



- The political uprisings of 1837 in both Upper and Lower Canada, by means of which a maturing citizenry, which had developed a rough land and fought for it, made known its needs and achieved the right to responsible government and a greater say in the political management of the new country;
- the end of the American Civil War, which left in existence large U.S. forces that it was feared might be directed against British North America in reprisal for British aid to the Confederacy;
- the expansion of the American West and the slower settlement of the Canadian territories west of the Great Lakes, prompting the development of rail communications and the feeling among Eastern political leaders that a federation of the whole country must be achieved if the West was to be saved from encroachment and the economic potential of the new country developed.

The British North America Act of 1867 created a new Canada, embracing four provinces — Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. It provided for a federal union and for the parliamentary system of government and an elected House of Commons, including the chief executive officer, the Prime Minister, and his Cabinet. Six other provinces eventually entered Confederation, the latest being Newfoundland in 1949.

The advent of the twentieth century brought with it millions of new settlers, an influx of foreign investment capital, financial and industrial development and the emergence of a steadily growing manufacturing industry.

The West became known as the “bread-basket of the world”, and agriculture became specialized. The discovery of gold, nickel, silver and a score of other ores revealed Canada as one of the world’s great storehouses of natural resources.

From 1914 to 1918, Canada’s contributions in men and material to the Allied victory earned important international recognition both economically and politically.

Economically, the country’s iron-and-steel industry, its shipbuilding industry, its new aircraft industry, its vast networks of communications (railways, highways, waterways, telegraph, telephone, wireless, etc.), all came into full play, and the young country took its first step towards modern industrialization.

Politically, as a country whose military forces fought with such gallantry throughout the war, Canada was invited to take a separate place at Versailles and was one of the original members of the League of Nations. Following the Imperial Conference at London in 1926, attended by Britain’s senior Dominions, and the enactment of the Statute of Westminster in 1931, Canada became a completely autonomous nation so far as its domestic and international policies were concerned.

Following the severe economic hardships of the Thirties and the outbreak of the Second World War, which Canada entered on its own initiative, the nation again proved, through its manpower, its resources and abilities, to be both a tough fighting ally and a strong arsenal in the defence of freedom from political tyranny.

At the close of the war, Canada ranked third in naval strength and fourth in air-power among the Allies, and had contributed \$2,250 million in mutual aid to its comrades-in-arms.

Canada’s history for the 20 years following the end of the Second World War is the story of valuable aid to less fortunate countries, of further sacrifice in the Korean conflict and of numerous contributions to peace-keeping operations throughout the world.

At home, it is the story of remarkable growth in primary and secondary industry, of rich new finds of oil, natural gas and many new minerals, of advances in science, culture and education, and in the ever-challenging task of achieving national unity without submerging the cultures of the peoples who helped build the nation.