

directed to the nearest Canadian legation instead of a British consular office.

When war broke out in 1939, the United States government announced that Canadians would need passports and visas to cross the border. At that time about half a million Canadians travelled to the States each year without any documentation. Tensions rose at border crossings when American border officials began searching Canadian travellers. When a hearse was detained at the border, a riot broke out, the culmination of incidents that led to Canada's issuing of special wartime passports for travel to the United States.

Until 1947, two kinds of passports were issued in Canada, either for British-born or naturalized citizens. When the *Canadian Citizenship Act* came into effect that year, the familiar blue passport booklet with pale pink pages was issued to Canadian citizens, while similar booklets with blue pages were issued to British subjects. In July of 1948, Canadian passports were issued by the Canadian government only to Canadian citizens.



THE MODERN ERA

Between 1947 and 1970, Canadians could only apply by mail to Ottawa. Requirements were very simple, and applicants claiming birth in Canada didn't have to provide proof.

Within a few years, however, the number of lost and stolen passports rose, pointing out the need to tighten requirements. The shock of broad press coverage following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., whose killer, James Earl Ray, had escaped arrest while travelling on a fraudulently obtained Canadian passport, reinforced the need for changes.