



OUR CANADIAN MONARCHY



The Monarchist League of Canada
monarchist.ca





Justin Trudeau takes Oath of Office as Prime Minister before Governor General David Johnston.

“I, [name], do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors. So help me God.”

– Canada’s Oath of Allegiance, sworn by many public officials

The Queen receives Canada’s Governor General Mary Simon with her spouse His Excellency Whit Fraser



Our Canadian Monarchy

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Canada 150 portrait of The Queen, wearing the Maple Leaf brooch presented to her mother by George VI before their 1939 tour of Canada.

Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada

The Queen is the representation of all of Canada within one person. Together with her representatives and members of the Royal Family, she promotes “all that is best and most admired in the Canadian ideal.”

Governor General Johnston gives Royal Assent in the Senate on June 19, 2017.



Canada: always a monarchy



The lands that now comprise modern-day Canada have long been reigned over by hereditary leaders. Canada enjoys a history of functioning government that began to evolve centuries before European contact with Indigenous peoples.



Many Indigenous groups were headed by a chieftain who was advised by a council of elders, not unlike the series of French and British monarchs in whose name the original colonies of North America were founded. Although not all Indigenous communities were governed this way, the concept of monarchy has never been “foreign” to the inhabitants of Canada.



The French and British colonization of North America introduced the European system of constitutional monarchy. After France ceded its American territories to Britain in the 18th century, the British Crown continued its reign in North America until Confederation in 1867, when the Fathers of Confederation decided the new country would continue as a monarchy.



Canadians have often reaffirmed commitment to their monarchy. In 1867, the Fathers of Confederation elected to vest national identity and the rule of law in The Queen. The *Statute of Westminster, 1931* further strengthened Canada's status as an independent realm constitutionally distinct from the United Kingdom. The *Constitution Act, 1982* permanently entrenched the monarchy into Canada's political framework. Québec sovereignty referendums in the 1980's and 1990's affirmed Canadian unity under the Crown. The 2010's saw surging popularity of the monarchy with The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations; the excitement of Prince William and Catherine's wedding and first tours of Canada; and the modernization of the Succession to the Throne to incorporate Canadian values of inclusion and gender equality.

What is a monarchy?

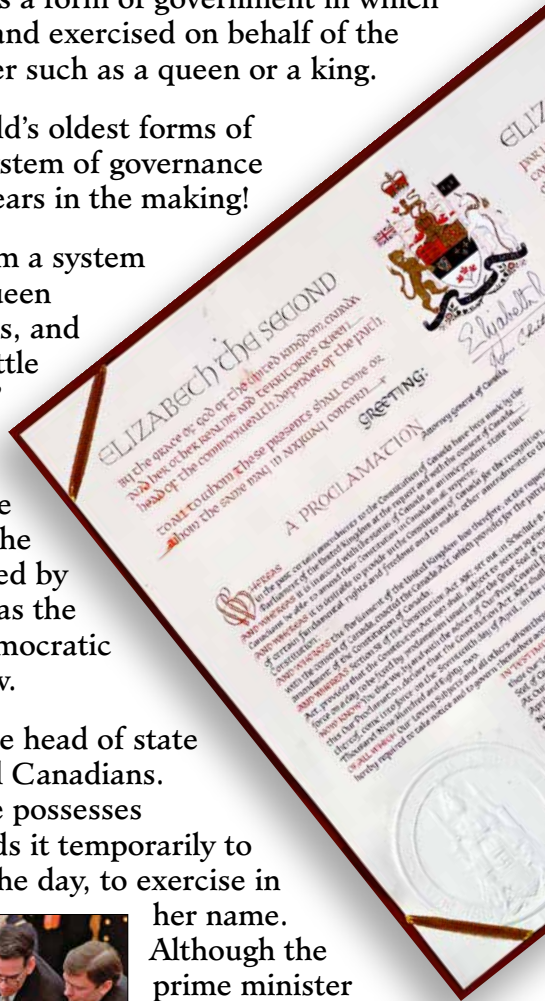
Simply put, a **monarchy** is a form of government in which sovereignty is vested in and exercised on behalf of the people by a hereditary leader such as a queen or a king.

Monarchy is one of the world's oldest forms of government, so Canada's system of governance has been over a thousand years in the making!

It has evolved over time from a system in which a strong king or queen carried out personal agendas, and ruled through success in battle and a claim to "divine right" – which is called "absolute monarchy" – to the "constitutional monarchy" we now enjoy, one existing by the consent of the people, limited by the constitution and acting as the guarantee of Canadians' democratic freedoms and the rule of law.

In Canada, The Queen is the head of state and a symbol of unity for all Canadians. More importantly, she alone possesses executive authority and lends it temporarily to the elected government of the day, to exercise in

her name. Although the prime minister – the head of government – advises The Queen and her representatives, it is The Queen who ultimately sits atop the Canadian pyramid of constitutional power and unites all levels of government.



How did Canada become a monarchy?

Different parts of what today makes up Canada were once colonies. A **colony** is a territory ruled by another power, as is Bermuda (by the UK) and Aruba (by the Netherlands).

Our colonial powers were France and Britain. So, in a sense, we can trace our modern monarchy to the kings and queens of those countries. (*See page 30.*)

The Fathers of Confederation met from 1864 to 1867 to discuss how the future country of Canada should be formed and governed. In fact, the representatives of the four colonies that would become Canada's original provinces (Canada East, Canada West, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia) unanimously decided that constitutional monarchy should be the political framework of the new Canadian state. The *Constitution Act, 1867* states that Canada has "a constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom", and stipulates that "the Executive Government and authority of and over Canada is hereby declared to continue and be vested in The Queen."

Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent led Parliament to adopt The Queen's distinctive Canadian title in 1953, reaffirming her position as our head of state.

Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom, Canada and Her other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith

The Canadian monarchy, symmetrical to, but legally separate from the British monarchy, reached its full development with the *Constitution Act, 1982*. It reaffirmed Canadians' desire to maintain constitutional monarchy as their form of government, and provided that any change to the position of The Queen or her vice-regal representatives would require the unanimous consent of Parliament and all of the provincial legislative assemblies.



The Crown fulfils both a historical and foundational role in Canadian society. It has become a symbol of independence from the seemingly overwhelming influence of the United States, which chose to abandon its connection to the monarchy in 1776.

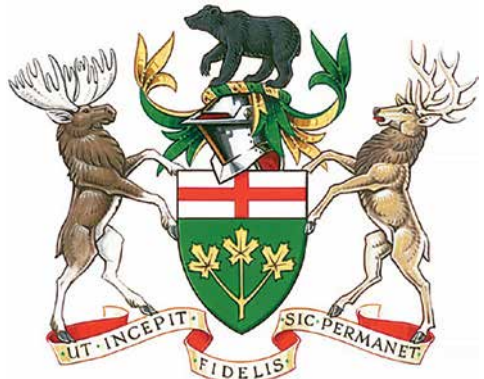


A symbolic example of the Crown's role in promoting a distinct Canadian identity is seen when travellers drive from New York state into Ontario, where many of that province's highway signs carry crowns, and its major roadways are known as "The King's Highways."



New York and Ontario: miles apart

Below, left to right: The coat of arms of New York state, with a crown at the feet of Lady Liberty showing the American rejection of the monarchy; the coat of arms of Ontario with the motto "Loyal she began, loyal she remains."



Authority in Canada

Canada maintains a distinction between the **head of government** and the **head of state**. While the prime minister is the head of government, the reigning monarch is the head of state.

While our Sovereign holds executive power, she lends her authority to those elected to form a government. This is why all laws in Canada are made in The Queen's name.

The government of the day has the duty of managing the power of the state. We might think of it as a filter: it must try to interpret the people's wishes and express them through the actions of Parliament, all of which is the responsibility of elected officials. Yet it must do so within the framework of the rule of law, which is safeguarded by the Crown.

By separating the role of the head of state (the monarch) from that of the head of government (the prime minister), Canadians ensure that those elected to office do not actually possess the full power of the state. Rather, authority is lent to the government for a short period of time by the Crown. Power is deliberately placed above and away from the structure of the government and political partisanship. (This is visually represented by the crown at the top of the Queen's Canadian arms.)

Simply put, The Queen and her representatives do not involve themselves in party politics. Similarly, Canadians are able to support their country without being a member of a political party.

Members of Parliament, provincial legislators, cabinet ministers, judges, many public servants, members of the Canadian Forces and police officers swear allegiance to The Queen, who represents all citizens, regardless of political ideology. In much the same



way, lands belonging to the public are called “Crown land” and public inquiries are known as “Royal commissions.”

It is for all of these reasons that Canadian oaths give allegiance to the monarch, an actual human being, rather than to lifeless objects such as a flag, abstract ideas like freedom and justice, or to debatable political documents such as a constitution.

Canadian symbols of authority

The Crown gives many of the country’s institutions their authority to operate and interact with Canadians on a daily basis. As visual representations of these entities, coats of arms give visual clues about the Royal origin of their powers.

The national coat of arms provides a depiction of Canada and many aspects of its history (the shield) with the Crown at its top.



Arms of the Queen
in Right of Canada



The Crown is the unifying pillar of government

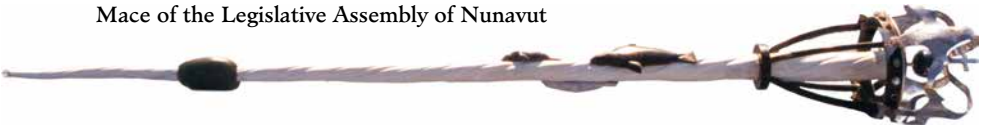
Right, badge of the CSIS. Below, l-r, badge of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, badge of the Canadian Forces and arms of Nunavut.





The Great Seal of Canada must be affixed to all state documents and proclamations. As well, all commissions of cabinet ministers, senators, judges and other senior government officials must bear this seal, which depicts Elizabeth II as Queen of Canada.

Mace of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut



The symbol of the Crown in Parliament is the Mace, carried into the legislative chamber by its sergent at arms each day. Canadian Maces are surmounted by crowns, and Parliament cannot conduct business in the absence of the Mace.



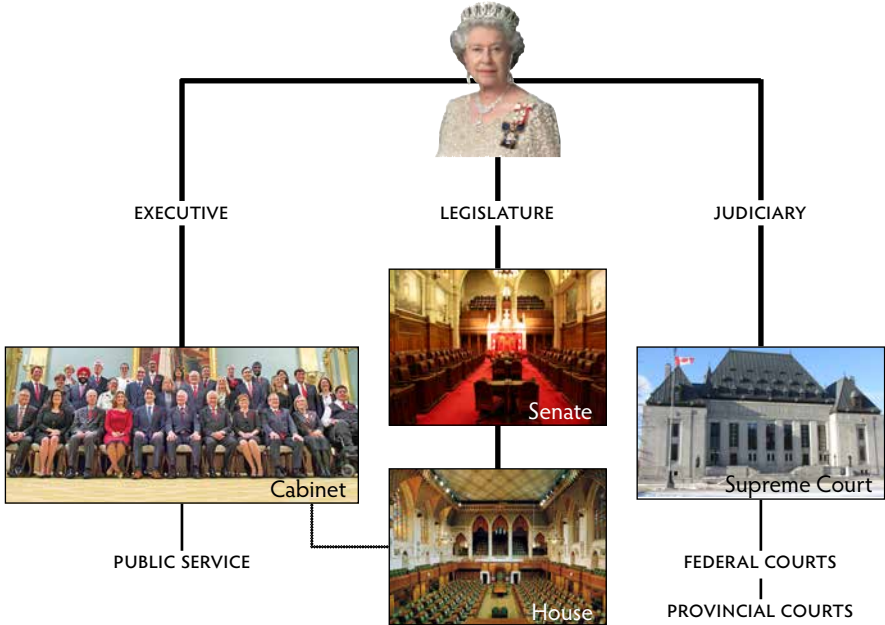
Since Confederation, all coins bear the image of the monarch. The Sovereign's image gives such money its authority and makes it valid.





The Crown as the central pillar of Canadian government

As depicted in the chart below, the Crown is inseparably linked to all parts of government. The Queen forms Parliament along with legislators, as well as being head of state and fount of justice.



Legislative Assembly of
British Columbia, Victoria



Reserve powers of the Crown

The Queen and her representatives have the power to dissolve Parliament, and even to refuse to give the Royal Assent needed for a bill to become law. These are extraordinary powers held only by the Crown, and are only used to protect the public in the event that the normal machinery of government breaks down.

Think of the Crown as a fire extinguisher hanging on a wall. It is bright and colourful, much like the pomp and ceremony that surrounds the monarchy. It has the power to put out fires, but is an object that we hope never to use. In fact, just the presence of a fire extinguisher has the potential to discourage people from playing with matches.

The Crown is similar: it is a mechanism that allows Canadians to put a stop to any government that is lighting fires. Although use of the reserve powers is rare, it is still reassuring to know they are there in case of need.

The purpose of the Crown, as frequently stated, is to assert **“the right to be informed, to encourage and to warn.”**



Indigenous peoples and the Crown

From the very beginning, treaties have played an important role in the relationship between Indigenous peoples in Canada and the Crown. Many look to King George III's *Royal Proclamation of 1763* as a sort of Indigenous *Magna Carta*.

Under these treaties, Indigenous Canadians surrendered vast amounts of land to the Crown in exchange for compensation and the exclusive rights to hunt and fish on the surrendered areas. The Crown has also made promises regarding the provision of education and healthcare services to Indigenous peoples.

Although the responsibility for fulfilling treaty commitments in today's society is now the challenging task of both the federal and provincial governments, the prestige of the Crown stands behind the promise of the treaties. Its relationship with Indigenous Canadians continues to this day.

In 2005, after having presented a tablet bearing her own and Queen Victoria's cyphers to the First Nations University of Canada, Queen Elizabeth II said: "This stone is presented ... in hope that it will serve as a reminder of the special relationship between the Sovereign and all First Nations peoples."



From left to right: Prince Arthur with the Chiefs of the Six Nations at the Mohawk Chapel, Brantford, Ontario, 1869.



The Queen, left, speaks with Chief Leonard Pelletier, Thunder Bay, Ontario, 1973. The Duchess of Cornwall, right, wears traditional Coast Salish symbols, 2009.





King George VI and Queen Elizabeth meet with Indigenous Canadians, 1939.



The Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) paddles a canoe, 1919.



The Queen leaves a teepee in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 2010.



The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge meet with Indigenous Canadians in the Northwest Territories, 2011.



The Queen meets with Mi'kmaq Grand Chief Ben Sylliboy in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 2010.



Prince Charles dancing in the Northwest Territories, 2022.



Canada and its Queen grow together

Left page, left to right, top to bottom: Princess Elizabeth at three years old; Princess Elizabeth square dances at Rideau Hall in 1951; Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Charles; The Queen is presented with flowers by Trina Pelletier, seven years old, daughter of Chief Leonard Pelletier in 1973.

Right page, l-r, top to bottom: Canadian Platinum Jubilee emblem; The Queen unveils a stained glass window featuring



herself and Queen Victoria commemorating her 60 years on the throne, now installed in the Senate foyer; The Queen in Halifax; Canada's MVP carries out ceremonial puck drop; The Queen addresses the country on Canada Day in 2010; The Queen meets with Canadians during her Golden Jubilee tour; HM broadcasts to Canada during the pandemic.

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The Governor General

As The Queen is the head of state of 15 countries, it is understandable that she cannot always be in Canada to exercise her constitutional responsibilities. In her place she appoints a representative, the particular person having been suggested by the prime minister. This representative is known as the **governor general**, and is expected to carry out much of The Queen's role in Canada.



A governor general typically serves at The Queen's pleasure, meaning that there is no specific term of office. However, appointments traditionally last no less than five years.

As representative of the Crown, the governor general performs the following duties:

- Serves as Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Forces
- Summons, prorogues and dissolves Parliament
- Reads the Speech from the Throne
- Gives Royal Assent in The Queen's name to bills passed by Parliament, the necessary final step in the legislative process





- Regularly meets with the prime minister
- Travels throughout Canada to represent the Crown and foster national unity
- Travels abroad to promote Canadian sovereignty
- Encourages national identity and provides leadership
- Recognizes excellence across Canada by means of the Canadian honours system
- Entertains visiting foreign heads of state



The Governor General hails Queen's "commitment to service and her steadfast and reassuring presence" during Canada Day celebrations, 2022.



The governor general resides at Rideau Hall in Ottawa.



Vincent Massey, the first governor general to be born in Canada, accompanies The Queen and Prince Philip at Rideau Hall, 1957.

The monarchy in the provinces

Canada is a federal state. This means that the responsibility for governing our country is shared: the federal government in Ottawa, and the provincial governments, each with their own elected legislature, laws and public service.

The Canadian monarchy works in exactly the same way. Just as the Governor General represents the head of state of Canada, The Queen, the lieutenant governor of each province performs nearly all of the same duties at the provincial level. Consequently, there are eleven Crowns in Canada. This is why one can see the Royal crown or other Royal symbols on the coats of arms of most provinces.

In each province, the lieutenant governor represents The Queen directly. They are appointed by the governor general on the advice of the prime



Top row: standard of the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan and coat of arms of Saskatchewan. Bottom row: coat of arms of Québec and standard of the Lieutenant Governor of Québec.

minister, often in consultation with the premier of the province, to serve for no less than five years.

Lieutenant governors read the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the legislature, grant Royal Assent to bills, and possess the same emergency powers as the governor general.

Community involvement is very important to lieutenant governors, many of whom adopt themes during their tenure in office and serve as honorary patrons of volunteer and service organizations.

In most provinces, lieutenant governors present honours of the provincial Crown to deserving citizens, travel around the province to recognize excellence and meet with many different people to promote pride in both provincial and national institutions.



The Queen receives the Lieutenant Governor of Quebec, the Hon. Michel Doyon.



Meeting in 2014, Canada's Vice-Regal representatives and Territorial Commissioners recreate scene from 1864 Charlottetown Conference.

The Canadian honours system

In Canada, all honours originate from the Crown, and The Queen acts as sovereign of the various national orders, such as the Order of Canada, Order of Military Merit and Order of Merit of the Police Forces. As Canada's head of state, The Queen, with her governor general, is responsible for recognizing excellence, whether it be for local, national or international contributions that have brought credit to Canada.

Order of Canada

At the centre of the Canadian system of honours is the Order of Canada. Founded in 1967 to celebrate the centennial of Confederation, it serves to recognize outstanding lifetime achievement by those who have contributed to Canadian society. The Order is divided into three levels, each according to postnominal letters to the recipient's name: Member (CM); Officer (OC); Companion (CC).





National and provincial honours

Aside from the Order of Canada, there is a wide range of bravery decorations such as the Victoria Cross, Cross of Valour, Star of Courage and Medal of Bravery. There are also awards for meritorious service, such as the Order of Military Merit and the Meritorious Service Cross.



Each province also possesses its own order, which recognizes significant contributions to its life.

On special occasions, such as The Queen's Silver, Golden and Diamond Jubilees, and some significant anniversaries of Confederation, commemorative medals are struck and awarded to a wide variety of Canadians as a token of the Sovereign's esteem for their services to their communities and to Canada.

In addition to these honours, there are other awards, such as the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers, recognizing Canadians who have been involved in volunteer activities; the Governor General's Literary Awards, for excellence in Canadian literature; and the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards, which recognize Canadians who have made significant contributions to arts, theatre and television.



At the provincial level, lieutenant governors are the patrons of numerous awards and prizes that recognize excellence at a more local level.

The Canadian Heraldic Authority

On June 4, 1988, The Queen created the Canadian Heraldic Authority, so giving the governor general the right to grant armorial bearings. In other words, the creation and awarding of the symbols of heraldry, such as coats of arms, were patriated so that they would more clearly be the gift of the Canadian Crown.

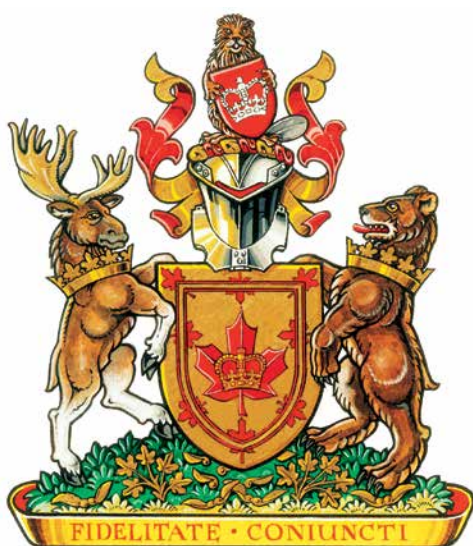


The Canadian Heraldic Authority (*Arms depicted left*) grants coats of arms to institutions, corporations and individuals throughout Canada.

Among the many arms granted in recent years are those of the Monarchist League of Canada (below, right), the Lieutenant Governor's

Award for Excellence in

Ontario Wines (below, left) and municipal, public safety, educational and military entities across the country.





Town of Stewiacke,
Nova Scotia



City of Greater Sudbury, Ontario



The Sir John A. Macdonald
Historical Society,
Vancouver, British Columbia



École secondaire Louis-
Riel, Montréal, Québec

The Queen
admires
the newly
unveiled
insignia of
the Canada
Border
Services
Agency
during
her 2010
Canadian
homecoming.



Did you know?

The Canadian Crown is reflected everywhere in our society: just look around. Here are some examples:

- The Stanley Cup was donated in 1893 by the Earl of Derby (Lord Stanley of Preston), Governor General of Canada (1888–1893).
- The Grey Cup was gifted in 1909 by Earl Grey, Governor General of Canada (1904–1911).
- Red and white were proclaimed as Canada's official colours by King George V.
- Canadian coinage, together with some bank notes and postage stamps, bears the image of The Queen.
- Alberta is named after Princess Louise Caroline Alberta, Queen Victoria's daughter.
- Prince Edward Island is named after a son of King George III who lived in Halifax during the early 19th century. Prince Edward was the father of Queen Victoria.
 - Victoria, British Columbia, is named after Queen Victoria.
 - Ontario's QEW (Queen Elizabeth Way) was named in 1939 for Queen Elizabeth, consort of King George VI. After the death of the King, she became known as The Queen Mother.



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- Queen Elizabeth II has come home to Canada 22 times since her becoming our monarch in 1952.
- The Queen Elizabeth II Highway in Alberta, which links Calgary and Edmonton, was named after The Queen during her 2005 homecoming.
- Canadian naval ships are styled *HMCS*, meaning *Her Majesty's Canadian Ship*.
- The Royal Canadian Air Force, Royal Canadian Navy and many Royal regiments within our Army remind us that the Canadian Forces serve the interests of the nation as a whole, and are not political “enforcers” of the government of the day, as is often the case in many other countries.
- The Queen of Canada has travelled abroad on many occasions, most notably to the United States to open the St Lawrence Seaway in 1959, and to rededicate the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France in 2007.



The Queen's other Realms

A diverse and multicultural Canada is fortunate to share its head of state with 14 other vastly different nations in all parts the world. These 15 countries are collectively known as the Commonwealth Realms. The combined population of these states is approximately 151 million.

The Commonwealth

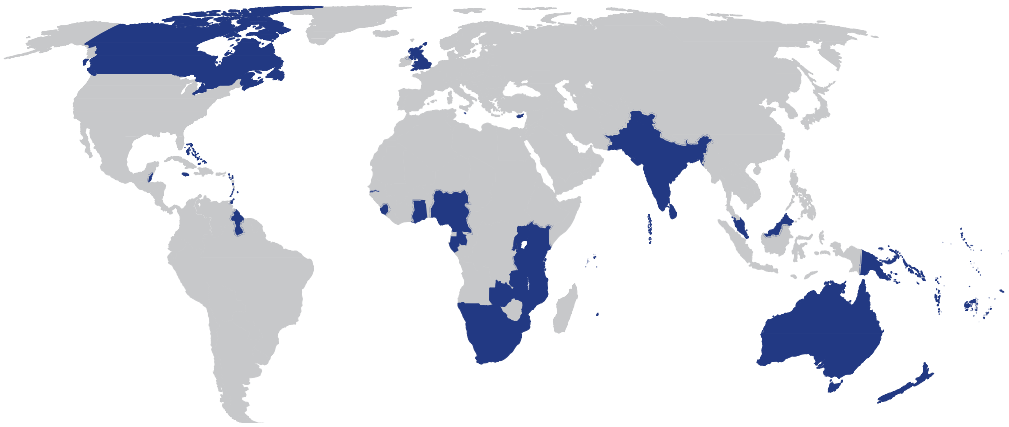
The Commonwealth of Nations is an international organization made up mostly, but not entirely, of former British colonies. Its mission is to promote democracy, human rights, good government, the rule of law, individual liberty, egalitarianism, free trade, multilateralism and world peace. The Commonwealth is not a political union, but rather an intergovernmental entity where countries with diverse social, political and economic backgrounds come together as partners equal in status.

Activities of the Commonwealth are carried out through the Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General, and meetings between its heads of government. The symbol of their free association is the Head of Commonwealth, which is a ceremonial position now held by Queen Elizabeth II. In 2018, Commonwealth leaders determined Charles would occupy this role once he is King.

There are currently 56 member states of the Commonwealth with a population of 2.5 billion.



Flag of the
Commonwealth.



The 56 countries that make up the Commonwealth (plus dependent territories).

The Commonwealth Realms

Antigua and Barbuda

Australia

The Bahamas

Belize

Canada

Grenada

Jamaica

New Zealand

Papua New Guinea

St Kitts and Nevis

Saint Lucia

St Vincent and the Grenadines

Solomon Islands

Tuvalu

United Kingdom



List of Canada's Sovereigns

1485–1509	Henry VII
1509–1547	Henry VIII
1547–1553	Edward VI
1553–1558	Mary I
1558–1603	Elizabeth I
1603–1625	James I
1625–1649	Charles I
1649–1660	(Cromwellian Era)
1660–1685	Charles II
1685–1688	James II
1688–1702	William III
1688–1694	and Mary II (jointly)
1702–1714	Anne
1714–1727	George I
1727–1760	George II
1760–1820	George III
1820–1830	George IV
1830–1837	William IV
1837–1901	Victoria
1901–1910	Edward VII
1910–1936	George V
1936	Edward VIII
1936–1952	George VI
1952–	Elizabeth II

1515–1547	François I
1547–1559	Henri II
1559–1560	François II
1560–1574	Charles IX
1574–1589	Henri III
1589–1610	Henri IV
1610–1643	Louis XIII
1643–1715	Louis XIV
1715–1775	Louis XV

The *Treaty of Paris* (1763) marked the transfer of French sovereignty in North America to Britain



Henri IV



George VI & Queen Elizabeth with PM MacKenzie King in Banff, 1939.

Further reading

Websites

The monarchy (royal.uk) along with the Governor General (gg.ca) and the lieutenant governors all have websites with information and pictures, as does Canadian Heritage (canada.ca/en/services/culture/canadian-identity-society/monarchy-crown). The Monarchist League's site (monarchist.ca) contains comprehensive information, including a 'For Students' section with many ideas for projects, and gateways to print and social media.

The Monarchist League's site (monarchist.ca) contains information, an education section, a comprehensive listing of links, past issues of *Canadian Monarchist News* and gateways to social media, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Selected Publications

Christopher McCreery, *Fifty Years Honouring Canadians: The Order of Canada, 1967-2017*, 2017

David E. Smith. *The Invisible Crown: The First Principle of Canadian Government*, 1995

David E. Smith. *The Republican Option in Canada, Past and Present*, 1999

David Smith, Christopher McCreery & Jonathan Shanks, *Canada's Deep Crown: Beyond Elizabeth II, The Crown's Continuing Canadian Complexion*, 2022



The Queen's Personal Canadian Flag.

“... as Queen of Canada, she has not only witnessed, but also been an active participant in, the evolution of our country over the past 63 years. Her Majesty will remain an integral part of our country’s progress and future.”

*– Prime Minister Justin Trudeau,
speaking of his upcoming Audience with
The Queen on November 25, 2015*



The booklet, published by the Monarchist League of Canada in five previous editions made possible by Richard and Donalda Robarts, now presents its 6th edition, funded by a generous grant from The Department of Canadian Heritage to honour The Queen’s 70 years as Canada’s Monarch by distributing 70,000 copies free of charge during Platinum Jubilee year. Please send your request to:

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