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*Le secrétaire, Gouverneur général au sous-secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires extérieures*

*Secretary to Governor General to Under-Secretary of State
for External Affairs*

Ottawa, March 1, 1937

Dear Doctor Skelton,

I was looking through various files here the other day and came across a letter from Lord Wigram on the subject of the relative precedence of the Governor-General and the British Ambassador in Washington. I send you a copy of a note I have made for my file, as I think it will be useful in connection with His Excellency's forthcoming visit to President Roosevelt. His Excellency has written a private line to Sir Ronald Lindsay, merely saying that he proposes to visit Washington. I will let you know if the Ambassador reacts to it on the lines suggested in this note. If he does not, I shall have to take up the question with Buckingham Palace.

Yours sincerely,

A. S. REDFERN

[PIÈCE JOINTE/ENCLOSURE]

February 27, 1937

PRECEDENCE

The question was raised in 1934 of the relative precedence of the Governor-General of Canada and the British Ambassador to the United States of America in the event of the former paying a visit to Washington.

The view was taken that there were strong arguments against laying down a hard and fast rule that a visiting Governor-General should, in all circumstances, take precedence over an Ambassador in the country in which the latter was resident, and it would be preferable that the Ambassador should, as and when a case of this kind occurs, be authorised to waive his precedence voluntarily on public occasions, such as public dinners. This arrangement should permit of the Governor-General being accorded the full ceremonial normally accorded to a visiting Head of State, without derogating from the position and prestige of the Ambassador.

There was also a constitutional difficulty owing to the fact that under the Letters Patent constituting the office of the Governor-General of Canada, the Governor-General ceased his functions as Governor-General as soon as he left the Dominion. To meet this difficulty, the Letters Patent were amended on September 25th, 1935, by new Letters Patent laying down that the