

* * * ORIGIN OF THE SERVICE * * *

1. The Department of Trade and Commerce was created by an Act of the Canadian Parliament passed in 1887 and made effective by an Order in Council dated December 5th, 1892. The Act, which is about a page in length, is divided into six sections the third of which outlines the duties and powers of the Minister as follows:

"The duties and powers of the Minister of Trade and Commerce shall extend to the execution of laws enacted by the Parliament of Canada, and of orders of the Governor in Council, relating to such matters connected with trade and commerce generally as are not by law assigned to any other department of the Government of Canada, as well as the direction of all public bodies, officers and servants employed in the execution of such laws and orders."

2. In assuming responsibility for "matters connected with trade and commerce" the newly formed department fell heir to the machinery for trade promotion that had been gradually built up by the Canadian government since Confederation.

3. In addition to trade treaties which continue to play an important role in furthering Canada's external trade, the government had encouraged a more direct type of trade promotion. Prior to the establishment of the Department of Trade and Commerce, three agencies or channels assisting Canada's external trade existed: Canadian Emigration Agents, the offices of the Canadian High Commissioner in London and the Commissioner-General in Paris, and Canadian Commercial Agents abroad acting under the Minister of Finance. In return for an honorarium of \$250-a year, the agents reported periodically on trade opportunities for Canada in their areas and were available to answer trade enquiries.

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Original 3 January 61