

Production Notes

The video opens with shots of Ottawa in about the year 1909. You may recognize the Byward Market, the first Parliament Buildings and Wellington Street.

The Trafalgar Building, the Department's first home, still stands at the corner of Bank and Queen Streets in Ottawa's commercial core.

The original staff, comprising five male clerks and two female typists, were directed by the venerable Sir Joseph Pope and his assistant, W. H. Walker. Since no photographic record of the office could be found, the clerks are depicted by office workers from the same era.

Even before Canada became a country, there were offices abroad seeking new immigrants. This sequence features a shot of the Immigration Office in London as well as period posters advertising Canada's advantages to newcomers. Trade promotion also figured prominently in the early years. In this sequence are a series of shots of Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier at an international commission with officers including Sir George Eulas Foster who reorganized the Trade Commissioner Service.

By the 1920s, the Department moved to the East Block on Parliament Hill where it stayed for fifty years. It is depicted here in a painting by Robert Pilot.

Canada Finds a Place

The next sequence opens with photographs of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. After the war Canadians wanted to speak with their own voice in world affairs. We see Prime Minister Mackenzie King at the League of Nations as well as O.D. Skelton and Walter Riddel from the Department.

Canada's first diplomatic mission opened in Washington in 1927. Following the shot of this building we see the legation in Tokyo in 1929. Shown are K.P. Kirkwood (Third Secretary), H.L. Keenleyside (First Secretary), Herbert Marler (Minister) and J.A. Langley (Commercial Secretary).