

...On July 1, 1867, just one year before the Meiji Restoration signalled the birth of modern Japan, the Canadian Confederation joining Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick came into existence...

...The first Japanese to land in Canada were reportedly shipwrecked sailors who came ashore in British Columbia during the early nineteenth century. The first known Japanese arrival, Manzo Nagano (Jack Nagano), a sailor, landed in New Westminster in May 1877 and spent 46 years in Canada, prospering as a fisherman, longshoreman, and storekeeper, before returning to Nagasaki in 1923. A mountain in British Columbia is named after him...

...The first Canadians to reach Japan (1873) were Davidson MacDonald and George Cochrane, Methodist missionaries, who not only preached the Christian Gospel, but transmitted their knowledge of medicine, history, language, and science to the Japanese...

...The Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 made Canada and Japan allies. When Japan defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 many Canadians applauded "gallant little Japan" for defeating Britain's arch enemy, "the Russian bear". The victorious admiral, Heihachiro Togo, was among the earliest prominent Japanese to visit Canada...

...Hirobumi Ito, the father of the Meiji Constitution, and Prince Tomosada Iwakura, leader of the Iwakura Mission which laid the groundwork for a modern state in Japan, both visited Canada early in the century...

...In July 1914 a flotilla of German warships from Tsingtao commanded by Admiral Maximilian Graf von Spee approached the virtually undefended Pacific Coast. Canada had only one obsolete light cruiser, the *H.M.C.S. Rainbow*. Japan, in observance of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, sent the battleship *Izumo* and the cruiser *Asama* to help defend Vancouver. The German squadron, however, turned south from San Francisco and was destroyed by a British squadron...

...Canadian Prime Minister W.L. MacKenzie King decided in the late 1920s that Canada should have representatives in the capitals of the four great powers, Washington, London, Paris and Tokyo. He sent Herbert Marler, Canada's first Minister to Japan in September 1929...

...The Canadian flag was first raised in Tokyo at the Canadian legation near Shibuya on July 1, 1929, by Dr. Hugh L. Keenleyside, Chargé d'Affaires, who preceded Marler to Tokyo...

...During the depression of the 1930s, the Canadian government lacked the money to build a legation in Tokyo. Herbert Marler advanced the money (\$200 000) from his own pocket (at 6% interest), saving the Canadian government as much as \$250 000. Marler, who was knighted during his tenure in Tokyo, was repaid by the Canadian government five years later. Marler built what is still one of the handsomest diplomatic residences in Tokyo today, facing the palace of the Emperor's eldest brother. The building was named *Marler House* in the 1960s...

...Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida recalled to Arthur Menzies who was Chargé d'Affaires: "When I was Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, I knew that Herbert Marler had been looking for a piece of property on which to build a legation. I was acquainted with a family that was having difficulty selling a well-situated property because it was alleged to be haunted by the ghosts of two suicides. It came to me in a flash that the property could be sold to the Canadians, since Westerners apprehended the presence of ghosts only when they heard the thud of heavy feet. Japanese ghosts, however, make no heavy footfalls but move silently on a wisp of smoke. I arranged to sell the property to Marler"...

...In the Pacific War (1941-1945) Canada and Japan were on opposite sides of the conflict. Canada moved quickly towards reconciliation with Japan after the war. The head of Canada's liaison mission to Japan, Dr. E. Herbert Norman, a brilliant Japanologist born and raised in Japan, was an advisor to General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. Norman also served on the Far Eastern Commission and helped in the shaping of Occupation policy and the writing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty of September 1951...

...From January in 1947 until later that year Marler House was shared with international judges sent to participate in war crime trials...

...The bilateral trade volume rose from \$500 000 in 1880 to some \$55 million in 1929, declining somewhat during the tensions of the thirties. After the Second World War, trade increased to more than \$130 million by 1953. The trade balance heavily favoured Canada...

...Japan's first ambassador to Canada, Sadao Iguchi, a former Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs under Prime Minister Yoshida, was appointed in June 1952. He said that he was treated with respect and not "as the Ambassador of a defeated nation"...

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