

Territorial Evolution, 1867

Abstract

This map shows the colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick united in a federal state. The provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick retain their established boundaries, and Canada is divided into the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. New provisional boundaries are assigned to northern Ontario.

Canada's long and diversified settlement history is reflected in the two distinct patterns of boundaries that differentiate between eastern and western Canada. The eastern boundaries closely conform to natural features such as drainage basins, while the boundaries of western and northern Canada reflect the administrative organisation of these lands by, first, the Hudson's Bay Company and later the Government of Canada.

Confederation

The British North America Act, which created the "Dominion" of Canada, was passed by the British parliament in 1867. The British parliament passed the Act as the Canadians had designed it. The Act gave general powers to the federal government, and described the powers of the provinces, but it did not allow Canada to be totally independent. Certain important powers, such as dealings with other states, immigration, command of the armed forces and especially the power to change the Act itself, stayed in the hands of the British parliament. The most important change between the proposals of the Canadians and the Act was in the name of our country. The Canadians had wanted to call it "Kingdom of Canada"; instead, the British changed the name to "Dominion of Canada", so as not to offend the Americans.



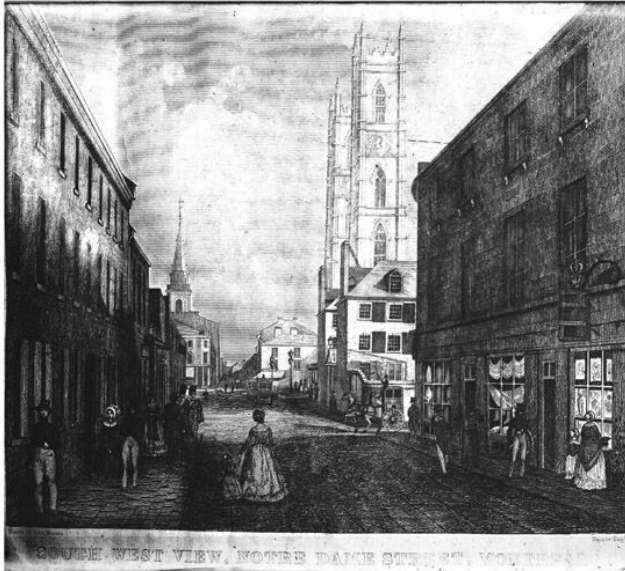


Figure 1: Engraving of Notre Dame Street, Montreal

In the mid-19th century, the industrial revolution was beginning all over the world. Lower Canada was no exception and Montréal became the country's industrial metropolis. The city's expansion included the construction of railways and factories, and a new concentration of merchants near the port of Montréal.

Source: Fonds Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Montréal. No de réf. : P82,S16,SS1,P2,(06-M). Archives nationales du Québec.

The name of Canada is believed to come from the Iroquois word "Kanata", meaning "village" or "community". This name was first used in a 1534 text written by Jacques Cartier describing the Indian village of Stadacona.

So Canada became a separate country in 1867. It was a confederation of four provinces: the two older ones, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and the new ones, Ontario and Quebec. They all kept the boundaries they had before Confederation, except that what used to be the province of Canada was divided into the new provinces of Ontario and Quebec. The boundary between these two new provinces followed the one which had existed between Upper and Lower Canada.

In 1825, the extent of Labrador inland from the coast, which had been the subject of dispute between Canada and Newfoundland, was referred to the Privy Council in London, whose decision (1927), based on the evidence submitted, fixed the boundary as shown on the map. Before 1927, the maps of this series show the approximate boundary claimed by Newfoundland.

Nova Scotia

The settlement of Port Royal in the Annapolis Valley of Acadia was first built in 1605 by the French. Although it was abandoned in 1607, it was reestablished in 1610.

In 1713, France surrendered Acadia to the British, but kept Île Royale (Cape Breton Island). The British changed the name of Acadia to Nova Scotia. In 1719, the French began to build a fortified port, Louisbourg, on Île Royale. Louisbourg was captured by the British in 1745, then returned to France in 1748. But in 1749, the British built a fortress on a hill overlooking the port of Halifax.

The British did not trust the French settlers so after 1755, thousands of French Acadians were forced to leave their lands, and were shipped to the thirteen colonies to the south. In 1758, Louisbourg was again taken by the British, who then changed the name of the island to Cape Breton Island. Île St. Jean was separated from the colony of Nova Scotia in 1769 and renamed Prince Edward Island in 1798.

After the American War of Independence, 35 000 to 40 000 Loyalists (settlers from the U.S. who were loyal to the British Crown) settled in Acadia. In 1784, the colony of Acadia was divided into three colonies: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island. Cape Breton Island was re-annexed to Nova Scotia in 1820.

New Brunswick

As early as 1751, there were two French forts in the region that is now New Brunswick: Fort Beauséjour and Fort Gaspereau. The colony of New Brunswick was created in 1784, after the arrival of a group of Loyalists (U.S. settlers loyal to the British Crown) in 1783. It was named in honour of the Duchy of Brunswick. Timber became the basis of a major industry, and Saint John grew to become a trading centre, because of its ship-building.

In the 1830s and 1840s, there were disputes between the lumbermen of New Brunswick and Maine. When an American official was arrested by the New Brunswick authorities for cutting timber in the Aroostook region of New Brunswick, it became obvious that Americans and New Brunswickers had to agree on where the boundary was. Final agreement was reached in 1842. Maine gained a northward thrust of land that would make the building a railway between Quebec and New Brunswick difficult.

When New Brunswick was created, it assumed the boundaries that had existed between the previous colony of Nova Scotia and the future province of Quebec. This boundary was defined as the watershed between the waters that drain into the St. Lawrence and those that drain into the ocean.

Shortly after the creation of New Brunswick, there was a controversy over the control of the seigniorship of Madawaska. Settlement of the dispute was attempted in 1787, but failed. A commission appointed in 1848, studied the issue and issued a

report, but the province of Canada did not agree with its decision. So, in 1850, two arbitrators were appointed, one by each province, to settle the question. Their 1851 decision made adjustments to the boundary that were acceptable to both sides. The dispute was finally settled in 1851 by an Imperial Act of Parliament. This boundary is still used.

There had also been a controversy about the boundary between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick since the creation of the colony of New Brunswick, because the boundary divided some of the older settlements between the two colonies. Nova Scotia wanted all of these settlements to be inside its own territory, while New Brunswick had no problems with the existing boundaries. In 1858 to 1859, a new boundary was delimited. It included only a few changes, but it was accepted by both provinces and has remained the same since.

Ontario

Ontario is an old Iroquois word which means "the shining waters". The name was first given to Lake Ontario, and then to the whole province.

The present international boundary between Ontario and the United States was defined when both were still British colonies. In 1763, when the British took over Quebec, the boundaries were defined in a Royal Proclamation. The boundaries were changed in 1783, after the U.S. War of Independence. The colony of Quebec in 1783 included parts of the present provinces of Quebec and Ontario.

In 1791, with the Canada Act, the British divided the colony of Quebec into Upper and Lower Canada. Each was allowed to have its own types of civil and family law. English common law was established in Upper Canada. The dividing line between the two provinces was the Ottawa River. At the time, the western boundary of Upper Canada was described as the maximum limits of Canada.

According to an 1818 Convention, Great Britain and the United States agreed that the western boundary between Canada and the United States would be the 49th parallel, from the northwestern corner of Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains. In 1826, the most northwesterly corner of Lake of the Woods was determined and a marker was built on the spot. This had the effect of cutting off a wide peninsula from Canada and giving it to the U.S., even though the land was not accessible from American territory.

In 1840, after a report written by Lord Durham, Upper and Lower Canada were combined into the province of Canada. This province remained divided into two parts, Canada East (Quebec) and Canada West (Ontario). Each had equal representation in the colonial parliament.

The province of Ontario, with its boundaries as defined in 1791, was created in 1867, and became a province of Canada at Confederation.

Quebec

In 1535 and 1541, Jacques Cartier explored and spent the winter in the region that is now Quebec; however, he did not establish a permanent settlement. The first permanent settlement in what is now the province of Quebec was established in 1608 by Samuel de Champlain where Quebec (city) is now found. Champlain called the settlement Québec, an Indian word meaning "the place where the water narrows." The colony, called New France, slowly expanded under French rule. The French gave up their North American colonies (except for Saint-Pierre et Miquelon and Louisiana) in 1763, under the Treaty of Paris, following the Seven Years' War. The British named their colony Quebec.

The international boundary between Quebec and the United States developed slowly. In 1763, when the British took over, Quebec's boundaries were defined in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and included parts of today's provinces of Quebec and Ontario. The boundaries were redefined in 1783, after the U.S. War of Independence.

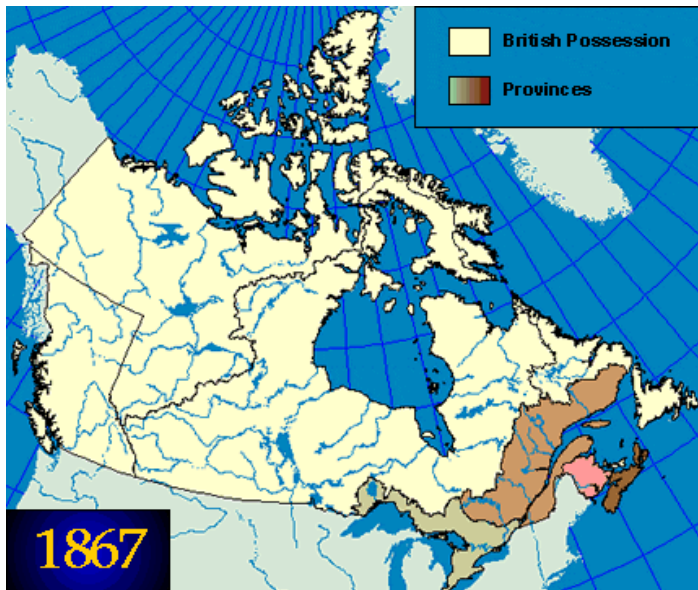
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Animation of the territorial evolution of Canada from 1867 to 1999

The animation, *Territorial Evolution 1867 to 1999_e.gif* is located in the animated gif folder.



Canada's boundaries are dynamic political structures that reflect the changing political, economic and cultural conditions of the country through time. This animation shows sequentially the history of boundary changes in Canada from Confederation to the creation of Nunavut.

Map Sources

Provinces and British Possessions, 1867

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Related Web sites (1999 – 2009)

Federal Government

Canada: A People's History

<http://www.cbc.ca/history/webdriver?MIval=EpisodeSum2.html&lang=E>

Episode summaries of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's documentary series about the history of Canada.

Government of Canada. *Canada's Digital Collections. The Acadian Odyssey*

<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/acadian/english/toce/toce.htm>

The History of Acadia and the Acadian Experience in Canada

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/>

Information on the Department and on services offered to First Nations People. See "Publications and Research" for recent data on Aboriginal population, First Nations Profiles, news on treaties and land claims, etc.

National Library of Canada and National Archives of Canada

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/>

The National Archives of Canada authorizes the disposal of records by federal government institutions and specifies the terms and conditions for their long-term preservation when they have archival value or historic importance; offers advice and orientation to support government institutions in the business of information management and record keeping; and provides records storage facilities.

The National Library's Canadian Confederation Web site

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/index-e.html>



Provincial/Territorial Government

British Columbia Archives

<http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca/index.htm>

Gouvernement du Québec. Archives nationales du Québec (available in French only)

<http://www.banq.qc.ca/accueil/>

Les Archives nationales du Québec conservent des milliers de fonds : 43 km de documents écrits, 7 000 000 de photographies, 800 000 cartes et plans, 53 000 heures d'enregistrements sonores, de films.

Government of Manitoba. Archives of Manitoba

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/>

Manitoba's rich documentary past is accessible to you at the Archives of Manitoba, which also houses the world-renowned archives of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Provincial Archives

<http://www.gov.nf.ca/panl/>

Government of Nunavut

<http://www.gov.nu.ca/Nunavut/English/departments/CLEY/>

Government of Ontario. Archives of Ontario

<http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/>

Government of Prince Edward Island. Department of Education. Public Archives and Records Office

<http://www.edu.pe.ca/paro/>

The Public Archives and Records Office of Prince Edward Island (PARO) acquires, preserves, and makes available for public research the records of the government of this province and private-sector papers and records deemed to be of lasting historical value.

Northwest Territories Archives

<http://pwnhc.learnnet.nt.ca/programs/nwtarchives.asp>

Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/>

Provincial Archives of Alberta

http://www.culture.alberta.ca/preserving/paa_2002/index.asp

Provincial Archives of New Brunswick

<http://archives.gnb.ca/Archives/Default.aspx?culture=en-CA>

Saskatchewan Archives Board

<http://www.saskarchives.com/web/index.html>

Yukon Archives

<http://www.btc.gov.yk.ca/archives/index.html>

Other

Canadian Geographic's Mapping Canada

<http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/mapping/default.asp>

Canadian Heritage Gallery

<http://www.canadianheritage.com/index2.htm>

The Canadian Heritage Gallery is a very extensive collection of historical Canadiana on the Internet.

Historical Atlas of Canada Online Learning Project

<http://www.historicalatlas.ca/website/hacolp/>

This site is still under development but promises to be an excellent site for historical maps of Canada. All maps shown on the site have been adapted from the printed version of three-volume Historical Atlas of Canada.

Musée McCord Museum

<http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/en/>

Founded in 1921 by David Ross McCord, the McCord Museum conserves, studies and presents a remarkable collection of objects, archives and historical photographs, from the 18th century to the present.

The Hudson's Bay Company Archives

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/index.html>

The HBCA offers a wealth of information on the human and natural history of western and northern Canada and the western USA. Whether you are an historian, genealogist, ethnologist, environmental scientist or land claims researcher, the HBCA may be able to help.

Association of Canadian Map Libraries and Archives (ACMLA)

<http://www.acmla.org/>

ACMLA actively serves as the representative professional group for Canadian map librarians, cartographic archivists and others interested in geographic information in all formats.

