

THE MONARCHIST LEAGUE of CANADA



The  
Canadian  
Monarchy

“I am not just a fair-weather friend.” —Canada Day, 1990

***“I do swear that I will be faithful  
and bear true allegiance to  
Her Majesty  
Queen Elizabeth the Second,  
Queen of Canada,  
Her Heirs and Successors.  
So help me God.”***

*—Canada’s Oath of Allegiance,  
sworn by public officials*



Having first sworn the Oath of Allegiance, David Johnston signs a proclamation to mark his assuming the position of Governor General.

*The Canadian Monarchy*

© 2012 by the Monarchist League of Canada.  
All rights reserved.

All images remain the property of their respective owners.



## Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada

The Queen is the representation of all Canada within one person. Together with her representatives and members of the Royal Family, she promotes “all that is best and most admired in the Canadian ideal”.



## *Canada has always been a monarchy*



The lands that now comprise modern-day Canada have long been reigned over by hereditary leaders. Canada enjoys a history of functioning government that began to evolve centuries before European contact with Aboriginal peoples.



Many Aboriginal groups were headed by a chieftain who was advised by a council of elders, not unlike the series of French and British monarchs in whose name the original colonies of North America were founded. Although not all Aboriginal communities were governed this way, the concept of monarchy has never been “foreign” to the inhabitants of Canada.



The French and British colonization of the New World introduced the European system of constitutional monarchy. After France ceded its American territories to Britain in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the British Crown continued its reign in North America until Confederation in 1867, at which time Canada became a monarchy in its own right.

Several times throughout history, Canadians have reaffirmed commitment to their monarchy. In 1867, the Fathers of Confederation elected to vest national identity and the rule of law in The Queen. Over six decades later, the *Statue of Westminster, 1931* further strengthened Canada’s status as an independent realm constitutionally separate from the United Kingdom. The patriation of the Canadian constitution via the *Constitution Act, 1982* permanently entrenched the monarchy into Canada’s political framework. The results of the Québec sovereignty referendums of the 1980s and 1990s demonstrated the commitment of Canada’s second most populous province to the country’s unity under the Crown. And the 2010s saw the surging popularity of the monarchy with The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the excitement of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge’s marriage and first royal tour of Canada.

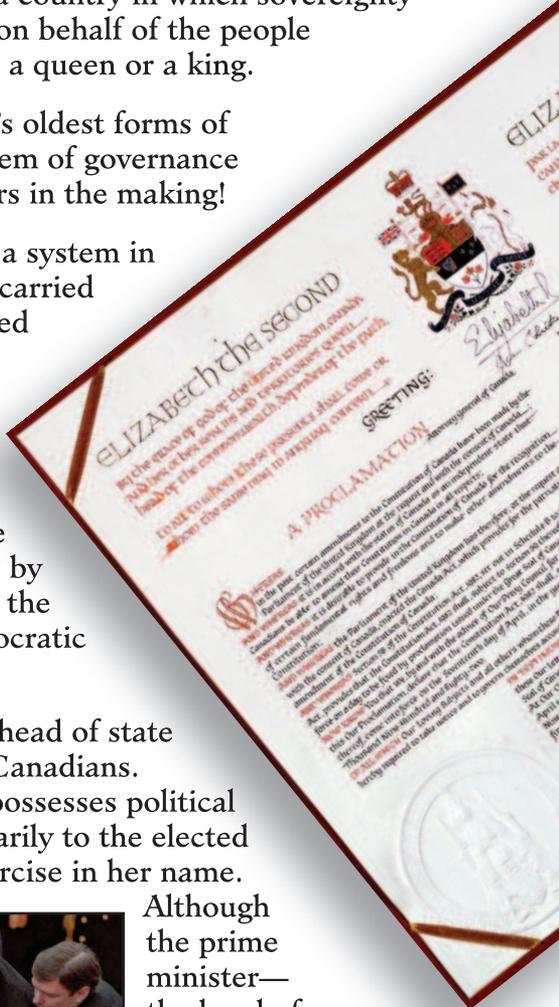
## What is a monarchy?

Simply put, a **monarchy** is a country in which sovereignty is vested in and exercised on behalf of the people by a hereditary leader such as a queen or a king.

Monarchy is one of the world's oldest forms of government, so Canada's system of governance has been over a thousand years in the making!

It has evolved over time from a system in which a strong king or queen carried out personal agendas, and ruled through success in battle and a claim to “divine right”—which is called “absolute monarchy”—to the “constitutional monarchy” we now enjoy, one existing by the consent of the people, limited by the constitution and acting as the guarantee of Canadians’ democratic freedoms and the rule of law.

In Canada, The Queen is the head of state and a symbol of unity for all Canadians. More importantly, she alone possesses political authority and lends it temporarily to the elected government of the day, to exercise in her name.



Although the prime minister—the head of government—advises The Queen and her representatives, it is The Queen who ultimately sits atop the Canadian pyramid of constitutional power and unites all levels of government.

## *How did Canada become a monarchy?*

**D**ifferent parts of what today makes up Canada were once colonies. A **colony** is a territory ruled by another power, as is Bermuda (by the UK) and Aruba (by the Netherlands).

Our colonial powers were France and Britain. So, in a sense, we can trace modern monarchy to the kings and queens of those countries. (See page 30.)

The Fathers of Confederation met from 1864 to 1867 to discuss how the future country of Canada should be formed and governed. In fact, they were the representatives of four colonies (Canada East, Canada West, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia). They unanimously decided that constitutional monarchy should be the political framework of the new Canadian state. The *Constitution Act, 1867* states that Canada has “a constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom”, and stipulates that “the Executive Government and authority of and over Canada is hereby declared to continue and be vested in The Queen”.

Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent led Parliament to adopt The Queen’s distinctive Canadian title in 1953, reaffirming her position as our head of state.

*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 Canadian monarchy, symmetrical to, but legally separate from the British monarchy, reached its full development with the *Constitution Act, 1982*, which reaffirmed Canadians’ desire to maintain constitutional monarchy as their form of government, and provided that any change to the position of The Queen or her representatives would require the unanimous consent of both houses of Parliament and all of the provincial legislative assemblies.



The Crown fulfils both a historical and foundational role in Canadian society. It has become a symbol of independence from the seemingly overwhelming influence of the United States, which chose to abandon its connection to the monarchy in 1776.

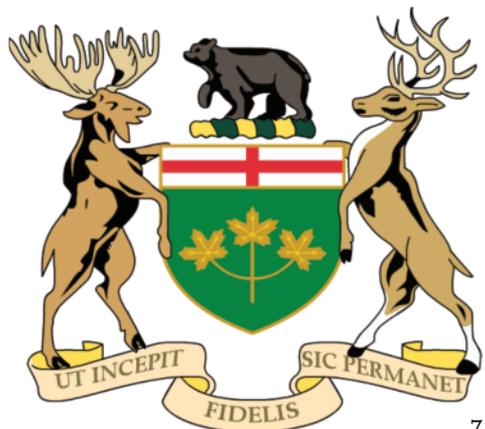
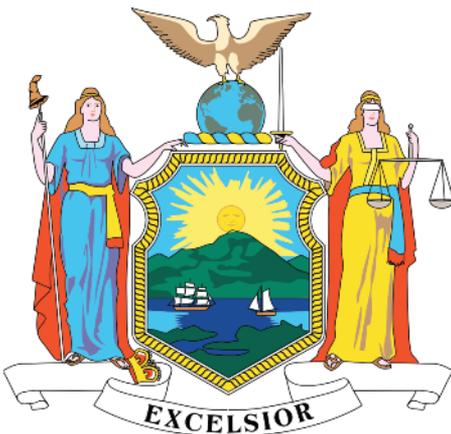


A symbolic example of the Crown's role in promoting a distinct Canadian identity is seen when travellers drive from New York into Ontario, where many of that province's highway signs carry crowns, and its major roadways are known as "The King's Highways".



*New York and Ontario: miles apart*

Below, left to right: The coat of arms of New York, with a crown at the feet of Lady Liberty showing the American rejection of the monarchy; the coat of arms of Ontario with the motto "Loyal she began, loyal she remains".



## *Authority in Canada*

**C**anada maintains a distinction between the **head of government** and the **head of state**. While the current prime minister is the head of government, only the reigning monarch is the head of state.

In Canada the head of state holds supreme power. However, the Sovereign lends her authority to those elected to form a government. This is why all laws in Canada are made in The Queen's name.

The government of the day has the duty of managing the power of the state. We might think of it as a filter: it must try to interpret the people's wishes and express them through the actions of Parliament, all of which is the responsibility of elected officials. Yet it must do so within the framework of the rule of law, which is safeguarded by the Crown.

By separating the role of the head of state (the monarch) from that of the head of government (the prime minister), Canadians ensure that those elected to office do not actually possess the full power of the state. Rather, authority is lent to the government for a short period of time by the Crown. Power is deliberately placed above and away from the structure of the government and political partisanship. (This is visually represented by the crown at the top of Canada's coat of arms.)

Simply put, The Queen and her representatives do not involve themselves in party politics. Similarly, Canadians are able to support their country without being a member of a political party.

Members of Parliament, provincial legislators, cabinet ministers, judges, public servants, members of the Canadian Forces and police officers swear allegiance to The Queen, who represents all citizens, regardless of political ideology. In much the same way,



lands belonging to the public are called “Crown land” and public inquiries are known as “Royal commissions”.

It is for all of these reasons that Canadian oaths give allegiance to the monarch, an actual human being, rather than to lifeless objects such as a flag, abstract ideas like freedom and justice, or to debatable political documents such as a constitution.

## Canadian symbols of authority

The Crown gives many of the country’s institutions their authority to operate and interact with Canadians on a daily basis. As visual representations of these entities, coats of arms give visual clues about the Royal origin of their powers.

The national coat of arms provides a depiction of Canada and its history (the shield). Note the crown at the top and the vice-regal lion just below.



Arms of Her Majesty in Right of Canada



### *The Crown is the unifying pillar of government*

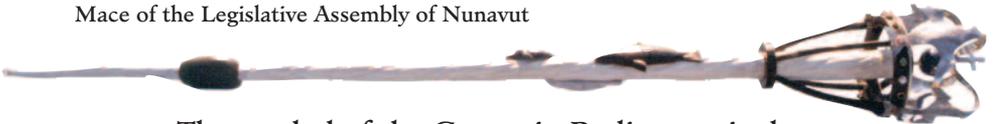
Counterclockwise from below: arms of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, emblem of the Canadian Forces, arms of Nunavut, arms of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.



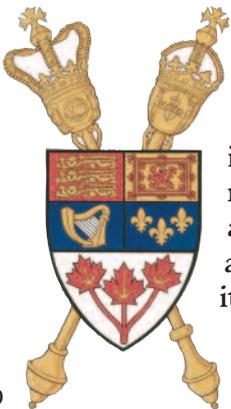


The Great Seal of Canada must be affixed to all state documents and proclamations. As well, all commissions of cabinet ministers, senators, judges and other senior government officials must bear this seal, which depicts Elizabeth II as Queen of Canada.

Mace of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut



The symbol of the Crown in Parliament is the mace, carried into the legislative chamber by its speaker each day. Canadian maces are surmounted by crowns, and Parliament cannot conduct business in the absence of the mace.



Since Confederation, all coins bear the image of the monarch. The Sovereign's image gives money its authority and makes it valid.

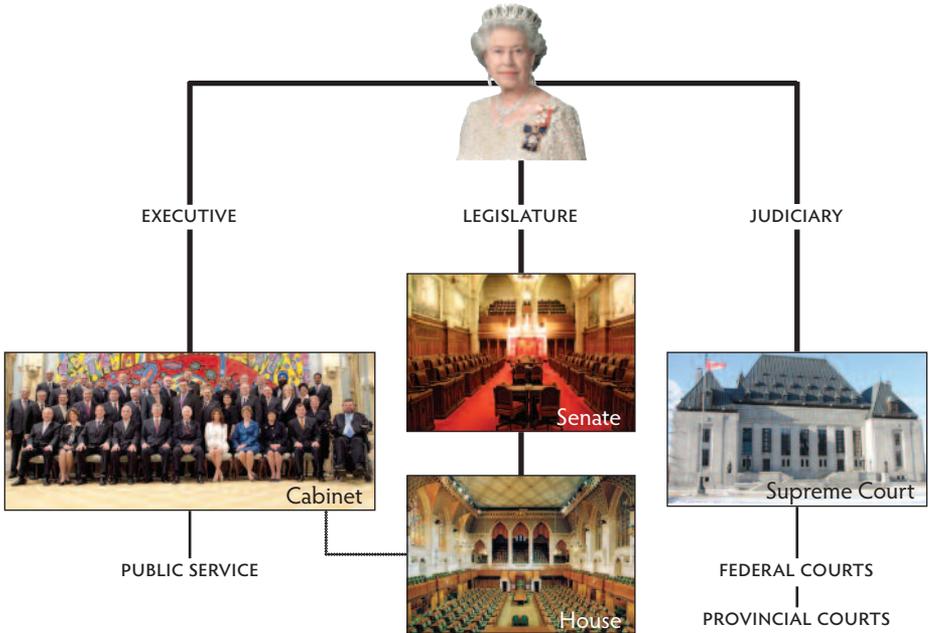


THE CANADIAN MONARCHY

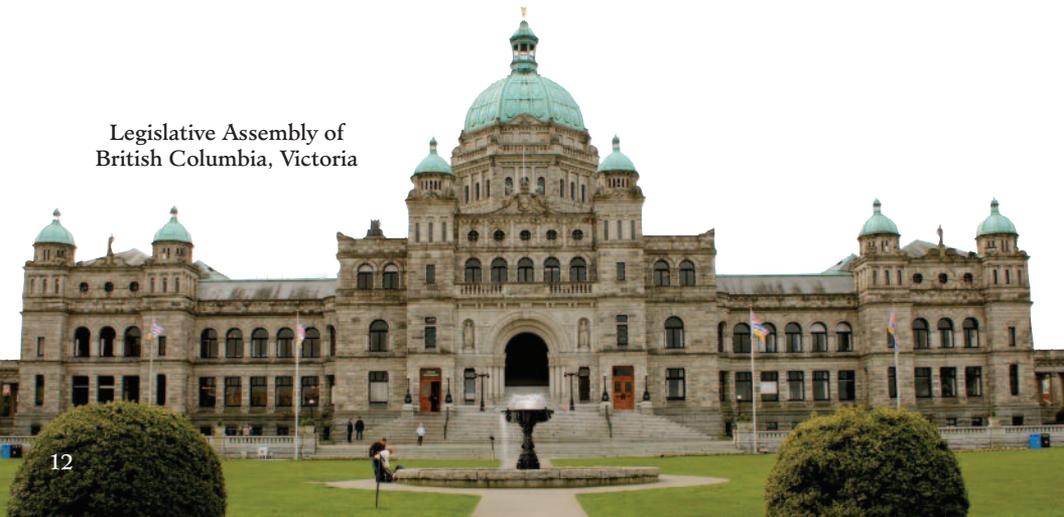


## *The Crown as the central pillar of Canadian government*

As depicted in the chart below, the Crown is inseparably linked to all parts of government. The Queen forms Parliament along with legislators, as well as being head of state and fount of justice.



Legislative Assembly of  
British Columbia, Victoria



## *Reserve powers of the Crown*

The Queen and her representatives have the power to dissolve Parliament, and even to refuse to give the Royal Assent needed for a bill to become law. These are extraordinary powers held only by the Crown, and are only used to protect the public in the event that the normal machinery of government breaks down.

Think of the Crown as a fire extinguisher hanging on a wall. It is bright and colourful, much like the pomp and ceremony that surrounds the monarchy. It has the power to put out fires, but is an object that we hope never to use. In fact, just the presence of a fire extinguisher has the potential to discourage people from playing with matches.

The Crown is similar: it is a mechanism that allows Canadians to put a stop to any government that is lighting fires. Although use of the reserve powers is rare, it is still reassuring to know they are there in case of need.

The purpose of the Crown, as frequently stated, is to assert “the right to be informed, to encourage and to warn”.



## *Aboriginal peoples and the Crown*

From the very beginning, treaties have played an important role in the relationship between Aboriginal peoples in Canada and the Crown. Many look to King George III's *Royal Proclamation of 1763* as a sort of Aboriginal *Magna Carta*.

Under these treaties, Aboriginal Canadians surrendered vast amounts of land to the Crown in exchange for compensation and the exclusive rights to hunt and fish on the surrendered areas. The Crown has also made promises regarding the provision of education and healthcare services to Aboriginal people.

Although the responsibility for fulfilling treaty commitments in today's society is now the challenging task of both the federal and provincial governments, the prestige of the Crown stands behind the promise of the treaties. Its relationship with Aboriginal Canadians continues to this day.

In 2005, after having presented a tablet bearing her own and Queen Victoria's cyphers to the First Nations University of Canada, Queen Elizabeth II said: "This stone is presented ... in hope that it will serve as a reminder of the special relationship between the Sovereign and all First Nations peoples".



From left to right: Prince Arthur with the Chiefs of the Six Nations at the Mohawk Chapel, Brantford, Ontario, 1869.



Queen Elizabeth II speaks with Chief Leonard Pelletier, Thunder Bay, Ontario, 1973.



King George VI and Queen Elizabeth meet with Aboriginal Canadians, 1939.



The Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) paddles a canoe, 1919.



The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge meet with Aboriginal Canadians in the Northwest Territories, 2011.



The Queen leaves a teepee in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 2010.



The Duchess of Cornwall wears traditional Aboriginal accessories, 2009.



The Queen meets with a Mi'kmaq leader in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 2010.



***Canada and its Queen  
grow together***

Left page, left to right, top to bottom: Princess Elizabeth at three years old; Princess Elizabeth square dances at Rideau Hall in 1951; Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Charles; The Queen is presented with flowers by Trina Pelletier, seven years old, daughter of Chief Leonard Pelletier in 1973.

Right page, left to right, top to bottom: the emblem marking the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen; The Queen unveils a stained glass window featuring herself and Queen Victoria commemorating her 60 years on the throne; to be hung in the Senate foyer; The Queen in Halifax; Canada's MVP drops the first puck; The Queen addresses the country on Canada Day in 2010; The Queen meets with Canadians during her Golden Jubilee tour.





## *The Governor General*



As The Queen is the head of state of 15 other countries, it is understandable that she cannot always be in Canada to exercise her constitutional responsibilities. In her place she appoints a representative, the particular person having been suggested by the prime minister. This representative is known as the **governor general**, and is expected to carry out The Queen's role in Canada.

A governor general typically serves at The Queen's pleasure, meaning that there is no specific term of office. However, appointments traditionally last no less than five years.

As representative of the Crown, the governor general performs the following duties:

- Summons, prorogues and dissolves Parliament
- Reads the Speech from the Throne
- Gives Royal Assent in The Queen's name to bills passed by Parliament, the necessary final step in the legislative process



The governor gen



- Regularly meets with the prime minister
- Travels throughout Canada to represent the Crown and foster national unity
- Travels abroad to promote Canadian sovereignty
- Encourages national identity and provides leadership
- Recognizes excellence across Canada by means of the Canadian honours system
- Entertains visiting foreign heads of state



Personal coat of arms of Governor General David Johnston.



Vincent Massey, the first governor general to be born in Canada, accompanies The Queen and Prince Philip at Rideau Hall, 1957.

eral resides at Rideau Hall in Ottawa.

## *The monarchy in the provinces*

Canada is a federal state. This means that the responsibility for governing our country is shared: the federal government in Ottawa, and the provincial governments, each with their own elected legislature, laws and public service.

The Canadian monarchy works in exactly the same way. Just as the governor general represents The Queen as head of state of Canada, the lieutenant governor of each province performs nearly all of the same duties at the provincial level. Consequently, there are eleven Crowns in Canada. This is why one can see the Royal crown or other Royal symbols on the coats of arms of all provinces.

In each province, the lieutenant governor represents The Queen directly. They are appointed by the governor general on the advice of the prime



Top row: standard of the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan and coat of arms of Saskatchewan. Bottom row: coat of arms of Québec and standard of the Lieutenant Governor of Québec.

minister, often in consultation with the premier of the province, to serve for no less than five years.

Lieutenant governors read the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the legislature, grant Royal Assent to bills, and possess the same emergency powers as the governor general.

Community involvement is very important to lieutenant governors, many of whom adopt themes during their tenure in office and serve as honorary patrons of volunteer and service organizations. In most provinces, lieutenant governors present honours of the provincial Crown to deserving citizens, and travel around the province to recognize excellence and meet with many different people to promote pride in both provincial and national institutions.



The Queen meets David Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and Mrs. Onley.



The Governor General, Lieutenant Governors, Territorial Commissioners and their spouses, 2012.

## *The Canadian honours system*

In Canada, all honours originate from the Crown, and The Queen acts as sovereign of the various national orders, such as the Order of Canada, Order of Military Merit and Order of Merit of the Police Forces. As Canada's head of state, The Queen, with her governor general, is responsible for recognizing excellence, whether it be for local, national or international contributions that have brought credit to Canada.

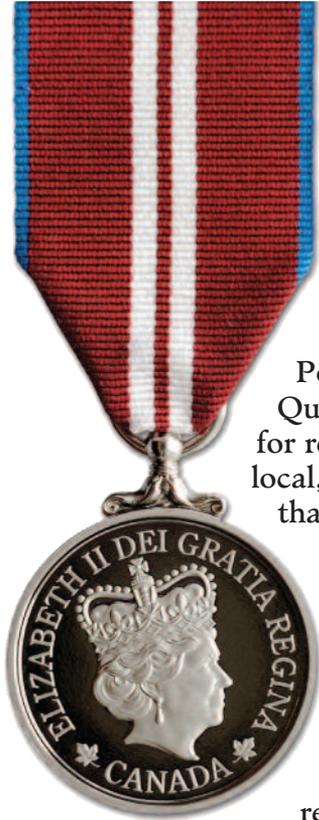
### **Order of Canada**

At the centre of the Canadian system of honours is the Order of Canada. Founded in 1967 to celebrate the centennial of Confederation, it serves to recognize outstanding lifetime achievement by those who have contributed to Canadian society. The Order is divided into three levels, each according postnominal letters to the recipient's name: Member (CM); Officer (OC); Companion (CC).

### **National and provincial honours**

Aside from the Order of Canada, there is a wide range of bravery decorations such as the Victoria Cross, Cross of Valour, Star of Courage and Medal of Bravery. There are also awards for meritorious service, such as the Order of Military Merit and the Meritorious Service Cross.

Each province also possesses its own order, which recognizes significant contributions to its life.





On special occasions, such as The Queen's Silver, Golden and Diamond Jubilees, and significant anniversaries of Confederation, commemorative medals are struck and awarded to a wide variety of Canadians as a token of the Sovereign's esteem for their services to their communities and to Canada.



In addition to these honours, there are other awards, such as the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award, recognizing Canadians who have been involved in volunteer activities; the Governor General's Literary Awards, for excellence in Canadian literature; and the Governor General's

Performing Arts Awards, which recognize Canadians who have made significant contributions to arts, theatre and television.

At the provincial level, lieutenant governors are the patron of numerous awards and prizes that recognize excellence at a more local level.



## *The Canadian Heraldic Authority*

On June 4, 1988, The Queen created the Canadian Heraldic Authority, so giving the governor general the right to grant armorial bearings. In other words, the creation and awarding of the symbols of heraldry such as coats of arms were patriated so that they would more clearly be the gift of the Canadian Crown.



The Canadian Heraldic Authority grants coats of arms to institutions, corporations and individuals throughout Canada.

Among the many arms granted in recent years are those of the Monarchist League of Canada (below, right), the Lieutenant Governor's

Award for Excellence in Ontario Wines (below, left) and municipal, public safety, educational and military entities across the country.





Town of Stewiacke,  
Nova Scotia



City of Greater Sudbury, Ontario



The Sir John A. Macdonald  
Historical Society, Vancouver,  
British Columbia



École secondaire Louis-  
Riel, Montréal, Québec

The Queen admires the newly unveiled insignia of the Canada Border Services Agency during her 2010 Canadian homecoming.



## *Did you know?*

The Canadian Crown is reflected everywhere in our society: just look around. Here are some examples:

- The Stanley Cup was donated in 1893 by the Earl of Derby (Lord Stanley of Preston), Governor General of Canada (1888–1893).
- The Grey Cup was gifted in 1909 by Earl Grey, Governor General of Canada (1904–1911).
- Red and white were proclaimed as Canada's official colours by King George V.
- Canadian banknotes, coinage and some stamps bear the image of The Queen.
- Alberta is named after Princess Louise Caroline Alberta, Queen Victoria's daughter.
- Prince Edward Island is named after a son of King George III who lived in Halifax during the early 19th century. Prince Edward was the father of Queen Victoria.
- Victoria, British Columbia, is named after Queen Victoria.
- Ontario's QEW (Queen Elizabeth Way) was named in 1939 for Queen Elizabeth, consort of King George VI. After the death of the King, she became known as The Queen Mother.





- Queen Elizabeth II has come home to Canada 22 times since her becoming our monarch in 1952.
- The Queen Elizabeth II Highway in Alberta, which links Calgary and Edmonton, was named after The Queen during her 2005 homecoming.
- Canadian naval ships are styled *HMCS*, meaning *Her Majesty's Canadian Ship*.
- The Royal Canadian Air Force, Royal Canadian Navy and many Royal regiments within our Army remind us that the Canadian Forces serve the interests of the nation as a whole, and are not political “enforcers” of the government of the day, as is often the case in many other countries.
- The Queen of Canada has travelled abroad on many occasions, most notably to the United States to open the St Lawrence Seaway in 1959, and to rededicate the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France in 2007.



## *The Queen's other Realms*

A diverse and multicultural Canada is fortunate to share its head of state with 15 other vastly different nations in all parts the world. These 16 countries are collectively known as the Commonwealth Realms. The combined population of these states is approximately 135 million.

## *The Commonwealth*

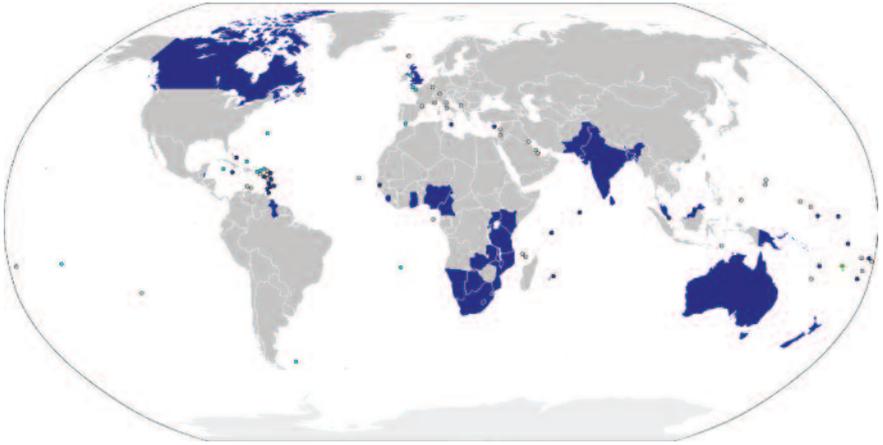
The Commonwealth of Nations is an international organization made up mostly, but not entirely, of former British colonies whose mission is to promote democracy, human rights, good government, the rule of law, individual liberty, egalitarianism, free trade, multilateralism and world peace. The Commonwealth is not a political union, but rather an intergovernmental entity where countries with diverse social, political and economic backgrounds come together as partners equal in status.

Activities of the Commonwealth are carried out through the Commonwealth Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General, and biennial meetings between Commonwealth heads of government. The symbol of their free association is the Head of the Commonwealth, which is a ceremonial position held by Queen Elizabeth II.

There are currently 54 member states of the Commonwealth with a population of 2.1 billion.



Flag of the  
Commonwealth.



The 54 countries that make up the Commonwealth (plus dependent territories).

*The Commonwealth Realms*

Antigua and Barbuda

Australia

The Bahamas

Barbados

Belize

Canada

Grenada

Jamaica

New Zealand

Papua New Guinea

St Kitts and Nevis

Saint Lucia

St Vincent and the Grenadines

Solomon Islands

Tuvalu

United Kingdom



## List of Canada's Sovereigns

1485–1509	Henry VII		
1509–1547	Henry VIII	1515–1547	François I
1547–1553	Edward VI	1547–1559	Henri II
1553–1558	Mary I	1559–1560	François II
1558–1603	Elizabeth I	1560–1574	Charles IX
1603–1625	James I	1574–1589	Henri III
1625–1649	Charles I	1589–1610	Henri IV
1649–1660	(Cromwellian Era)	1610–1643	Louis XIII
1660–1685	Charles II	1643–1715	Louis XIV
1685–1688	James II	1715–1775	Louis XV
1688–1702	William III		
1688–1694	and Mary II (jointly)		
1702–1714	Anne		
1714–1727	George I		
1727–1760	George II		
1760–1820	George III		
1820–1830	George IV		
1830–1837	William IV		
1837–1901	Victoria		
1901–1910	Edward VII		
1910–1936	George V		
1936	Edward VIII		
1936–1952	George VI		
1952–	Elizabeth II		

The *Treaty of Paris* (1763) marked the transfer of French sovereignty in North America to Britain



The Queen's Personal

## Further reading

### Websites

The monarchy ([royal.gov.uk](http://royal.gov.uk)) along with the governor general ([gg.ca](http://gg.ca)) and the lieutenant governors all have websites full of information and pictures that are easily found using a web search. Canadian Heritage also has a site with contemporary and historic material on the Crown and Royal homecomings ([canadiancrown.gc.ca](http://canadiancrown.gc.ca)).

The Monarchist League's site ([monarchist.ca](http://monarchist.ca)) contains information, an education section, a comprehensive listing of links, past issues of *Canadian Monarchist News* and gateways to social media, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

### Selected Publications

John Fraser. *The Secret of the Crown: Canada's Affair with Royalty*, 2012

Andrew Marr. *The Real Elizabeth: An Intimate Portrait of Queen Elizabeth II*, 2012

William Shawcross. *The Queen Mother: The Official Biography*, 2009

David E. Smith. *The Invisible Crown: The First Principle of Canadian Government*, 1995

David E. Smith. *The Republican Option in Canada, Past and Present*, 1999

Jennifer Smith and D. Michael Jackson, Eds. *The Evolving Canadian Crown*, 2012

Nathan Tidridge. *Canada's Constitutional Monarchy*, 2012



Partial Canadian Flag.

*“You are not only victorious,  
happy and glorious; you are also  
Canada’s most valuable player.”*

*—Prime Minister Stephen Harper,  
July 5, 2010, while showing The Queen  
an exhibit in her honour to be installed  
at the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto.*



This booklet is published by the Monarchist League of Canada. Copies are available free of charge to legislators, government agencies, schools and community groups. Individual orders: \$1.00 each, or six for \$5.00. Please send your order to:

PO Box 1057, Lakeshore West PO  
Oakville, Ontario, L6K 0B2  
1-800-I'M-LOYAL (465-6925)  
domsec@monarchist.ca



**monarchist.ca**