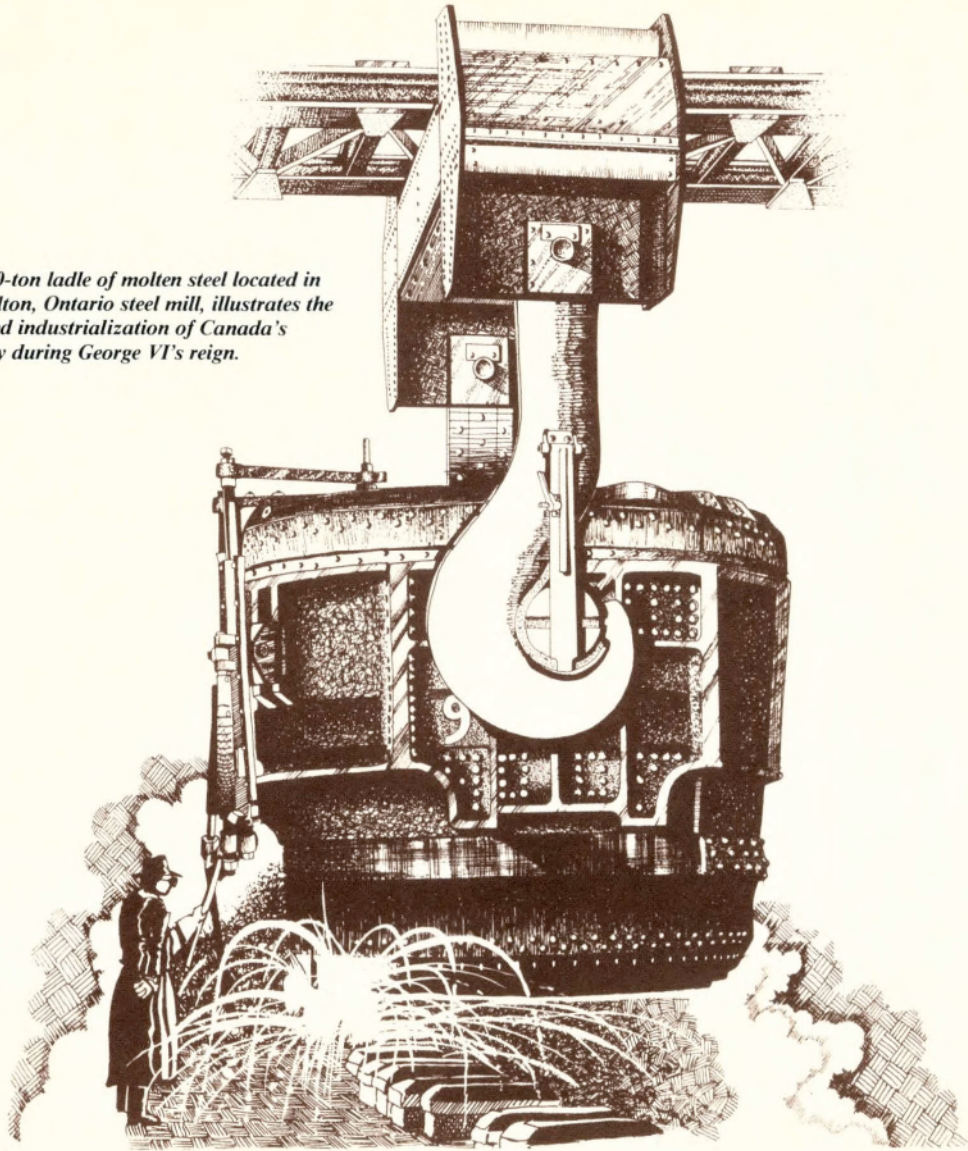


Women moved into the workforce during World War II to keep the wheels of industry turning.

As Canada moved into the middle of the twentieth century, our nation evolved to include large, modern cities.



This 180-ton ladle of molten steel located in a Hamilton, Ontario steel mill, illustrates the increased industrialization of Canada's economy during George VI's reign.



It was party to the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949 and sent its first military personnel to Europe under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1951.

Changing international relations during the reign of George VI dictated one significant change in the Royal Style and Titles, and hence, of the Great Seal. The seventy-two year title “Emperor of India” was rendered obsolete by the Indian Independence Bill given royal assent in mid-1947, by which “British India” ceased to exist and the modern nations of India and Pakistan were created. In 1949, therefore, a new Great Seal of Canada was

made at the Royal Canadian Mint — an exact copy of the seal previously in use except that the words *IND• IMP•* were deleted and *F• D•* extended to *FIDEI• DEF•* to fill in the resulting space. This first of the Great Seals to be made on Canadian soil continued in use until November 14, 1955. From 1952 onward, it was in the official custody of the Right Honourable Vincent Massey, the first Canadian-nominated, Canadian-born Governor General.

(1952-)

QUEEN ELIZABETH II



Our current Great Seal measures 125 mm in diameter and is made of specially tempered steel. The counterseal is of a copper alloy. It is impressed upon a moistened gummed wafer affixed to the document.

Her Majesty sits on the Coronation Throne, also known as King Edward's chair, wearing the St. Edward's Crown used for her coronation. Gone is the sword carried by her father, George VI. Elizabeth, like most of her predecessors, carries the orb and sceptre.

Simplicity is still the keynote in the Elizabethan seal. There is no ornamentation whatsoever in the background. Even the lengthy Royal Style and Titles have been eliminated from the legend band in order to allow for bilingual representation of the one pertinent title, REINE DU CANADA • ELIZABETH II • QUEEN OF CANADA. This seal is, more than any other, a celebration of Canada's linguistic duality for in no other do we see equal representation of our nation's two official languages.

As the throne passed from George VI to his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, further changes were introduced to the Royal Style and Titles. These changes reflected a desire, as Canadian Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent commented, “to have [them] accord with the constitutional position of the various members of the Commonwealth.” As a result of an Act Canada passed February 3, 1953, Elizabeth was created “Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom, Canada, and Her other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.”

The right to choose a title adapted to each member nation of the Commonwealth was agreed unanimously by the First Ministers of the Commonwealth at the Prime Ministers’ Conference of 1952.

When preparations were made to create a new Great Seal of Canada, several significant innovations were introduced. For the first time, a Canadian artist, Eric Aldwinckle, was chosen to design the seal. For the first time,



Queen Elizabeth II (b. 1926)

a new seal was produced entirely in Canada, the engraver being Thomas Shingles of the Royal Canadian Mint. For the first time, the legend abandoned Latin; instead, reflecting a recognition of Canada’s unique cultural and linguistic heritage, it adopted English and French. For the first time, the lengthy Style and Titles of the realm were replaced by the one relevant title in this instance: *REINE DU CANADA • ELIZABETH II • QUEEN OF CANADA*. The seal of Elizabeth is, more than any other before it, a tribute

to Canada’s unique national character and international stature.

Yet another precedent was proposed in one of Mr. Aldwinckle’s sketches for the seal. It broke tradition entirely and did not depict the monarch at all. Cabinet was not ready for such a radical innovation, however, and selected a more customary design: the enthroned Queen is crowned and robed, wearing the collar of the

Today’s Parliament Buildings, rebuilt from 1916 to 1917, prominently feature the Peace Tower — a symbol of Canada’s desire for world peace and conciliation.



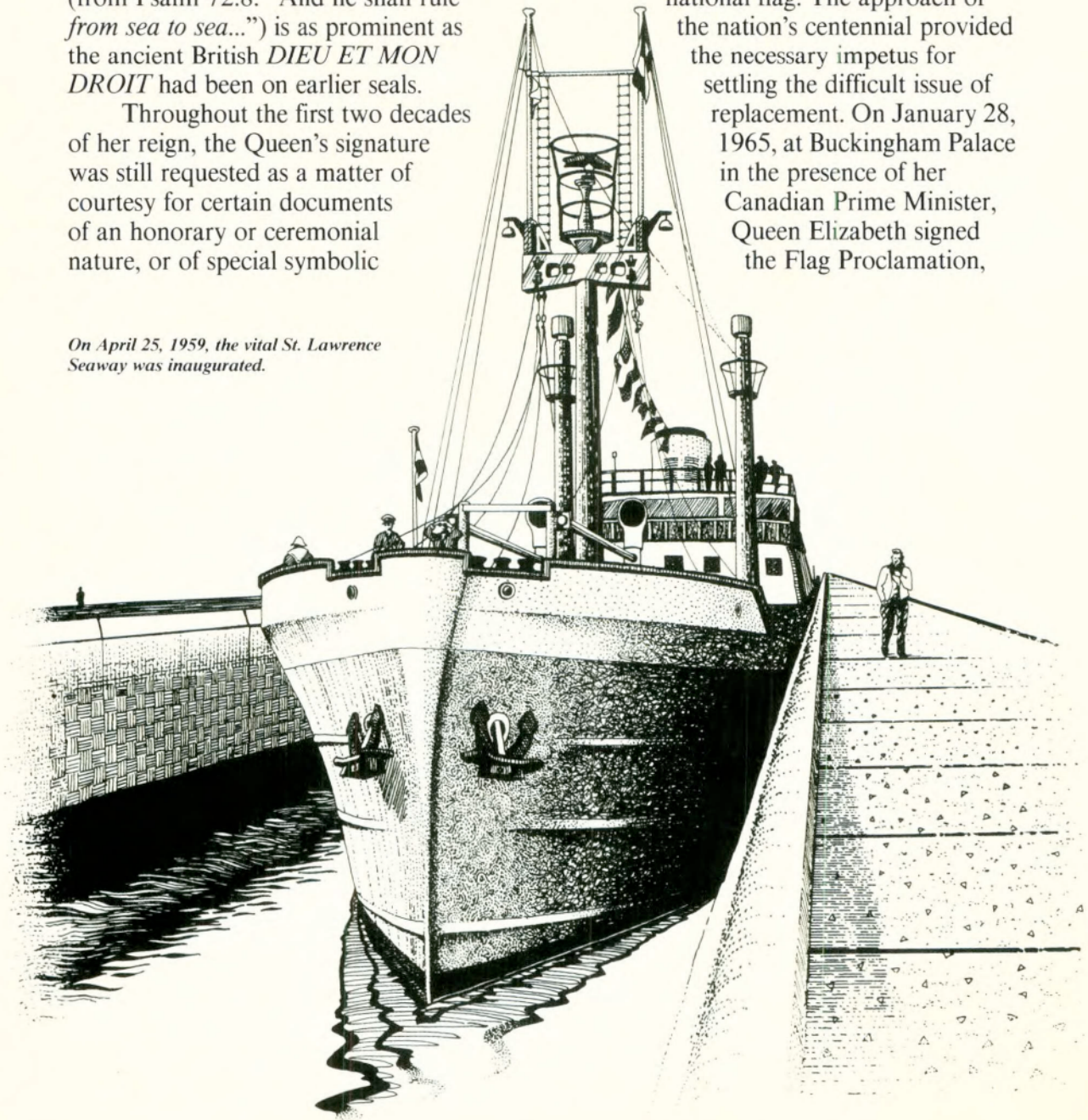
ancient Order of the Garter and holding the sceptre and orb much in the manner of her great-great-grandmother Victoria. The style is spare and modern, the design as uncluttered and simple as Victoria's was elaborate. Before the seated monarch, rising from the base of the legend band and proportionately larger than in the seal of George VI, appears the coat of arms of Canada, without the helmet and mantling which appeared in the arms of Canada in the seal of Elizabeth's father. The Canadian motto *A MARI USQUE AD MARE* (from Psalm 72:8: "And he shall rule from sea to sea...") is as prominent as the ancient British *DIEU ET MON DROIT* had been on earlier seals.

Throughout the first two decades of her reign, the Queen's signature was still requested as a matter of courtesy for certain documents of an honorary or ceremonial nature, or of special symbolic

significance. Such documents, which also bear her Great Seal, include the letters patent creating the Order of Canada in 1967.

Perhaps the most important document to pass under the Great Seal of Canada and the royal signature during this period was the Flag Proclamation of 1965. The Red Ensign, a banner originally authorized for merchantmen during Queen Anne's reign, had been adopted in Canada in 1945 as an interim measure until Parliament could agree upon a national flag. The approach of the nation's centennial provided the necessary impetus for settling the difficult issue of replacement. On January 28, 1965, at Buckingham Palace in the presence of her Canadian Prime Minister, Queen Elizabeth signed the Flag Proclamation,

On April 25, 1959, the vital St. Lawrence Seaway was inaugurated.





The innovative buildings of Expo '67 — the world's fair held in Montreal — capture the spirit of a nation celebrating its 100th birthday and looking forward to a bright future.

to which the Great Seal of Canada was already affixed by a red and white ribbon. On February 15, 1965, Canada's new flag — described in heraldic terms as *gules, on a Canadian pale argent, a maple leaf of the first* — was unfurled. Among other things, the new flag was an emphatic and hard-won symbol of national unity, an emblem with which French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians could identify.

Nearly two decades later, on a similarly momentous occasion, Her Majesty attended a proclamation ceremony held on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, on April 17, 1982. There, she signed the Proclamation of the Constitution Act, 1982, one of the most important documents to which the Great Seal of Canada has been affixed. The Constitution Act, 1982, was contained in a statute of the Parliament of the United Kingdom entitled

the Canada Act, 1982, which provided for the patriation and amendment of the Constitution of Canada. The Constitution Act, 1982, includes the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which came into effect on this historic day as well as a set procedure for amending the constitution of Canada.

More than any of its predecessors, Elizabeth's seal reflects the fact that our country had finally become, in all respects, a modern, independent nation. Yet independence has not altered our form of government which remains a constitutional monarchy. By affixing the Great Seal to the most important documents of our government, we continue to honour monarchical tradition and our historical origins. The symbols of royalty and of our founding nations remain alive in Canadian consciousness, forever enshrined in the Great Seal of Canada.

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Ottawa, 1988