

Territorial Evolution, 1873

Abstract

In 1873, Prince Edward Island joins the Confederation as the seventh province. 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.

Canada

The colony of Prince Edward Island did not want to share the costs of railway construction on the Canadian mainland and so had stayed outside of Confederation. But when it started to build a railway of its own, it soon ran into financial difficulties. The debt of the island colony rose from \$250 000 in 1863 to about \$4 000 000 a decade later. Prince Edward Island agreed to join Confederation after an agreement in which Canada promised to buy out absentee landowners, to take over the railway debts, and to establish communications between the island and the mainland. Prince Edward Island became a province of the Dominion of Canada on July 1, 1873.



Figure 1: Photograph of the Trunk Road from Arisaig to Antigonish, Nova Scotia
Source: Weston, T.C. 1873. Geological Survey of Canada.

It was also in 1873 that the Northwest Mounted Police came into being. The government had decided that a police force of well-trained men, spread throughout the territory, would be more effective than military garrisons at keeping peace and order. The first group of 300 trained men were sent throughout the West in 1874. From the beginning, this police force played an important role in the Canadian West: they helped organize the territory, helped new settlers, patrolled all the territory even the most faraway areas, helped the Indians adapt to a new way of life, and helped with the Indian treaties. This police force changed its name twice: first, in 1904, to the Royal North-West Mounted Police, and then, in 1920, to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

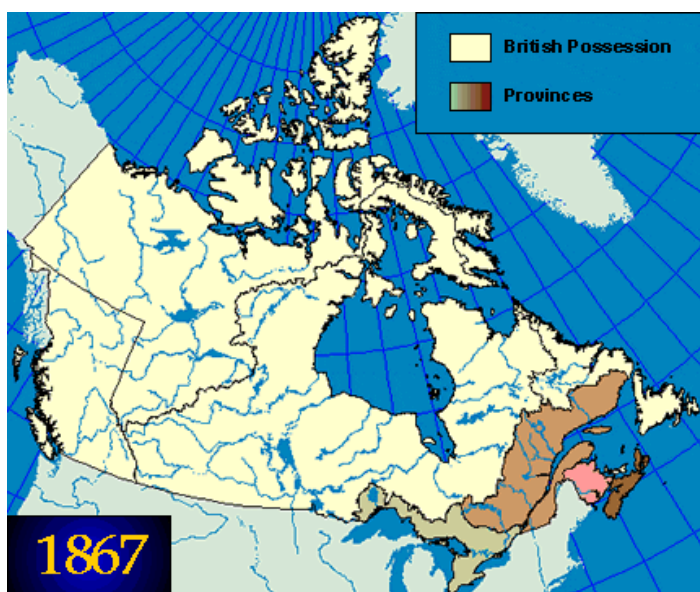
Prince Edward Island

The island we know as Prince Edward Island was originally known as Île Saint-Jean, but it had very few settlers while it was owned by the French. When the British took over the island in 1763, it became part of the colony of Nova Scotia. In 1767, the Government divided the land into sixty-seven equal townships of twenty thousand acres each. These absentee landlords did not take care of the land; they collected rent and waited.

The settlers, who did not own their farms, had no good reason to improve the land or their homes and were reluctant to build churches or schools. St. John Island, as it came to be called by the British, was separated from Nova Scotia in 1769, and renamed Prince Edward Island, after Edward, Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria, in 1798. When the island joined Canada, the federal government agreed, among other things, to buy out the island's absentee landlords and to take over the new province's debt.

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.