

In 1882, instructions were received by the Governor-General from the Colonial Office in London that the authority to issue passports to naturalized persons was extended, in Canada, to the lieutenant-governors of the provinces. The Governor-General was requested to notify the lieutenant-governors to this effect. It is not known what was done by the Governor-General with regard to this instruction, but there is nothing to indicate that the revenue of the Dominion from passports decreased by reason of the jurisdiction conferred on the provinces. The Secretary of State issued 30 passports in 1882, and during the next ten years there was a gradual increase in the number issued. In any event, the exclusive jurisdiction of the Dominion to issue passports was restored in 1895. This policy of centralization of the issuance of passports has been followed ever since (excluding a short period at the beginning of World War II, when sub-passport issuing offices were opened in eight Canadian cities as an emergency measure made necessary by the introduction by the United States of a requirement that all British subjects entering the United States had to produce passports).

British Subjects by Birth

The anomalous situation under which passports could be issued by the Government of Canada to naturalized persons but not to British subjects by birth was considered by the Colonial Secretary in 1891, and in 1893 he decided that passports could be issued in Canada to British subjects by birth. Such persons received a "Letter of Request" type of passport, in which the Sovereign requested free passage and assistance for the bearer. On the other hand, persons naturalized in Canada received a Certificate of Colonial Naturalization, under which naturalized subjects were only entitled, while abroad, to consular protection by the Sovereign "as a matter of courtesy" and not as of right.

It was only as a result of the Imperial Conference of 1911 that persons naturalized in Canada achieved the same status as persons born or naturalized in the United Kingdom. Starting on August 31, 1915, with the introduction of the folder type of passport, all persons born or naturalized in Canada were granted passports in the same form, of which the formal part was a "Letter of Request" by the Governor-General in the name of the King. At first all passports had been signed personally by the Governor-General and bore his official seal. Beginning on August 31, 1915, and continuing until April 12, 1946, his signature was lithographed. A lithographed signature of the Secretary of State for External Affairs was substituted on the latter date, and on this date also the coat-of-arms of the Dominion of Canada was substituted for the coat-of-arms of the Governor-General.

The era of modern passports begins from the time, following the First World War, when it became the practice to include particulars in the document identifying the bearer. At the same time there was a tightening up of visa requirements throughout the world. There were international conferences on passports at Paris in 1920, at Geneva under the auspices of the League of Nations in 1926, and at Geneva again, under the auspices of the United Nations, in 1947. Com-