

# 1909

# 1921

## AN INAUSPICIOUS START

The new Department of External Affairs began life in poky offices above a barber shop at the corner of Queen and Bank streets in central Ottawa. Both Pope and Grey had wanted it in the East Block of the Parliament Buildings, the centre of power and the most convenient locale—"it might as well have been in Calcutta," Grey bitterly complained—but space could not be found. Nor was it needed. The tiny Department consisted of only six people: its first minister, Secretary of State Charles Murphy, his under-secretary, and four clerks. It functioned primarily as a document clearance centre.



<sup>6</sup> The Department began life in poky offices above a barber shop in the Trafalgar Building at the corner of Queen and Bank streets in central Ottawa. (Source: Library and Archives Canada, PA-008934)

<sup>7</sup> In 1914, the Department moved to better quarters in the East Block of the Parliament Buildings, which remained its headquarters until 1973. (Source: Library and Archives Canada, PA-009423)