

Readers Note

This is the fourth volume in a series begun in the 1960s to reconstitute the early debates of the House of Commons. The editorial approach followed here is set out in P.B. Waite's Introduction to the first volume, which presents the debates of 1867-1868.

These debates are a reconstruction from newspaper accounts and are in no way considered official records of the House of Commons. Numbers and figures misquoted in original newspaper reports have been corrected where required. The exact names of bills, votes, etc., sourced from the *Journals* of the House, occasionally replace the more dubious titles found in unofficial records of the day. Professional designations have been suppressed in favour of the official names of individuals. These were exhaustively researched using parliamentary guides, the Dictionary of Canadian Biography, and the Library of Parliament's own PARLINFO database, where readers may consult the political biographies of Canada's first parliamentarians. The names of electoral districts have been verified and made consistent, but readers should note that other place names, which may have changed since the 1800s, have been left "as reported" here.

There has been no attempt to clean up awkward or incomplete sentences. The reader must adopt the mindset of a reporter in the late 1800s, writing furiously in a noisy, bustling environment. Likewise, the language of debate is rooted in the times, with the appearance of archaic words and turns of phrase and liberal references to the classics of the day. Those with a keen eye will note some creative spelling and variations in the capitalization of parliamentary terms, a lack of consistency that honours the flavour of the times.